

**ICE!**  
A CHARLIE BROWN  
Christmas  
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# The Arlington Connection

Sabrina Rupprecht is working on the last image in her important scenes around Arlington, painted on the walls of the Pentagon City tunnel.

SENIOR LIVING, PAGE 5.G ♦ ENTERTAINMENT, PAGE 8 ♦ CLASSIFIEDS, PAGE 10

PHOTO BY SHIRLEY RUHE/THE CONNECTION

**It's Turkey Week**

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**Arlington Neighborhood Village Celebrates Thanksgiving**

PAGE 6

**Mural Captures Arlington Scenes**

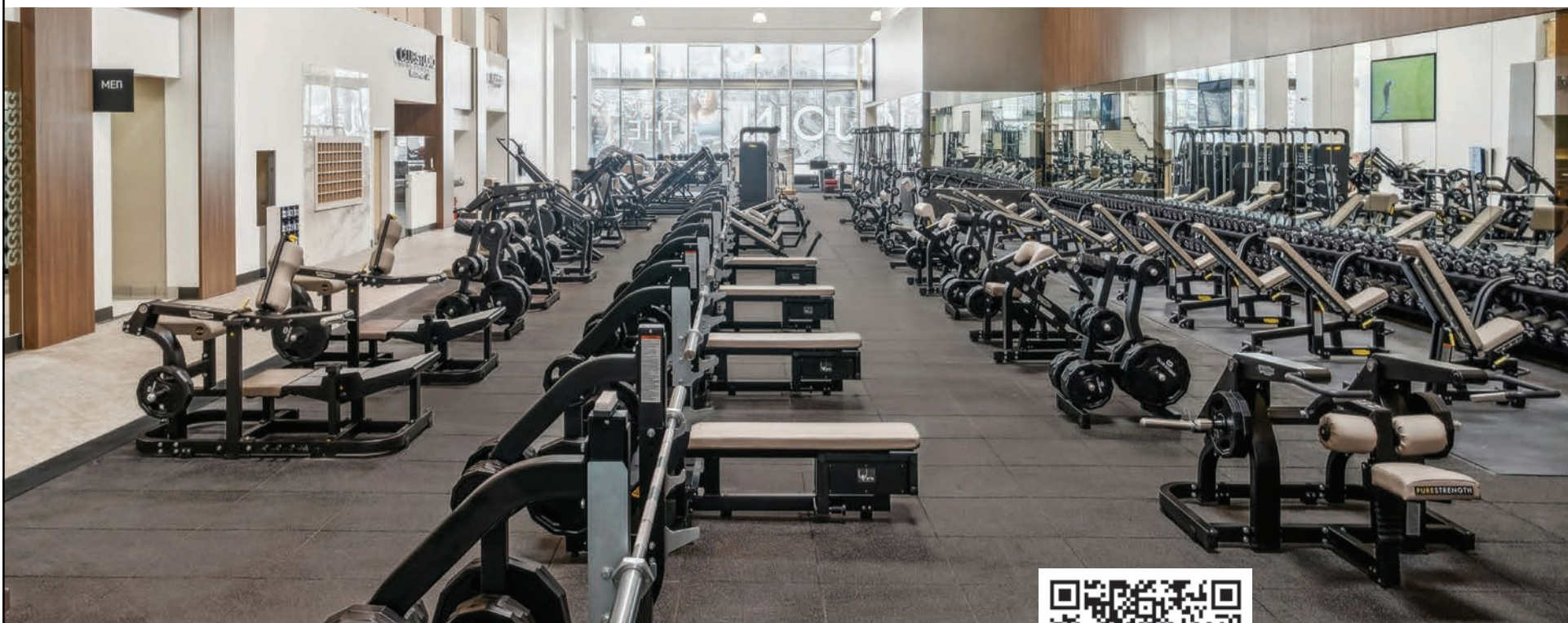
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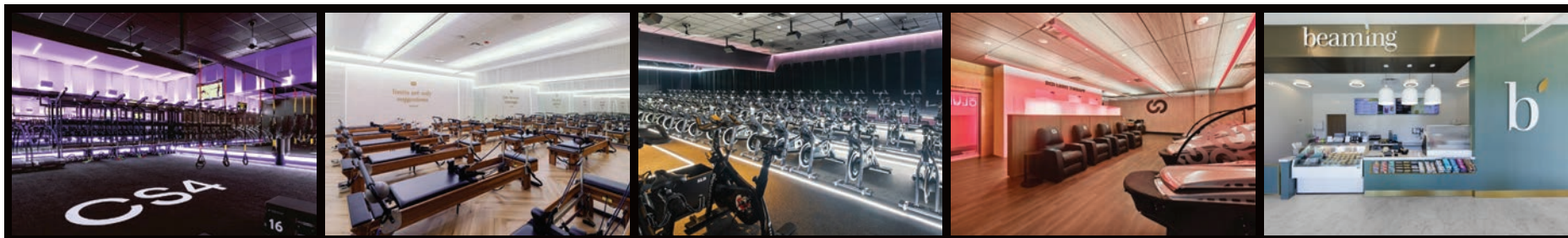


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# Turkey Week Is Here At Last

PHOTOS BY SHIRLEY RUHE/THE CONNECTION

BY SHIRLEY RUHE  
ARLINGTON CONNECTION

**T**urkey Week was here at last. At 9 am on Monday, Nov. 18 when the Arlington Food Assistance Center (AFAC) food distribution center opened, the line of clients with shopping bags, rolling carts and extra hands was already down the block. Jolie Smith, AFAC chief development officer said, “Normally there is a line down the block but when it’s Turkey Week, it doesn’t stop.”

The needy families who come to AFAC for supplemental groceries receive a protein selection, eggs, milk, fresh fruit and vegetables, bread, beans or pasta and a choice of canned staples. But during Turkey Week, they also receive a turkey or a chicken.

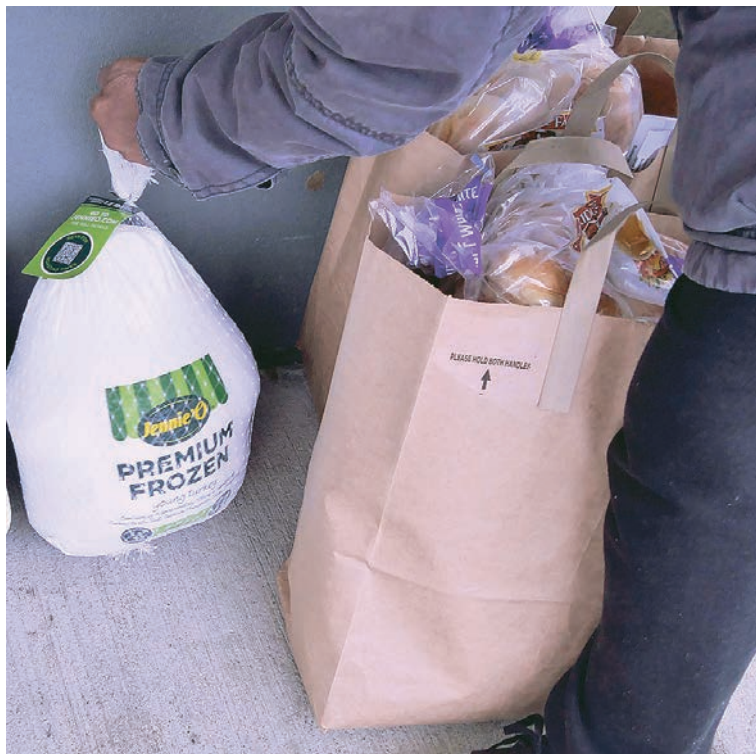
Charlie Meng, CEO of AFAC, says the number of families served by AFAC has soared to 4,000 weekly, the highest ever, and AFAC ordered 3,900 turkeys and 500 chickens this year. He explained that many older people prefer chickens because they are easier to handle. And the good news is that Turkey Week is actually giving out turkeys again this year since last year due to financial constraints everyone received a chicken instead. But Meng explains that turkeys are \$1.01 cent a pound cheaper this year than last.

Due to the pressures of the economy and increasing number of families served, AFAC has been overspending its budget in the last couple of years. Meng says that he wrote to the County Board in early October 2024 with an update out-

SEE TURKEY WEEK, PAGE 9



Charlie Meng, CEO of AFAC, lays out the need for additional assistance to support the unprecedented number of families served. Jasper, Assistant to the Director for Staff Morale, was at home the day of the interview and unable to appear in the picture with his favorite fetch toy.



The last person in line at Thursday’s Turkey Week gathers up her bag of supplemental groceries and her heavy Thanksgiving turkey.



Jolie Smith, chief development officer, and Alana Rafiee, marketing and communications director, gather a box of bananas, heavier than it looks.



Every family gets a bag with milk, eggs, bread, choice of protein, beans or pasta, and fresh produce on a weekly basis.

## Meng Honored as Community Leader of the Year

**C**harles Meng, CEO of Arlington Food Assistance Center (AFAC), was presented the Community Leader of the Year Award by the Inter-Service Club Council at the Washington Golf and Country Club on Wednesday, Nov. 20.

Jeff Englander, head of the Arlington Optimist Club, presented the award to Meng for Meng’s 17 years of service and his efforts in the community to spotlight the needs of those in financial distress. Englander pointed out that AFAC had served 600 families a week when it started and now it has expanded to a full

PHOTO CONTRIBUTED



blown logistical operation serving 4,000 a week.

Meng received a standing ovation from the packed crowd of community supporters and businesses and said afterwards, “It made me realize how much AFAC means to the community.”

Matt de Ferranti was present representing the Arlington County Board. He explained later, “I am honored and grateful to work with him. Charlie is a great leader. He is

**Charles Meng, CEO of Arlington Food Assistance Center receives Community Leader of the Year Award.**

inclusive and fully committed to serving those in need.” De Ferranti adds, “His good data and detailed approach allowed us to give AFAC additional close out money from our 2024 County funds which is not typical for the Board.”

The Inter-Service Club Council of Arlington was founded in 1940 as a clearinghouse for service organizations. From its founding until 2022 it awarded an annual Man of the Year and a Woman of the Year Award. In 2023 they established the single Community Leader Award.

— SHIRLEY RUHE



# Rupprecht Fills Tunnel with Scenes of Arlington

BY SHIRLEY RUHE  
ARLINGTON CONNECTION

**W**arm hat on her head and paintbrush in hand, Sabrina Rupprecht is working on the map of Pentagon City. If it gets too cold in the tunnel she adds layers. "I'm from Germany so I'm used to the cold."

She is brushing acrylic paint on the last image on the wall of the tunnel that she has been filling with important scenes of Arlington for the last six weeks. She gets to know some of the people who walk by every day. The tunnel connects the lower level of the Pentagon City shopping mall with the street on the other side.

Rupprecht says Simon Property Management, who owns Pentagon City and other malls nationwide, commissioned the work. The portrayal of two women with shopping bags is followed by large letters spelling Pentagon City which stretch 120 feet down the long wall. Each letter is filled with an image of something important in the area. The first image is the Ritz Carlton at the Pentagon City Mall. Other letters are filled with images such as a soaring airplane to represent Reagan National Airport, a man in an Army uniform to represent the presence of the military in the area. Bicyclists remind us that Arlington is rated the fittest location and her favorite, the dog picture.

"People here love their dogs. They have their dog parks and their doggie day care. In general people love to see animals in art." Rupprecht says she used to paint endangered wildlife pictures for a living when she lived in S. Africa. She also painted portraits and started a business 10 years ago focusing on portraits of people. "In a time of Instagram, which was hip, I posted pencil drawings and got commissions from all over the world."

During these years she was coming to Florida every year for a large art show and decided she wanted to move to the United States. "I applied for an O1 Visa for exceptional talent in 2019." She came to America, met her future husband in 2019 and moved to Crystal City in 2020 but then Covid hit and there was limited work. "There were no shows." She says she couldn't exhibit in galleries to show her art which is how she got her visa. So in January 2021 she sent an inquiry to National Landing, and they told her Valentine's Day was coming up and asked her to submit ideas. She came up with a drawing of a pink VW Love bug which was a hit, and then things just happened.

She had been painting a 12-foot-high, 10-foot-wide wall at Commonwealth Joe Coffee Shop for four years changing it with the seasons. "Amazon found me outside painting. They had emailed me two years prior to do some cherry blossom painting but I couldn't do it at the time. They came back a year later in 2024 and said 'We still want you to do the cherry blossoms,'" and this time she was able to do it.

Rupprecht explains that when she lived in South Africa she was painting portraits and wildlife pictures while working part time as a customer service agent for Amazon. Amazon hired her because she had German language



Sabrina Rupprecht with the image of a plane representing Reagan National Airport.



Artist Sabrina Rupprecht with an Army officer to represent the presence of the military in our area.



Sabrina Rupprecht is working on the last image in her important scenes around Arlington, painted on the walls of the Pentagon City tunnel.

Each day's supplies of acrylic paint, brushes and rags line the tunnel where Sabrina Rupprecht paints each day.



skills. But she says that job didn't work well for her since she didn't like to be in an office and when they offered her a chance to work her way up, she said, "No, I'm an artist." She says when she came to the U.S. and Amazon recently asked her to do painting for them she felt like she had come full circle.

Rupprecht has been doing art since she could hold a crayon. "But I didn't ever think it would be a career. I've never studied art; I studied fashion design." When she moved

to South Africa her first design was leather handbags. "But I sketched for fun. I was fascinated drawing faces."

She remembers a friend came by and saw one of her portraits and wanted to buy it. "But I would only sell a copy." She only sold copies for a long time until "some guy came to me and wanted me to draw his girlfriend. But he wanted the original thing. He paid way more than I was going to charge so I realized maybe selling the original was the

thing to do."

Now Rupprecht deals only with corporate clients such as businesses and restaurants. "I have learned it is not necessarily all about how good your work is but about customer service. I always meet with the client to have them tell me their story, who are they trying to reach, and what is their target group." She says, "You have to deliver what they ask for, avoid disappointments. I always meet my deadlines."



# SENIOR LIVING

## "Flourishing After 55"

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

55+ Programs are in person at 55+ Centers unless otherwise noted. A 55+ Pass is required to participate starting at a \$20 annual fee. To join or register, go to registration. arlingtonva.us or call 703-228-4747.

55+ crafters invite fellow crafters to socialize and create the perfect gift, Wednesday, Nov. 27, 10:30 a.m., Arlington Mill 55+ Center. Bring your own supplies; no instruction provided. Drop-in.

Coffee or Tea and Thee, drop in and meet new folks while sipping coffee and tea, Wednesday, Nov. 27, 9 a.m., Lubber Run 55+ Center.

Open art studio to accommodate artists who work at their own pace, Wednesday, Nov. 27, 10 a.m.-12 p.m., Arlington Mill 55+ Center. No instruction; bring your own materials. Drop-in.

Movie matinee, Dynamic Duo: "Being the Ricardos" (2021) (R), Wednesday, Nov. 27, 12:30 p.m., Aurora Hills 55+ Center. Registration # 911804-06.

Sing-along, dance or just come to listen to an open rehearsal of rock and roll band, Off our Rockers, Wednesday, Nov. 27, 10 a.m. - 1 p.m., Madison Community Center. Drop-in.

Local history discussion, have fun recollecting and learning about Arlington's rich past, Wednesday, Nov. 27, 1:30 p.m., Lubber Run 55+ Center. Registration #911402-09.

Women's drop-in basketball, Wednesday, Nov. 27, 7 p.m., Langston-Brown 55+ Center. Langston-Brown 55+ Center.

Canasta, easy to learn card game, Wednesday, Nov. 27, 10 a.m. - 12 p.m., Walter Reed 55+ Center. Drop-in.

Thanksgiving dinner at Dutch's Daughter buffet, Frederick, MD, Thursday, Nov. 28. Cost \$99, Arlington resident; \$114, non-resident. Registration #902411-16.

The Alliance for Arlington Senior Programs (AASP) is a non-profit organization dedicated to improving the quality of life of older adults in Arlington.. AASP works closely with the Office of 55+ Programs. For more information, check the website, www.friendsofthealliance.org.

55+ Travel group to attend an afternoon performance by GRAMMY award winning male chorus, "A Chanticleer Christmas" at the Hylton Performing Arts Center in Manassas, Sunday, Dec. 1. Cost \$47, Arlington resident; \$54, non-resident. Registration # 902412-01.

The National Federation of the Blind (NFB) offers free services such as life skills training and technology support. Hear more Monday, Dec. 2, 11 a.m., Lubber Run 55+ Center

from Gary Moore, member of the NFB Board, Potomac VA Chapter. Register # 912500-01.

Stay Active and Independent for Life (SAIL), exercise programs to improve strength, balance and fitness and reduce fall risks, Mondays beginning Monday, Dec. 2, 1 p.m. through Feb. 20, Lubber Run 55+ Center. No cost. Registration # 912502-01.

Step-by-step painting demonstration by a Community Arts Programmer, Monday, Dec. 2, 10:30 a.m., virtual. Picture and supply list will be sent prior to class. Registration # 912303-01.

Let's play easy piano duets, music supplied, Mondays beginning Dec. 2, 4 p.m., Walter Reed 55+ Center. Must have at least beginners knowledge of the piano to participate. Registration # 912304-13.

Jeopardy! Play America's favorite quiz game, monthly themes, Monday, Dec. 2, 2 p.m., Aurora Hills 55+ Center. Registration # 912600-13.

Learn the American style of Mah Jongg with instructor Judy Wall, 4-part series of classes, Mondays and Thursdays beginning Monday, Dec. 2, 10:45 a.m., Walter Reed 55+ Center. No experience needed; supplies provided. Registration # 912600-16.

The GardenFest of Lights at the Lewis Ginter Botanical Garden in Richmond, VA is on the agenda for the 55+ Travel group, Monday, Dec. 2. Cost \$96, Arlington resident; \$110 non-resident. Registration #902412-02.

Join Marissa Bale, Area 2 Farms community outreach and program manager to learn about urban farms, Tuesday, Dec. 3, 1 p.m., Arlington Mill 55+ Center. Registration # 912501-07.

Wildlife in Arlington presentation by Carolyn Wilder, volunteer for the Wildlife Rescue League, Tuesday, Dec. 3, 5:30 p.m., Walter Reed 55+ Center. Registration # 912400-22.

Introduction to the ukulele, Tuesday, Dec. 3, 4 p.m., Walter Reed 55+ Center. No experience required; limited ukuleles available. Taught by Sandy O'Shea. Registration # 912304-01. Intermediate class follows at 4:30 p.m., registration # 912304-07.

Workshop to make holiday fabric stars, enhance folding skills, no sewing involved, Wednesday, Dec. 4, 1 p.m., Aurora Hills 55+ Center. Materials supplied; instruction provided by Anya Gan from the Aurora Hills Advisory. Registration # 912310-01.

Holiday tunes with pianist Ken Schellenberg and friends, Wednesday, Dec. 4, 4 p.m., Arlington Mill 55+ Center. Come to listen and join in a sing-along. Registration # 912304-14.

Opera appreciation, view complete operas from the NYC Met on Demand with professional commentary by George Cecchetti, begins with "Elektra" by Richard Strauss, Wednesday, Dec. 4, 1:30 p.m.,

SEE FLOURISHING, PAGE 6



## ICE! A CHARLIE BROWN Christmas

Experience a one-of-a-kind winter getaway at Gaylord National. Discover festive fun for the whole family while exploring an extraordinary indoor garden atrium.

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# Early Thanksgiving for a Full House



Arlington Neighborhood Village (ANV) celebrates early Thanksgiving dinner with volunteers and members.



The dessert table is a "not to miss" at the annual Thanksgiving dinner.

PHOTOS BY SHIRLEY RUHE/THE CONNECTION

BY SHIRLEY RUHE  
ARLINGTON CONNECTION

**A**rlington Neighborhood Village (ANV) is celebrating Thanksgiving dinner Nov. 22 at St. Andrew's Episcopal Church. It is a cold, rainy night, but the parking lot is full. Wendy Zenker, Executive Director, says a number of the people attending the dinner don't have any relatives nearby so this is their Thanksgiving celebration.

Tables are set up for 150 volunteers, members of ANV as well as family and friends. Volunteers and members have brought the appetizers and desserts, and ANV has provided a regular turkey dinner with mashed potatoes and gravy and stuffing



Bobby A plays the blues at Thanksgiving dinner Nov. 22 at St. Andrew's Episcopal church on Lorcom Lane.

and all the trimmings. Noel Durman, a ANV volunteer says, "The desserts are usually a 'don't miss.'"

Bobby A, both a ANV member and a volunteer, is playing blues on the piano while the group gathers and chats before the buffet.

ANV is a network of neighbors helping neighbors who want to stay in their homes and age in place. It is a non-profit organization with services and educational programs provided by volunteers. ANV currently has 450 members and 285 active volunteers. Zenker says their membership now consists of 41 percent of low-income individuals, and as a result ANV offers discounted memberships.

ANV serves all of Arlington with members ranging

in age from 58 to 102 years old. ANV members pay an annual fee which covers a portion of the operating expenses and allows them to receive services from the volunteer base such as transportation, errands, friendly visits, daily check-ins. Zenker says the greatest need for volunteer assistance is for medical rides because they happen at a specific day and time.

She says most members are over 75 and have more significant needs. Other errands such as picking up groceries or trips to the post

office have time flexibility. Zenker says the volunteers also offer technology assistance such as how to work your phone or computer issues, "Not high tech, just meat and potatoes."

This concept of a village started in the Beacon Hill neighborhood of Boston in 1999. Today there are more than 350 villages including the Arlington Neighborhood Village which was incorporated as a nonprofit in Virginia in July 2013. For more information: [anvarlington.org](http://anvarlington.org)

## "FLOURISHING AFTER 55"

FROM PAGE 5

Lubber Run 55+ Center. Registration # 912300-01.

Introduction to basic Spanish begins Thursday, Dec. 5, 1 p.m., virtual. Class meets first and third Thursdays through Feb 20. Taught by Lubber Run 55+ Center Director Ashley Gomez. Registration #912650-06.

Light up the holidays with a painted wine

bottle filled with fairy lights, Thursday, Dec. 5, 10 a.m. – 12 p.m., Walter Reed 55+ Center. Supplies provided. Registration # 912310-02.

Artificial Intelligence (AI), blessing or curse, Thursday, Dec. 5, 2:30 p.m., virtual. Hear the latest developments, challenges and opportunities from Steve Ruth, retired GMU professor of Public Policy. Registration # 912403-01.

Secret lives of famous fakers, discuss biographies

of several well-known forgers and how they were caught, Thursday, Dec. 5, 9 a.m., virtual. Presented by Community Arts Programmer Jennifer Droblyen. Registration # 912302-01.

Old-time and string band jam, bring your banjo, guitar, fiddle, mandolin or dulcimer for an open jam, with volunteer Fred Winter, co-founder of NYC Old Time Music Project Thursday, Dec. 5, 5 p.m., Lubber Run 55+ Center. All skill levels welcome.. Registration # 912304-16.

Winter Piano Lounge with pianist Valerie Welsh and a hot beverage, Friday, Dec. 6, 1 p.m., Aurora Hills 55+ Center. Registration #912301-01.

55+ Travel group will visit the Smithsonian American Art Museum to view "Pictures of Belonging: Miki Hayakawa, Hisako Hibi and Mine Okubo" exhibit featuring the careers of three trailblazing women of Japanese descent, Friday, Dec. 6. Cost \$11, Arlington resident; \$13, non-resident. Registration # 902412-04.



**NOTICE OF WATER RATE AND BUDGET PUBLIC HEARING**

December 12, 2024 at 6:30 p.m.

At 6:30 p.m. on Thursday, December 12, 2024, Fairfax Water will conduct a public hearing on its Proposed Schedule of Rates, Fees, and Charges. The hearing will be held in Fairfax Water's offices at 8570 Executive Park Avenue, Fairfax, VA.

The proposed changes, to be effective April 1, 2025, include the following:

- An increase in the Availability Charge from \$4,800 to \$4,930\*.
- An increase in the Local Facilities Charge from \$22,910 to \$24,290.
- An increase in the Service Connection Charge from \$1,830 to \$1,840\*.
- An increase in the Account Charge from \$47 to \$48.
- An increase in the Quarterly Billing Service Charge from \$15.60 to \$16.55\*.
- An increase in the base Commodity Charge from \$3.84 to \$4.03 per 1,000 gallons of water.
- An increase in the Peak Use Charge from \$4.10 to \$4.15.
- An increase in the Turn Off / Turn On Charge from \$57 to \$58.
- An increase in the Fees for Use of Fairfax Water Fire Hydrants to include the increase in the Commodity Charge and Peak Use Charge.
- An increase in the Installation of Sewer Use Meter Charge Inspection Fee from \$46 to \$47.

\*Charges reflect fees associated with a standard 5/8" residential meter. Changes in charges for larger residential and commercial meters are reflected in the Proposed Schedule of Rates, Fees, and Charges.

Fairfax Water is also proposing a \$240 million budget for calendar year 2025.<sup>1</sup> Water sales are expected to provide \$209 million and the remaining \$31 million is expected from connection charges, investment income and other sources.

The major areas of operation and maintenance expense are:

Category	-- \$1,000s --	
	2024	2025
Personal Services & Employee Benefits	\$ 66,956	\$ 74,371
Power and Utilities	14,667	14,630
Chemicals	15,970	16,910
Purchased Water	7,713	9,013
Supplies and Materials	6,871	7,401
Insurance	1,507	1,558
Fuel	776	890
Postage	620	642
Contractual Services	12,667	14,194
Professional Services	1,191	1,940
Other	2,605	3,168
<b>Sub-Total</b>	<b>131,543</b>	<b>144,717</b>
Transfer to Improvement Fund	(11,014)	(12,005)
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 120,529</b>	<b>\$ 132,712</b>

Net revenues are expected to be appropriated as follows:

Debt Payment	\$49,871,656
Improvement Fund	\$11,000,000
General Fund	\$43,885,000

<sup>1</sup>Fairfax Water's Board will continue to monitor economic factors and review revenues and expenditures at mid-year to determine if additional action is needed.

A copy of the proposed changes can be viewed on our website at [fairfaxwater.org/rates](http://fairfaxwater.org/rates).

Those wishing to speak at this hearing or desiring a copy of the proposed changes should call Ms. Jessica Love at 703-289-6029. Interested parties may submit written comments to [PublicHearingComments@fairfaxwater.org](mailto:PublicHearingComments@fairfaxwater.org) or mail written comments to:

Fairfax Water  
Public Hearing Comments  
8570 Executive Park Avenue  
Fairfax, VA 22031

All written comments must be received by close of business on **Wednesday, December 11, 2024** to be included in the record of the public hearing.



# Long Bridge Groundbreaking Furthers New Era

## Bridge is flagship of Transforming Rail in Virginia Initiative.

The Virginia Passenger Rail Authority, with U.S. Secretary of Transportation Pete Buttigieg, U.S. Senators Tim Kaine and Mark Warner as well as U.S. Reps Gerry Connelly and Abigail Spanberger, participated in a groundbreaking ceremony for the state's Long Bridge Project on Oct. 15. This is the largest of the Commonwealth's Transforming Rail in Virginia projects, Long Bridge is a \$2.3 billion infrastructure improvement which will provide increased capacity for passenger rail over the Potomac River.

The new two-track railroad bridge will connect Arlington with Washington, DC allowing for the expansion of rail service which has been blocked by limited capacity to cross the river. Construction activities including site preparation will begin over the next few weeks with large-scale construction beginning in 2025. The project is scheduled for completion in 2030. The new bridge will be constructed adjacent to the existing bridge, a 119-year-old river crossing that currently operates at 98% capacity during peak periods, and will relieve one of the largest rail traffic bottlenecks on the East Coast. The new bridge will aid in separating passenger rail from freight rail, improving the on-time performance for both.

"In Virginia, our crippling traffic has truly become a bipartisan issue, and the Long Bridge groundbreaking represents our bipartisan solution," said DJ Stadtler, Executive Director of the VPRA. "But it's not just Virginians who will benefit. Travelers from Boston to Miami will feel the effects of this project." The Transforming Rail in Virginia initiative will add \$7.2 billion to the economy via VPRA's capital investments, according to VPRA.

When complete, TRV will enable the state's Amtrak Virginia service to offer a total of 13 daily round trips up from eight currently, traveling throughout the state and connecting to the Northeast Corridor.

tion from the Arlington County Board, this program is a collaboration between EcoAction Arlington and the Arlington County Forestry and Natural Resources Commission.

This partnership has successfully planted over 3,800 trees to create a greener, healthier Arlington for everyone to enjoy. Visit the website to apply <https://www.ecoactionarlington.org/community-programs/tree-program-overview/tree-canopy-program-tpp/>

## Get A Free Tree This Spring

Applications are open now through Jan. 7, 2025

EcoAction Arlington is committed to enhancing Arlington's tree canopy through a dedicated tree planting program funded in part by the Arlington County Tree Canopy Fund. Property owners, including those of single-family homes, townhouses, condos, and places of worship, can apply for a free native tree to be planted on their property.

Established in 2007 with authoriza-



# ENTERTAINMENT

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS VACANCIES

The Friends of Arlington's Planetarium seeks to fill three vacancies on its 2025 Board of Directors. Interested candidates seeking information and an application can find details on the FOAP Elections web page. The deadline for submission is Dec. 31, 2024.

## CENTERS FOR OPPORTUNITY ARLINGTON

The Centers for Opportunity Arlington is a safe, stigma-free place to spend time for those recovering from homelessness, substance use, and mental illness. It has a donation closet that needs adult clothing and shoes. Some participants at the Center are looking for jobs and need the proper attire. Located at 3219 Columbia Pike, Suite 101, Arlington. Contact Greg, Program Coordinator at 703-567-1346.

## VOLUNTEER FOR ARLINGTON'S COMMUNITY AMBASSADOR PROGRAM

Arlington Neighborhood Village, in partnership with Arlington County and Marymount University, has started the Community Ambassador Program (CAP). CAP is a volunteer fueled system that identifies "Ambassadors" connected with civic associations, faith communities, senior centers, apartment buildings, etc. These individuals will be trained to be a reliable source of information about the many opportunities available to older adults in Arlington.

Ambassadors will spread the word about programs and support services, opportunities for social and civic engagement, and educational and enrichment activities for older adults in their own neighborhoods. They are actively recruiting ambassadors to act as a bridge between their community and the Arlington safety net, providing information and soliciting feedback to improve offerings that help older adults remain safe, independent, engaged, and connected to their community. Contact [cap@anvarlington.org](mailto:cap@anvarlington.org) if this is something you are interested in or want to learn more. Let's work together to create a supported and connected community for all ages!

Receive Support Services  
Are you a senior in Arlington? Do you need support services but don't know where to look? Are you looking for fun and enriching activities in Arlington? Email or call 703-509-8057 and they will connect you with an Ambassador.

## UNTIL JAN. 26, 2025

**Assembly 2024: Horizon Scanning Exhibit.** At the Museum of Contemporary Art, Arlington. The exhibition is organized by MoCA Arlington Curator of Exhibitions Blair Murphy and guest curator Jared Packard. Launched in 2019, Assembly highlights current material and conceptual trends among contemporary artists. Since 2022, the exhibition has had a national focus, showcasing work by some of the country's rising stars and giving them a platform on the doorstep of the nation's capital. Assembly 2024: Horizon Scanning opens on the eve of the presidential election, four miles from the center of Washington, DC. In this time of multiple, overlapping, and seemingly perpetual crises, and



"A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum" can be seen Oct. 29 to Jan. 12, 2025 at Signature Theatre in Arlington.

with that proximity in mind, the exhibition brings together artists whose work can help us grapple with our tumultuous present by offering strategies to navigate and reimagine the future.

## OCT. 29 TO JAN. 12

**"A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum."** At Signature Theatre, Shirlington, Arlington. It's a comedy night in Sondheim's zany, hysterical, Tony Award-winning musical romp. In one of the greatest musical comedies of all time, three households reside next to each other in ancient Rome. Just outside their doors, the exploits of a quick-thinking Roman slave, a braggart soldier, a beautiful courtesan, a lovesick young man and others devolve into uproarious chaos in a fast-paced, witty and monumental escapade. With mistaken identities, wily ruses, madcap chases, a love story, and a happy ending of course, "A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum's" audacious and irreverent spectacle has something for everyone.

## THURSDAY/NOV. 28

**Arlington Turkey Trot 2024, Official Start Time 8 a.m. Thanksgiving Day.**

Start Line directly in front of Lyon Park Community Center, <https://arlingtonvatourkeytrot.org/>

## MONDAY/DEC. 2

**Mother Mary: Monday Night Play Reading.** 7 pm. At Signature Theatre, Arlington. In 1968, lesbian Puerto Rican taxi driver Jo Cruz knows the streets of Boston like the back of her hand, but no road map can prepare her for meeting Mary O'Sullivan, an Irish Catholic school teacher with a boyfriend. Despite rising tensions between their communities, Mary and Jo start connecting over daily rides to work and sparks fly. But their friendship takes a turn when Mary discovers she is pregnant and the two embark on a risky road trip to obtain an abortion in this romcom about choice and the women who choose.

## TUESDAY/DEC. 3

**Sip & Jingle.** 5-7 p.m. At The Commentary, Westin Arlington Gate-

way, 801 N. Glebe Road, Arlington. Presented by the Ballston BID. Join in food, drinks, games and networking. Come dressed to impress for our Ugly Sweater Contest with incredible prizes, and don't forget to bring a toy for the Fill the Cruiser toy drive with Arlington County Police Department.

## DEC. 5-8

**Brighten Your Season.** At Central Place Plaza, Rosslyn. Celebrate the holidays with Rosslyn Cheer! A fun lineup of events and more holiday happenings to get you into the holiday spirit. 1800 N Lynn St, Arlington, VA 22209

Light the Plaza: Thursday, Dec. 5, 5-8 p.m.

Santa Paws Yappy Hour: Friday, Dec. 6, 5-7 p.m.

Holiday Market: Saturday, Dec. 7 and Sunday, Dec 8, 10 a.m.-3 p.m.

## DEC. 6 AND 13

**Free Classical Music.** The Friday Morning Music Club invites everyone to classical music concerts the first and second Fridays of the month at Saint George's Church, 915 N. Oakland St., one block from Virginia Square Metro Station. The program for December 6 features Karg-Elert's Suite Pointillistique for solo flute and Shostakovich's Piano Trio in E minor. The program December 13 includes a cello solo performance of Boccherini's Concerto in G Major; Schubert's piano Impromptu in B-flat Major, and the virtuoso Fantaisie brillante sur 'Carmen' for solo flute. The one-hour concerts start at noon. Free, no ticket required. Visit [fmmc.org](http://fmmc.org)

## SATURDAY/DEC. 7

**Enchant: A Family Holiday Concert by the Arlington Chorale.** 5 p.m. At Westover Baptist Church, 1125 Patrick Henry Drive, Arlington. Join in an enchanting concert that will warm your heart and spark your holiday spirit! Immerse yourself in the joy and wonder of the season as the Arlington Chorale brings beloved holiday classics to life. From festive carols to spirited sing-alongs, this concert is a celebration of love, togetherness, and the enchantment of the holiday season. Let the music transport you to a world of winter wonder with snow-covered landscapes and the

joyous laughter of children. Tickets and more information at [arlington-chorale.org](http://arlington-chorale.org)

## DEC. 7-8

**Holiday Gift Nook.** At Arlington Central Library, 1015 N. Quincy St., Arlington. Shopping Hours Saturday 10 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.; Sunday 10 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

How it works: Pick up a coupon before entering the shop and exchange it for one item. You may return for additional tickets, while supplies and inventory last. Visit the gift-wrapping station to personalize and wrap your gift(s). Check out other Library gift-making and wrapping programs.

## SATURDAY/DEC. 14

**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. The headliner for December's show is the hilarious Lucas Craig.

## DEC. 14-15

**Jane Franklin Dance.** 7 p.m. Saturday and 4 p.m. Sunday. At Theatre on the Run, 3700 S. Four Mile Run Drive, Arlington. Jane Franklin Dance will close 2024 at the intimate black box venue Theatre on the Run, with commissioned works by six choreographers. Tickets: \$23 through Dec 13. (\$25 on Dec 14, 15 and at the door). Visit the website: <https://janefranklin.com/performances>.

## SATURDAY/DEC. 14

**Holiday Cheer.** 7:30 p.m. At Unitarian Universalist Church of Arlington, 4444 Arlington Blvd., Arlington. The National Chamber Ensemble returns with their beloved 'Holiday Cheer' concert. This event has become a holiday tradition enjoyed by all faiths and anyone who loves the finest classical and holiday favorites of the season. Star soprano Sharon Christman and the winners of NCE's Outstanding Young Artist Award string competition will captivate the audience with their performances. The concert

concludes with a Carols-Sing-Along inviting everyone to join the spirit of music and song.

## OCT. 31 TO DEC. 8

**Susan J. Goldman Exhibit.** At The Athenaeum, 201 Prince Street, Alexandria. Artist talk, Saturday, November 30, 1 p.m.

## OCT. 24 TO DEC. 21

**"A Focus on Nature."** At Coldwell Banker Realty, 310 King Street, Alexandria. Art exhibit featuring the nature-themed photographs of Steven Halperson and mosaics of Nina Tisara. Steven Halperson, Tisara Photography, has over 30 years' experience in portrait and event photography. For this exhibit, he is returning to his roots in fine art photography and making use of digital camera software to create strikingly beautiful images. Nina Tisara retired from the photography studio in 2007 and began creating intricate mosaics which are now widely exhibited and collected. Nina is the founder of Living Legends of Alexandria. A portion of all sales will be donated to the Coldwell Banker Realty Cares Foundation, a program that helps support selected nonprofits in Alexandria and throughout the Mid-Atlantic region. For additional information, contact Rachel Carter, [RCarter@cbmove.com](mailto:RCarter@cbmove.com) or Nina Tisara, [Ninat@ninatisara.com](mailto:Ninat@ninatisara.com).

## NOV. 1 TO DEC. 1

**Del Ray Artisans "\$100 & Under" exhibit.** At Del Ray Artisans Gallery, 2704 Mount Vernon Ave., Alexandria. Showcases members' artwork all priced at \$100 or less. The art is sold on an art-to-go basis. The gallery walls are packed with great art at prices all art-lovers can afford. Opening Reception: Friday, November 1, 7-9pm. Open Thursdays 12-6pm, Fridays 12-9pm, Saturdays & Sundays 12-6pm. Closed Thanksgiving Day. Details: [DelRayArtisans.org/exhibits](http://DelRayArtisans.org/exhibits)

## NOV. 10 TO DEC. 10

**Pope-Leighey House Tours.** 12-1 p.m. At Woodlawn & Pope-Leighey House, 9000 Richmond Highway, Alexandria. By 1941, the year Pope-Leighey House was completed, Frank Lloyd Wright had studied Japan for almost a half-century. He had become a serious collector of woodblock prints--even writing a book on the subject--and had won acclaim for his design of the Tokyo Imperial Hotel, one of the few buildings to survive the Great Kanto Earthquake of 1923. On this special tour, visitors will discover how the famous American architect incorporated his love of Japanese art, architecture, and philosophy into Usonian homes, and how this East Asian influence shines in Wright's Pope-Leighey House.

## FRIDAY/NOV. 29

**Plaid Friday Alexandria.** Alexandria's 50 Small Business Black Friday returns for another holiday season to highlight and celebrate Alexandria's iconic array of independent businesses. Known as the top destination for locally owned retail, 50 participating businesses are asking customers to shift their shopping this holiday season by kicking off Black Friday shopping at Alexan

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[WWW.CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM](http://WWW.CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM)



# Turkey Week is Here At Last

FROM PAGE 3

lining the highest number of families ever served—183,558. This is a 30.5 percent increase over 2023, which had seen a 29.4 percent increase over 2022. In FY 2023 AFAC overspent its purchased food budget by \$664,929 and last year overspent the purchased food budget by another \$1 million. In September, AFAC served 5,444 unique families made up of 13,784 individuals, of whom 3,173 were children.

On the second day of Turkey Week, Meng received word that the County had allocated AFAC \$750,000 of the County's 2024 close out funds. "This will go a long way to solve the problem." Meng says last year AFAC got several unexpected estate gifts allowing them to balance the budget. "People in this community are exceedingly supportive." But he explains, "Someone saved us last year, and the County saved us this year but this just shifts the worry to next year."

AFAC donation boxes are everywhere you look around Arlington for collection of non-perishable food. AFAC has a list on their website of most requested items including canned tuna, tomatoes, beans, soups, peanut butter and cereal. "We offer different kinds of dried beans since varying cultures have their preferences." Meng says AFAC likes to get monetary donations since they need specific foods to offer and are able to buy food in quantities less expensively. But some things are too expensive to buy like peanut butter and cereal. "There are a lot of kids, and cereal flies off the shelves."

Smith says, "We keep overspending but we won't turn anyone away. So far, we've made it, knock on wood." She explains that



PHOTO BY SHIRLEY RUHE/THE CONNECTION

Warehouse workers take a break from loading, sorting and unpacking produce for distribution to low-income families.

we have a solid base of people giving money, and they are giving more. "We are lucky. I think people understand food. They go to the grocery store and they see the grocery prices. People give more when they hurt themselves."

Two more days of Turkey Week but the need will continue. Meng predicts the number of families served may reach 4,400 during the holiday season. To contribute, [afac.org](http://afac.org).

## BULLETIN BOARD

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

### 2024 ARLINGTON TURKEY TROT 19TH ANNUAL FUN RUN

The Arlington Turkey Trot 19th Annual Fun Run will take place on Thursday, November 28, 2024. The Arlington County Police Department will conduct the following road closures from approximately 7:30 a.m. until 11:00 a.m. to accommodate the race:

- N. Pershing Drive from N. Edgewood Street to N. Piedmont Street
- N. Oxford Street from N. Pershing Drive to 4th Street N.
- N. Oakland Street from N. Pershing Drive to Columbia Gardens Cemetery Side Entrance
- 4th Street N. from N. Oxford Street to N. Nelson Street
- N. Irving Street from 9th Street N. to 2nd Road N.
- 2nd Road N. from N. Irving Street to Columbia Gardens Cemetery Side Entrance
- 9th Street N. from N. Irving Street to N. Highland Street
- N. Highland Street from 9th Street N. to 1st

- Street N.
- 1st Street N. from N. Highland Street to N. Fillmore Street
- N. Fillmore Street from 1st Street N. to N. Pershing Drive

### DONATIONS NEEDED

Pet Food Bank. AWLA has established a Pet Food Bank to serve qualifying residents of Arlington County and the City of Falls Church. In consideration of the effect financial obstacles have on a pet owner's ability to afford pet care, the AWLA Pet Food Bank program's goal is to keep family pets out of shelters. If you are an Arlington County or City of Falls Church resident and are in need of assistance in feeding your pet, follow this link and fill out a pre-registration form. Visit [goo.gl/forms/s2FuFdaYWdZm4tPw2](http://goo.gl/forms/s2FuFdaYWdZm4tPw2).

Donations Needed. Our Lady Queen of Peace Catholic Church, 2700 South 19th St., is seeking to replenish its food pantry. Particularly needed are rice (large bags appreciated, the pantry will rebag), dry beans, canned vegetables, soup, small jars of peanut butter, small jars of jelly, pasta and pasta sauce. Donations are collected during Mass each Sunday. Visit [www.ourladyqueenofpeace.org](http://www.ourladyqueenofpeace.org) for more.

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**Legals**

**ABC LICENSE**  
Coworking Solutions Llc trading as Three Whistles, 2719 Wilson Blvd, Arlington, Arlington County, Virginia 22201. 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. Ramzy Azar, Owner & 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.

**Legals**

AT&T Mobility, LLC is proposing to modify the existing 130-foot-tall (132-foot overall height) transmission tower telecommunications facility located at 1730 North Roosevelt Street, Arlington, Arlington County, VA 22205 (N38° 53' 5.4" and W77° 09' 16.4"). AT&T Mobility, LLC invites comments from any interested party on the impact the proposed undertaking may have on any districts, sites, buildings, structures, or objects significant in American history, archaeology, engineering, or culture that are listed or determined eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under National Historic Preservation Act Section 106. Parties interested in commenting on this Federal undertaking or with questions on the proposed facility should contact Eocene at 8951 Windsor Parkway, Johnston, IA 50131 or call 515-473-6256 and reference project #NE 1268/JC. Comments must be received within 30 days of the date of this notice.

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# ENTERTAINMENT

FROM PAGE 8

dria boutiques for steals and deals on Friday, November 29. Several participating businesses will open at 6 a.m. For more details on participating businesses and special offers, visit [plaidfriday-ALX.com](http://plaidfriday-ALX.com).

## SUNDAY/DEC. 1

**8th Annual Old Town Tuba Christmas.** Presented by WMPA - Washington Metropolitan Philharmonic Association. 3 p.m. At Market Square/Old Town Farmers Market by City Hall, Alexandria. Free. Christmas carols and holiday tunes with tubaists of all ages. Free.

## MONDAY/DEC. 2

**Annual Holiday Party.** 6-8 p.m. At Good Shepherd Lutheran Church, 100 W. Luray Ave., Alexandria. Friends of Guest House welcomes you to join in the annual holiday party. This is an opportunity to enjoy a community meal with the board, staff, and women of Guest House. If you volunteered in the past year, supported them with a financial gift or would like to join the mission in the future, you are welcome to attend!

## TUESDAY/DEC. 3

**Yoga Nidra.** 10:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. At Woodlawn & Pope-Leighey House, 9000 Richmond Highway, Alexandria. Experience Pope-Leighey House in a unique way through Yoga Nidra, a type of guided meditation that allows participants to achieve deeper states of relaxation. Cost: \$25. Visit the website: <https://www.woodlawnpope-leighey.org/upcoming-events/2024/12/3/yoga-nidra>

## DEC. 6 - 8

**Alexandria's iconic holiday weekend.** Taste of Scotland. Friday, Dec. 6. The 53rd Annual Alexandria Scottish Christmas Walk Parade is Saturday, Dec. 7, followed by the 24th Annual Alexandria Holiday Boat Parade of Lights. <https://visitallexandria.com/holidays/biggest-weekend/>

## FRIDAY/DEC. 6

**Taste of Scotland Event.** 6:30-10:30 p.m. At The Atrium, 277 S. Washington Street, Alexandria. Campagna Center and partners will celebrate the Scottish Christmas Walk Weekend from December 6 - 7, 2024. This holiday party always occurs on the Friday before the Scottish Christmas Walk parade and offers guests the chance to sample Scotland via its distinct spirit, Scotch, as well as to enjoy delicious catering, music, and entertainment, with all proceeds supporting the non-profit's work. For the past 50 years, Campagna Center, which is committed to improving the lives of Alexandria's children and families through a variety of impactful programs that promote learning and growth for everyone, has embraced the Scottish-filled event as tradition. Visit the website: <https://www.campagnacenter.org>.



The 8th Annual Old Town Tuba Christmas takes place on Sunday, Dec. 1, 2024 in Alexandria.

## DEC. 6-21

**Holiday Tours.** 5-7:30 p.m. At Woodlawn & Pope-Leighey House, 9000 Richmond Highway, Alexandria. Tour the Pope-Leighey House during special evening tours and see the home decorated for a mid-century holiday. Tours are offered Dec. 6, 7, 13, 14, 20, 21, with tours every half hour between 5 and 7 p.m. Space is limited, advance registration is recommended. Cost: \$20. Visit the website <https://www.woodlawnpope-leighey.org>

## DEC. 6-22

**29th Annual Holiday Market.** At 2704 Mount Vernon Avenue, Alexandria. Del Ray Artisans 29th Annual Holiday Market offers unique handmade fine arts and crafts from local artists. Choose from wall art, pottery, photography, jewelry, glass, and much more! Plus 2025 wall calendars support Del Ray Artisans nonprofit. Free admission. Holiday Market is the first three weekends in December (Dec 6-8, Dec 13-15, Dec 20-22). Different artists each weekend! Open Fridays 6-9 p.m., Saturdays 9 a.m.-5 p.m. and Sundays 11 a.m.-5 p.m. Details: [DelRayArtisans.org/holiday-market-2024](https://www.delrayartisans.org/holiday-market-2024)

## SATURDAY/DEC. 7

**Holiday Parade Day.** Alexandria's two signature holiday parades starting with the 53rd Annual Alexandria Scottish Christmas Walk Parade sponsored by Wegmans at 11 a.m. followed by the 24th Annual Alexandria Holiday Boat Parade of Lights sponsored by Amazon at 5:30 p.m., with riverside festivities for the whole family starting at 2 p.m.

## SATURDAY/DEC. 7

**Fall Book Sale.** 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. At Kate Waller Barrett Branch Library, 717 Queen Street, Alexandria. The Friends of Barrett Library will hold their annual Fall Book Sale. Come browse a great selection of fiction, nonfiction, and children's books, as well as DVDs and CDs. Prices are \$3 for hardbacks, \$2 for paperbacks, and vary for special volumes and collections. Info: (703) 746-1703.

## SATURDAY/DEC. 7

**Used Book Sale:** 10 a.m. - 4 p.m. at Sherwood Regional Library, 2501 Sherwood Hall Lane, Alexandria. Selection of over 20,000 gently used children's books, fiction, history, biography, home and garden, cooking, crafts, sports, religion, travel, CDs, DVDs, and more. Unless specially priced, \$1 for hard backs and large paperbacks, and 25 cents for mass market paperbacks. Visit <https://www.fairfax-county.gov/library/branches/friends-of-sherwood-regional>.

## SATURDAY/DEC. 7

**Support Youth Musicians.** WMPA - Washington Metropolitan Philharmonic Association. 3 p.m. At Bishop Ireton High School, 201 Cambridge Road, Alexandria. Join both the Washington Metropolitan Youth Orchestra and the Washington Metropolitan Concert Orchestra as they perform. The program offers a variety of music: Hoffmeister Viola Concerto, Mvt. I - Isayah Reed, soloist Seitz Viola Concerto, Mvt. I - Tate Commission, soloist Capriol Suite - Peter Warlock Slavonic Dance in C - Furiant - Antonin Dvořák. Free.

## SUNDAY/DEC. 8

## Holiday Dreams Orchestra

**Concert.** 3 p.m. At the George Washington Masonic National Memorial, 101 Callahan Street, Alexandria. Washington Metropolitan Philharmonic performs with the Alexandria Choral Society. Duke Ellington's "Nutcracker Suite" headlines, under the baton of Music Director Anna Binneweg. This concert promises to transport the audience into a realm of festive delight, "Holiday Dreams" offers a captivating blend of seasonal cheer and musical charm. Grace-Evangeline Mason's "The Imagined Forest" sets a magical tone, weaving together melodies that evoke the spirit of the holidays. Tickets \$35 adults, \$30 seniors, 18 & under just \$5.

## BREAKFAST WITH SANTA

**At Joe Theismann's Restaurant.** 8 a.m. Located at 1800A Diagonal Road, Alexandria. Dates: Saturday, Dec. 7, 14, 21; Sunday, Dec. 8, 15, 22. This holiday season, create unforgettable memories with Breakfast with Santa in the enchanting Old Town Alexandria at Joe Theismann's Restaurant. Start with a festive family-style breakfast featuring delectable options like french toast, smoked salmon, and tater tots. Children will love the take-home treats and a magical moment meeting Santa Claus, complete with a keepsake photo. Adults can indulge in bottomless Prosecco bellinis or classic mimosas for \$15. Babies join for free, while kids are \$29.50 plus tax and adults are \$53 plus tax.

## BREAKFAST WITH SANTA

**At Mia's Italian Kitchen.** 8 a.m. Located at 100 King Street, Alexandria. Dates are Saturday, Dec. 7, 14, 21; Sunday, Dec. 8, 15, 22. Celebrate the season with a festive breakfast feast featuring a delicious spread served family-style, including breakfast pastry & bagel basket, smoked salmon, and scrambled eggs. At Mia's Italian Kitchen, children will enjoy take-home treats and a magical visit with Santa Claus, complete with a keepsake photo that captures the Christmas spirit. Adults can enjoy bottomless classic mimosas and Prosecco bellinis for \$18. Babies join for free, while kids are \$34 plus tax and adults are \$57 plus tax.

## BREAKFAST WITH SANTA

**At Ada's on the River.** 8 a.m. Located at 3 Pioneer Mill Way, Alexandria. Dates are: Saturday, Dec. 7, 14, 21; Sunday, Dec. 8, 15, 22. Join Ada's on the River for a festive breakfast feast, where you'll enjoy a delicious family-style spread including breakfast pastries, pancakes, yogurt parfait, and tater tots. Children will receive take-home treats and a magical visit with Santa Claus, complete with a keepsake photo that captures the Christmas spirit. Adults can indulge in classic mimosas, bellinis, or Prosecco. Adults can indulge in bottomless Prosecco bellinis or classic mimosas for \$15. Babies join for free, while kids are \$29.50 plus tax and adults are \$53 plus tax.

## Tick, Tick, Tick



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

After picking three ticks off myself yesterday afternoon, including one so embedded in my upper right arm, my wife, Dina practically had to dig it out with an "entrenching tool," to invoke a phrase from 1970's comedy troupe, "The Firesign Theater," I am once again reminded of the risk/disease associated with ticks: Lyme disease. Having known a few friends "diseased" with Lyme and likewise having heard and read multiple first-person accounts of life with Lyme, I'd just as soon skip the experience. Moreover, I can't imagine that being an active thyroid cancer patient with kidney issues would likely simplify my treatment. A treatment which has continued for nearly 16 years with ups, downs and all-arounds and has seen me outlive my original "13 months to two years" prognosis by leaps and bounds. 'Leaps and bounds' which likely would have been almost impossible if I had been afflicted with Lyme, on top of my underlying morbidity - as is the medical jargon for complications - now papillary thyroid cancer, with a side of chronic kidney disease, with a GFR at stage 3b, a stage or two above the threshold for dialysis. A possible development which scares the s\*\*\* out of me.

In addition, there's another variable, though hardly unique to me, which increases the likelihood of yours truly being subjected to this very unpleasant experience: Burton the dog. He must go out. We don't have a fenced-in yard. And even though he's almost always on a leash, our neighborhood is very woody and I'm guessing the trees, and all make for a very inviting and hospitable environment for ticks. I don't see much tick-mitigation going on under the power lines behind our house or above the fuel pipeline bordering our property. In short, it's tick central over here and every time I walk Burton (four to five times a day), I feel like there's a ticking time bomb ready to explode - with my name on it, and infect me with this most insidious and hard-to-defeat disease - despite the deet that I'm spraying on myself as I prepare to venture into our "backwoods."

What I really need to do is inject myself with anti-tick venom. Or maybe take the deet internally? Now that Trump is back in The White House - or soon will be, perhaps he'll sign an executive order co-signed with Robert F. Kennedy Jr. authorizing the treatment, so long as Dr. Deborah Bix has not been rehired to lead the newly-authorized tick-elimination group. She might veto this bleach injection-type treatment on the grounds that it's ill-advised, shall we say. Besides, we've all been there and done that during the pandemic, so I don't foresee a repeat of this similar-sounding solution. But Trump has returned/prevailed to be president for another four years and with his hands on the tiller, surrounded by legions of sycophants, there may be very little that anybody governing for the other team, can do. But I semi digress. The issue is Lyme disease and the consequence of animals being vaccinated against it while their human owners are left to fend for themselves and as a result, must constantly look over their body for ticks and be sure to have a ready supply of "Off" on hand.

All kidding aside, I don't know why there isn't a Lyme disease vaccine for humans. My dog is vaccinated against Lyme. Why not me? In fact, he's due Jan. 16, 2025, for a renewal. As is said about the goose and the gander, isn't it true that what's good enough/appropriate for the dog is good enough/appropriate for the dog owner? Granted, one wouldn't want to be injected with animal vaccine but is bleach somehow better? Do we take better care of our dogs than we do ourselves? After all, dogs are so dependent on their owners for food, water, and overall health and welfare - not to mention bathroom breaks, that shouldn't us dog owners receive similar preventive treatment to assure our availability? I love my dog and I'm sure he loves me (despite his getting neutered last week), but if I'm unable to provide the same T.L.C. as he's come to expect, we all lose.

Maybe what's needed to guarantee me, and my pet's simultaneous good health/Lyme disease-free existence is for President-to-be Trump to create a new cabinet level department: Dept. of Veterinary Affairs? Perhaps he could fund it with some of the savings that will accrue in the budget with the dismantling of the Dept. of Education? I imagine it would make us pet owners, regardless of party affiliation safe and secure. And isn't that what the government is supposed to do?

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





PHOTO BY LARRY MEADE

A male or tom turkey.



PHOTO BY RANDY STREUFERT

Two tom and two hen turkeys.



PHOTO BY DIXIE SOMMERS

Turkey in the Dyke Marsh Wildlife Preserve.



PHOTO BY GLENDA BOOTH

A Quander Road family is in the Thanksgiving mood.



PHOTO BY RANDY STREUFERT

A male turkey displaying.



PHOTO BY RANDY STREUFERT

A turkey's head is red, white and blue.

# Turkeys Indoors and Out

BY GLENDA C. BOOTH  
ARLINGTON CONNECTION

**T**hey're not those big white, puffed-out gobblers in kids' storybooks, but wild turkeys are exciting a few lucky Northern Virginians who've spotted these birds ambling about and pecking around lately.

Mount Vernonite Laurie Shirey recently glimpses two turkeys poking around Grist Mill Park's soccer field. At Huntley Meadows Park, visitors on the Cedar Trail have seen male turkeys out in the woods. Larry Meade, president of the Northern Virginia Bird Club, spotted some at Occoquan Bay National Wildlife Refuge and another observer nearly ran off Belle Haven Road watching a turkey pecking the ground between the road and the Belle Haven Golf Course.

Northern Virginians see wild turkeys in parks, cemeteries and occasionally neighborhoods, but the birds' preferred habitats are woodlands and open clearings. When they forage, they scratch in the leaf litter and feed on acorns, seeds, berries, grass blades and sometimes frogs and snakes.

## The "Grandest of Game Birds"

The National Wild Turkey Federation has this description of *Meleagris gallopavo*, the North American wild turkey's scientific name: "Considered among the grandest of game birds, the American wild turkey has many characteristics that distinguish it from other fowl. The unmistakable snood, caruncles, head color and beard truly set it apart." Turkeys also have wattles, hocks, shanks and spurs, anatomical terms that send many people to the dictionary.

Editor's note: Or in this case, Wikipedia:

In turkeys, the term caruncles usually refers to small, bulbous, fleshy protuberances found on the head, neck and throat, with larger structures particularly at the bottom of the throat. The wattle is a flap of skin hanging under the chin connecting the throat and head and the snood is a highly erectile appendage emanating from the forehead. Both sexes of turkey possess caruncles, although they are more pronounced in the male. Usually they are pale, but when the male becomes excited or during courtship, the caruncles,

wattle and snood all engorge with blood, become bright red or blue, and enlarge.

Virginia's wild turkeys weigh around 17-19 pounds. They typically mate in the spring and the females, called "hens," lay eggs in mid-April. Their young hatch in early June. Turkeys gobble to announce their presence, according to Josh Honeycutt in *Outdoor Life*. They also cluck, cackle, yelp and purr, he notes.

In the early 20th century, turkeys vanished from two-thirds of Virginia and hit a population low between 1880 and 1910. Managers took several steps to increase the population.

Virginia's turkey population is around 180,000 today, reports the state's Department of Wildlife Resources (DWR), with the highest densities in the Tidewater, South Mountain and South Piedmont regions of the state. There are around seven million turkeys in North America, according to the National Wildlife Federation.

Fairfax County has a "very low density" of turkeys, 0.26 per square mile, DWR surveys show. High-density counties, like some

in southeastern Virginia, have 0.92 turkeys per square mile.

Last year, Dino Grandoni wrote for the *Washington Post*, "Once-common [bird] species, like the turkey, are becoming less common, a distressing signal about the way humans are warming the planet and altering the environment."

Asked about turkey population trends, "The turkey story is a bit complicated," emailed Mike Dye, a DWR upland gamebird biologist. "Reproduction indices have been down across the eastern portion of the range for quite some time and survival data indicates that our turkeys may have a tough go of it as an adult."

Turkeys use closed canopy forests and open fields, but he explains that the scrub, shrub and early successional habitats that turkeys need to nest and raise their young are declining. "If we don't have an abundance of that habitat, turkeys will not be able to flourish," he wrote.

He said that DWR officials have some "concerns with decreased productivity in portions of the state." He has seen swings in populations over fairly short periods of time, citing localized habitat

changes and local weather patterns during nesting and brood rearing season.

He summarizes that DWR data show stable populations. "But if we look through the larger landscape context, we see turkeys doing well in some areas while struggling a bit in other areas. Overall, the population changes often offset and we see stable population metrics, but may be seeing some localized population concerns."

## Franklin's Favorite

When eyeing that plastic-wrapped, supermarket butterball, it's hard to realize that many adult turkeys in the wild are actually quite beautiful. Their iridescent dark copper, bronze, red and green feathers shine in the sun. A male's droppings are j-shaped; a female's, spiral-shaped. And NWF offers, "They reach up to 55 mph flying and 25 mph running."

Perhaps it was intriguing facts like those that led American Revolutionary leader Benjamin Franklin, in comparing the turkey to the bald eagle, to dub the turkey, "a much more respectable Bird," ever boldly at-the-ready to attack a "Grenadier of the British Guards."