

The Arlington Connection

Salwa Abulghaith and Jedeilliza Escobel, Seniors at Washington-Liberty High School, volunteered at the Free Pop Up Shop on Sunday, Feb. 2.

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PHOTO BY EDEN BROWN/THE CONNECTION



Heartbreak
After DCA Crash
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Keeping
Fast Fashion
Out of Landfills
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67 Dead After Airplane Collides with Army Helicopter

Wreckage and passengers plunge into the Potomac River.

BY JAMES LIBRESCO AND NOAH STERNBERG
THE CONNECTION

Officials said there are no survivors after a commercial jet with 64 passengers and an Army helicopter carrying three soldiers collided shortly before 9 p.m. on Jan. 29 outside of Ronald Reagan National Airport (DCA) in Arlington and plummeted into the Potomac River.

An Alexandria Police Department dispatch at exactly 9 p.m. described the event as a “mass casualty incident” and deployed Alexandria fireboats and ambulances.

An initial investigation by the Federal Aviation Administration found that air traffic controller staffing at Reagan National Airport during the crash was “not normal for the time of day and volume of traffic,” according to the New York Times. One air traffic controller was covering two different positions at the time of the collision, but a former FAA air traffic manager, told CNN this was a common practice. The airport reopened the day following the crash and is at full operational capacity, though several airlines canceled some scheduled flights.

The airport had 19 fully certified controllers as of September 2023, according to a report to Congress, which is well below the FAA’s target of 30. But as one of his first actions as president, Donald J. Trump froze hiring for groups of federal employees including air traffic control personnel. Trump, at a press conference in the White House, blamed Barack Obama, Joe Biden and diversity, equity and inclusion initiatives for the crash.

Washington’s Fire Chief John Donnelly confirmed the worst possible scenario at a separate Thursday morning press conference.

“We don’t believe there are any survivors,” he said, adding that “extremely frigid conditions,” including “heavy wind” and “ice on the water,” made the rescue operation difficult to manage.

Horrifying audio from the police scanner



PHOTO BY NOAH STERNBERG/THEOGONY

Officials used a floating crane Feb. 7 to remove the wreckage of American Airlines flight 5342 and the Black Hawk helicopter that collided midair.

“Three of our FCPS students and six of our FCPS parents were lost, affecting multiple schools and departments here at FCPS. Two of the parents were current or former FCPS staff members. Multiplying the grief are the siblings” and others ...

— Michelle Reid, superintendent, FCPS

the previous night revealed that divers found multiple people still buckled into their seats. As of Feb. 2, 55 victims have been identified, Donnelly said at a press conference. Donnelly said that after officials extracted the plane the following day, they would be able to “recover everyone.” That task was complete on Tuesday, Feb. 4.

Three students and six parents — including two school officials — from Fairfax County Public Schools were on the fatal flight, with several returning from a figure skating camp, according to a statement from the FCPS superintendent of schools.

It is still unclear if any Alexandria residents were involved in the crash.

“Our prayers are with everyone affected,” said Alyia Gaskins, Alexandria’s mayor, in a statement. “This devastating loss is felt by all of us.”

This article was first published in *Theogony*, Alexandria City High School’s student-run newspaper.

SENIOR LIVING

Flourishing After 55

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

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.

Opera appreciation, the spotlight

is on composer Richard Wagner’s “Die Walkure,” the second of his Ring Cycle, Wednesday, Feb. 5, 1:30 p.m., Lubber Run 55+ Center. Volunteer George Cecchetti provides professional commentary. Registration # 912300-05

Music from The Sondheim Songbook performed by pianist Ken Schellenberg and singers Judy Lewis and Jane Petkovsky, Wednesday, Feb. 5, 2:30 p.m., Aurora Hills 55+ Center. Registration # 912301-09.

Birds wintering in Arlington and how to support migratory birds, Wednesday, Feb. 5, 5 p.m., Arling-

ton Mill 55+ Center. Presented by volunteers from Arlington Regional Master Naturalists. Registration # 912400-26.

55+ Travel group will tour the National Museum of African 02.American History and Culture, D.C., Wednesday, Feb. 5. Cost \$11, Arlington resident; \$13, non-resident. Registration # 902502-

Black History Month program, “107th U.S. Colored Troops in Arlington, presented by local history expert John McNair, Thursday, Feb. 6, 3 p.m., virtual. Registration # 912400-09.

Strategic competition in Africa and U.S. efforts to promote democracy and peace through the integration of elements of national power, Thursday, Feb. 6, 2:30 p.m., virtual. Registration # 912400-35. Presented by Opher Heymann, a student at the U.S. Army War College.

Pianist Ken Schellenberg and singers Judy Lewis and Jane Petrovsky will perform music composed by Stephen Sondheim, Thursday, Feb. 6, 1 p.m., Walter Reed 55+ Center. Registration # 912301-10.

Paint along with Community Arts Pro-

grammers Jennifer Droblyen and Jim Halloran and recreate artwork on display at area museums, Thursday, Feb. 6, 10 a.m., virtual. Registration # 912303-09.

Bring your banjo, guitar, fiddle, mandolin and dulcimer and join volunteer Fred Winter, co-founder of NYC’s Old Time Music Project, for an open “jam” of Appalachian old time (pre-blue grass) and string band music, Thursday, Feb. 6, 5 p.m., Lubber Run 55+ Center. All skill levels welcome. SEE FLOURISHING, PAGE 7

Arlington Groups Rally to Support Immigrant Community

What more than a dozen people and organizations in Arlington are saying and doing about possible immigration enforcement.

BY SHIRLEY RUHE
ARLINGTON CONNECTION

Upon taking office Jan. 20, President Donald Trump immediately issued a number of complicated and extensive Executive Orders related to immigrants. Some of the orders such as expedited removal authority became effective immediately on Jan. 21. Other orders — such provisions as denying public benefits to immigrants, increased use of detention and eviscerating the asylum program were not so straightforward and will roll out over time.

The provision to revoke birthright citizenship reinterprets the Fourteenth Amendment of the Constitution to deny citizenship to children born in the U.S. to undocumented or temporarily present parents has been challenged in court as unconstitutional and temporarily halted by a judge's order.

Understanding the extensive orders and what each means for individual lives and family situations has overwhelmed immigrants and instilled fear.

Immigrants who are legal citizens in this country are still afraid despite their legal status that they will be rounded up indiscriminately without due process and sent back to their countries. Immigrants who are here legally waiting processing of paperwork but not yet citizens are in limbo about how the new rules affect them. Immigrants who had been approved but are still in their countries waiting to get on planes suddenly had their bookings cancelled.

Arlington is a diverse community whose population according to 2022 Census data is composed of 41.5 percent people of color with 1 in 4 born outside the USA. The student body of Arlington Public Schools speaks a total of 115 languages according to the 2021 Arlington profile. Arlington Public Schools offer 8 languages including American Sign Language, Arabic, Chinese, French, German, Japanese, Latin and Spanish to

“Many of the immigrants, even if they have legal status, are feeling immense stress, and this is taking a toll on mental health.”

— Taris Karantonis,
Chairman of the
Arlington County Board



Sample of sign posted by a church in New York as a reaction to recent threats to the immigrant community.

7,568 students in grades 6-12.

What does all of this mean for the immigrant community in Arlington? Despite the uncertainties surrounding interpretations of the executive orders and accompanying legal nuances, reactions have been swift from the Arlington Public School system as well as local groups representing immigrants, faith-based and non-profit organizations providing information and action plans in case of possible ICE arrests.

The Arlington County Board has issued the following statement: “Arlington County has not, and does not plan to, define itself as a ‘sanctuary jurisdiction’ a term which we believe could potentially mislead our residents and others to believe that Arlington County is able to, in some way, shield from immigration enforcement actions by the federal government. We do not have the authority to do so and will continue to comply with all legal requirements. The Arlington County Board is aware of the actions from the new administration and will (be) continuing to review these updates.”

Taris Karantonis, Chairman of the Arlington County Board, says the county employees know if they are challenged by any situation that they should seek support from their supervisor, and there are certain protocols in place. He says, “We haven’t had evidence of ICE in Arlington but we do know they are around here in Northern Virginia.”

Karantonis says Arlington is a place of re-

PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

KNOW YOUR RIGHTS

If ICE approaches you at home, work, or in public.

DO NOT OPEN DOORS

ICE will say they're police or service contractors so you will let them in. **DO NOT!** Ask for ID. They cannot enter without a warrant signed by a judge. If you open the door, you are giving them consent to enter.

REMAIN SILENT

Simply say, "I have a right to remain silent." Do not answer questions or give information about your immigration status. ICE can use anything you say against you.

DO NOT SIGN ANYTHING

Do not sign anything ICE gives you without talking to an attorney.

REPORT & RECORD

Take pictures and video. Record badges, agent numbers, license plates, and what is happening.

MAKE A PLAN FOR AN EMERGENCY

Memorize phone numbers of your family, friends, and attorney. Make arrangements with trusted people.



**IMMIGRATION RAPID RESPONSE
HOTLINE NETWORK:
VA: 855-298-3271
MD/DC: 202-335-1183**

Know Your Rights card being handed out by local organizations to immigrant families and groups.

spect but, “We don’t want to create the illusion that if an ICE agent shows up with a warrant that we can stop them. The Bozman Center is a public space. But we want people not to be afraid to go to a counter for county services, and we want to provide resources to the members of our community who are impacted.” He explains the county adheres to their Trust Policy, passed in 2022 concerning Interactions with the Customs and Immigration Enforcement. It says that unless required by state or Federal law the county will not be involved in immigration law enforcement.

He adds, “We’re listening to the community. Many of the immigrants, even if they

have legal status, are feeling immense stress, and this is taking a toll on mental health. This is early in a murky place with what’s happening around us. We’ll wait and see how this develops. We want everyone to get the services they need. That’s our job. We take this very seriously. We’ll respond as this is coming.”

One of the primary concerns comes from parents about the safety of sending their children to school. The Arlington School Board released a statement which they sent to families after the APS School Board Meeting Jan. 30. “We are committed to maintaining safe, supportive and

Matthew 25: Feed the hungry, clothe the naked, welcome the stranger.

SEE ARLINGTON GROUPS, PAGE 4

Arlington Groups Rally to Support Immigrant Community

FROM PAGE 3

welcoming school environments for all ... Our school leaders and staff have received thorough training on how to respond if law enforcement or immigration officials request student information or access to students." The letter states, "APS does not ask about immigration status. Under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act schools are prohibited, without parental consent, from providing student information to federal immigration agents without appropriate legal justification.

"APS is committed to protecting our students and families. Immigration officials will not be allowed to enter schools or remove students without following proper legal protocols. Principals will contact our central office and our legal team immediately to review any warrant or legal documents that are presented."

ACPD's Questions and Answers also address immigrant children in public schools. "The U.S. Supreme Court has indicated that undocumented students have a right to attend public school ... and Arlington Public Schools (APS) does not solicit or collect information on whether a student is undocumented." However, "Federal authorities are not restricted by statute or regulation from taking immigration enforcement actions at any location, including schools."

In practice, Department of Homeland Security policy indicates that ICE agents would not normally take enforcement actions at certain sensitive locations including schools, hospitals and churches. However, the recent Trump executive order has removed this protection of sensitive locations that had been practiced during the Biden Administration.

The Arlington County Police Department indicates that regardless of immigration status all individuals have equal protection under the law. This means that undocumented immigrants should not fear requesting assistance from police if they need help. "Any ACPD involvement in ICE actions is limited to those actions where a criminal warrant exists for the apprehension of a specific individual."

Michelle Swearingen, director of Arlington-based Restoration Immigration Legal Aid (RILA), offering free assistance to immigrants seeking asylum and special immigrant kids, says the immigrants are afraid to send their children to school. "We are inundated with questions from clients worried about their children. 'Is this real — what will happen to them?' There is so much confusion. They are terrified."

Swearingen says, "It is heart wrenching to be here at this time. We are currently educating immigrants about their rights. They have the right to remain silent; don't have to answer the door to ICE officers or answer questions. They can ask to see a warrant, and we show them what an authentic warrant looks like. This is difficult for them because they want to do the right thing and it feels wrong not to cooperate."

Congregation Action Network has issued Know Your Rights cards that are being distributed at apartment complexes in S. Arlington by local Arlington volunteers. They



PHOTO BY SHIRLEY RUHE

The Arlington Public Schools issued its policy concerning immigrants including potential visits by ICE on school property.

state in both English and Spanish:

- Do Not Open Doors
- Remain Silent
- Do Not Sign Anything
- Report and Record
- Make a Plan for an Emergency

Know Your Right cards were also distributed by Our Lady Queen of Peace church to 800 families at their weekly food distribution on Wednesday, Janu. 29.

Many churches are issuing statements of support for immigrants citing the Bible, Quran and Torah which all explicitly refer to support for immigrants. Many are confronting the possibility of an attempted arrest on church grounds by establishing a private space in the church. While the church sanctuary is a public space, a private space can be created somewhere else in the church which would require a warrant signed by a judge with someone's name on it for an ICE agent to enter. The first step would be to deny entrance to an ICE officer while calling for legal assistance.

Bishop Michael F. Burbidge, Diocese of Arlington, issued his gratitude for all those immigrants in the Diocese of Arlington who, through their goodness and faithfulness, contribute to our Church and to our country citing immigrants from as many as 20 countries who have settled here in the past generation. "We are also recognizing all of those law enforcement officers who work diligently to uphold our laws and protect our communities. Catholic teaching does not support an open border policy but rather emphasizes a common sense approach where the day to care for the stranger is practiced in harmony with the duty to care for the nation."

The Episcopal Migration Ministries holds a biweekly 30 minute update on immigration policy and hosts an Episcopal Migration Response Network that meets virtually on the fourth Wednesday of every month. Their session on Monday, Feb. 3 focuses on "Immigration Basics and Know Your Rights for Churches and Individuals."

The United Church of Christ Justice &

Peace Action Network released a set of talking points focusing on opposition to the new executive orders. Rev. Kathy Dwyer, a local UCC pastor at Rock Spring UCC says, "As a pastor, my faith compels me to speak with clarity and conviction in response to the recent Executive Orders and their impact on immigrants in our community and across the nation. At Rock Spring Congregational United Church of Christ, we affirm the dignity and worth of all people, regardless of their immigration status. For anyone our community who is feeling vulnerable in this moment, please know that Rock Spring continues to be a place of welcome and solidarity."

Doorways, a community-based nonprofit providing services, shelter, and supportive housing for survivors of domestic violence and sexual assault and their families has indicated their programs and services are running without interruption. "As always, the safety of Doorways' clients, staff, and volunteers is our top priority, and we have security measures and protocols in place for all of our facilities. We remain committed to serving all survivors who need us."

Samuel Gutierrez McTyre, an immigration lawyer in Arlington for nearly 40 years says, "The statements from the White House and ICE are that they are looking for criminal aliens but the problem is that there are few out and about in the immigrant community. They are not a community given to commit crime. They are looking for safety, after all in America, because the countries they came from are not safe. ...

"A lot of U.S. citizens are being taken into custody because they don't have a passport on them. They leave home thinking things will go the way they always have and suddenly they are picked up. The Administration isn't interested in the legal system. If you're not a red-blooded American, Trump isn't interested. If the person looks foreign, the skin is brown, he is picked up; it is at base a racist police action."

McIntyre says immigrants are being arrested and put on planes, thus circumvent-

ing the legal system which requires them to be able to come before a judge and have their case heard."

Clare Cherkasky, an Arlington immigration lawyer for 41 years says, "I'm glad I'm retiring." But she says she wouldn't expect ICE to be rounding up immigrants around here. "If immigrants have been here less than 2 years, they can be rounded up but I was surprised in a clinic I held last weekend that I didn't see a lot of panicked people. Maybe they don't know yet."

Rev. DeLisha Davis, Senior Pastor of the Calloway United Methodist Church in Arlington and newly elected head of the NAACP released a statement echoing this position. "This is not just an immigration issue; it is a human rights issue. U.S. citizens of color are feeling the weight of these policies, as racial profiling and discrimination escalate under the guise of law and order. These orders do not make us safer; they make us more divided."

Kenn Speicher, co-founder of the Arlington-based NOVA Friends of Refugees says, "The overall feeling among immigrants and refugees isn't just worry. There is fear, terror, and anger that they may be deported and their families separated. They are also afraid that even if they are here legally, they could be arrested and deported without ever seeing a judge. It is clear that the new actions are an assault on both legal and illegal immigrants."

Speicher cites a number of examples of human stories including an Arlington friend whose housekeeper was having her citizenship ceremony in Manassas last Wednesday, a day that should have been full of hope and joy but instead was marred by ICE knocking on her door looking for a relative. Speicher says since she knew her rights, she didn't open the door.

Another Afghan couple who have been here a couple of years and helped family members get approved to come here were just waiting for their plane to America and then all was cancelled.

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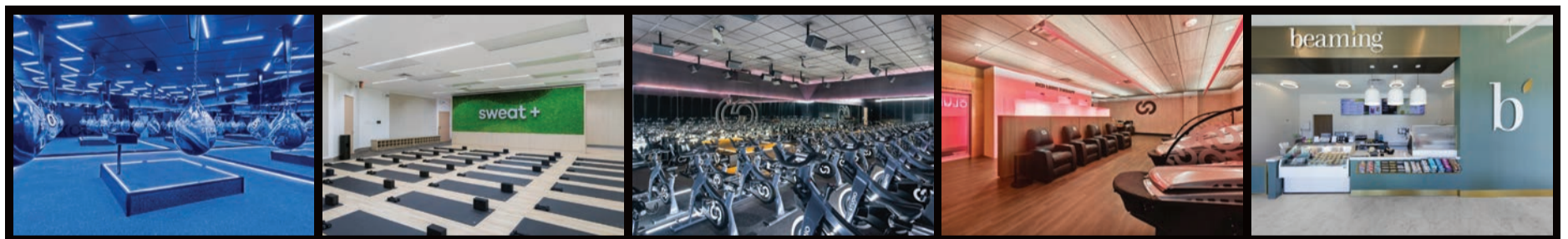
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From left: Bonnie Hellman Brown who stars as an American tourist in “Susana,” Geraldo Coello Escalante and Amadine Thomas, co-producers of the film. “Susana” premiered at Sundance on Jan. 22.



Geraldo Coello Escalante and Amadine Thomas enjoying a moment during a break while making “Susana.”

Local Filmmaker Premieres “Susana” at Sundance Film Festival

BY SHIRLEY RUHE
THE CONNECTION

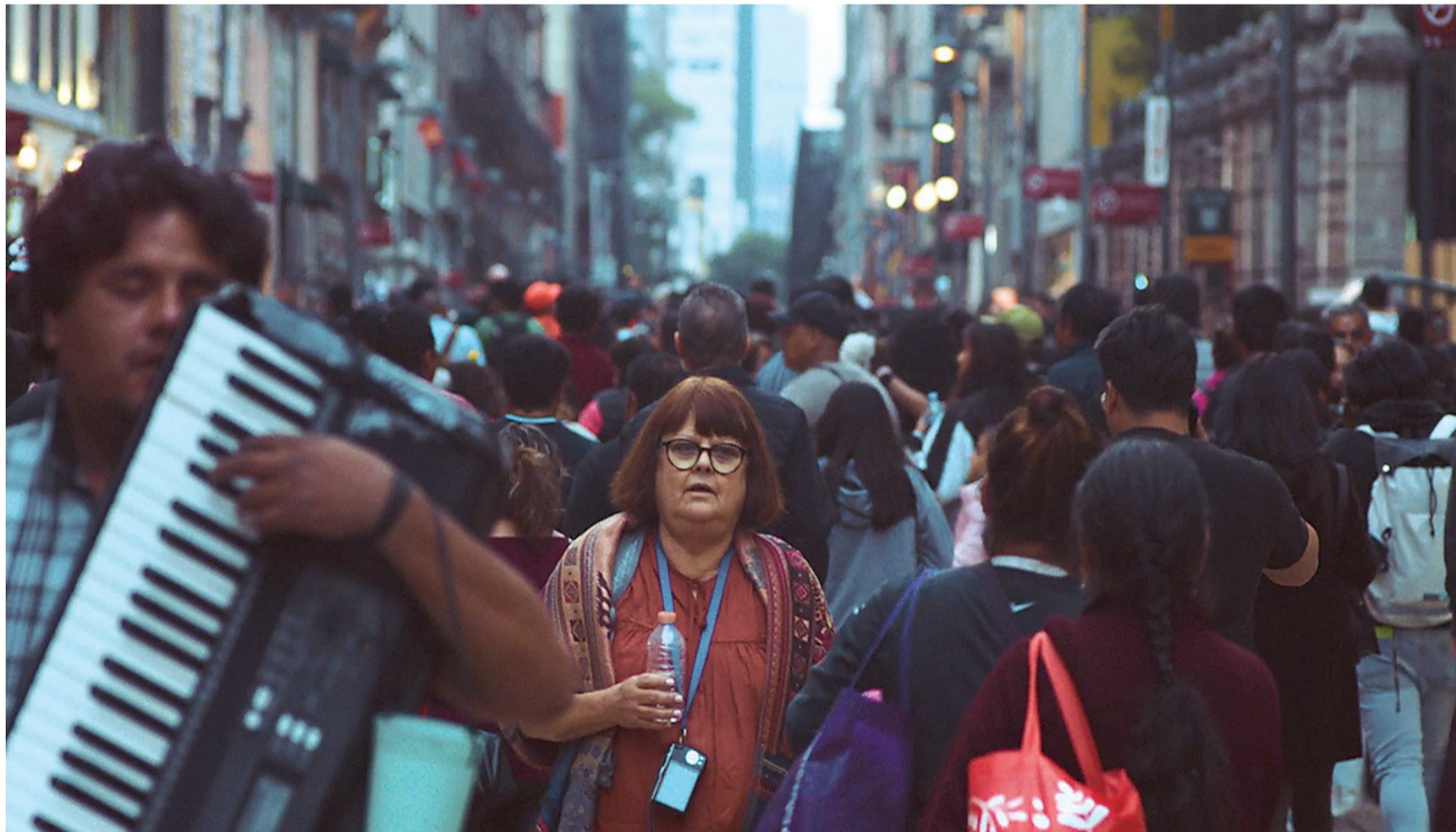
Amadine Thomas walked into the library auditorium at Park City, Utah where her short film “Susana” was premiering the first day at the Sundance Film Festival on Jan. 22.

“It was very exciting, surreal to see the space taken over by friends, the press.” She says 15 of the film crew of 25 were able to attend the festival as well.

Thomas says she and her creative collaborator of “Susana,” Gerardo Coello Escalante, had a film, “Viaje de Negocios” that also premiered in the Sundance Festival last year and was shown all over the world. It was the first of a trilogy of films exploring the complex relationship between Mexico and the United States.

As a result of attending Sundance last year, Thomas says they know a number of people who are attending the festival this year. “There is a good platform here for filmmaking and supportive relationships. They are faces we have worked with and love; it definitely feels like a reunion. It’s a special feeling.”

Thomas, who grew up in the Arlington-McLean area, is now 31-years-old and a full time filmmaker splitting her time between Mexico City where Escalante grew up and New York City. Thomas co-wrote, co-produced and co-directed and edited “Susana” with



Susana walks the streets of Mexico City as a lone tourist exploring the city and herself.

Escalante. “Susana” takes place in Mexico City where an older solo female traveler is trying to find herself and encounters a number of new and exciting experiences. “It touches on the impact of foreign tourism and what it does to the local population in a place experiencing rapid changes due to the explosion of people.”

While she was growing up,

Thomas acted in plays in McLean but there was never a time when she didn’t want to be in the film industry. “It was always my reference point.” Thomas graduated from McLean High School at 16 and headed to New York University for acting. “I didn’t go to school for film so I really learned by working on sets.”

“Susana” was shot in Decem-

ber 2023 in a number of locations around Mexico City, edited for a few months with post-production in July. “It took a year to get it done.”

She says because it takes so long to produce a film from start to finish that they are always working on several films at the same time in different stages. “It’s a lot of work.”

Coming up next Thomas says

she and Escalante are working on a documentary short which will be released soon about her grandmother getting into a romance online. “The romance turned out alright.”

Thomas says it was great to see their film in a different venue. “We didn’t produce “Susana” with the idea of going to Sundance. It was a surprise. We were over the moon.”

SENIOR LIVING

FROM PAGE 2

Registration # 912304-20.

Maryland Live! Casino, Hanover, MD plus the Arundel Mills Outlets are on the agenda for the 55+ Travel group, Friday, Feb. 7. Cost \$13, Arlington residents; \$15, non-residents. Registration # 902502-03.

In honor of Black History Month, 55+ Operations Supervisor Cory Cox will discuss African American Women Inventors, Friday, Feb. 7, 2 p.m., Aurora Hills 55+ Center. Registration # 912400-10.

Painting demonstration by a Community Arts Programmer using a detailed step-by-step process, Monday, Feb. 10, 10:30 a.m., virtual. Registration # 912303-03.

Reader's Theater, act in fun readings of vintage radio plays along with sound effects, Tuesday, Feb. 11, 5:30 p.m., Walter Reed 55+ Center. Registration # 912301-14.

Spellbinders of Arlington to hold an information session for adults 55+ and older to learn more about oral storytelling, Tuesday, Feb. 11, 2:30 p.m., Lubber Run 55+ Center. Registration # 912301-24.

Tiny valentines, pair up with one of Lubber Run's preschoolers to create valentine cards to take home, Tuesday, Feb. 11, 10 a.m., Lubber Run 55+ Center. Supplies provided. Registration # 912310-10.

It Takes a Village in Arlington, Wendy Zenker, executive director of

Arlington Neighborhood Village (ANV) will describe the village concept and ways to get involved, Tuesday, Feb. 11, 11:30 a.m., via Zoom at Lubber Run 55+ Center, registration # 912400-01 or virtual, registration # 912400-02.

Winter survivors, slide show presentation by Bobbi Farley, Arlington Park Naturalist to learn how animals survive in cold and harsh conditions in Arlington, Tuesday, Feb. 11, 7 p.m., virtual. Registration # 912400-27.

How to make chocolate covered strawberries, presented by Carrie Conley, Director, Arlington Mill 55+ Center, Wednesday, Feb. 12, 6 p.m. Registration # 912501-10.

History roundtable, participate in discussions about pivotal events in history. February's topic is major war resistance movements, Wednesday, Feb. 12, 11:15 a.m., virtual, Registration # 912402-06.

The study of words and the history of English, Wednesday, Feb. 12, 10:30 a.m., Lubber Run 55+ Center., Registration # 912402-13 or virtual, registration # 912402-14.

Acoustic afternoon with music performed by local residents Phil Rosen, Ed Girovasi and friends, Wednesday, Feb. 12, 2 p.m., Langston-Brown 55+ Center. Featuring classic pop, folk and blues from across the decades. Registration # 912301-11.

55+ Travel group will visit the Virgin-

ia Museum of History & Culture in Richmond, to view an exhibit on the educational initiatives spearheaded by Booker T. Washington, a Black educator and Julius Rosenwald, a Jewish businessman and philanthropist, Wednesday, Feb. 12. Cost \$34, Arlington resident; \$39, non-resident. Registration # 902502-05.

Virginia's Green Book that helped many African Americans travel safely during the Jim Crow era discussed Thursday, Feb. 13, 2:30 p.m., virtual. Pre-recorded lecture by Susan Hellman, principal planner with the City of Alexandria Planning and Zoning Historic Preservation Division. Registration # 912400-11.

Explore the rich history and contributions of Arlington's Black community with Scott Taylor, president, Black Heritage Museum of Arlington, Thursday, Feb. 13, 3 p.m., virtual. Registration # 912400-12.

Virtual Central America Tour, learn about Paraguay's history, culture, geography and more, Thursday, Feb. 13, 1 p.m. Presented by Ashley Gomez, Director, Lubber Run 55+ Center. Registration # 912400-40.

Beginner quilting, use a few basic tools to wind paper strips into coils and create shapes to embellish note cards, Thursday, Feb. 13, 1:30 p.m., Lubber Run 55+ Center. Supplies provided. Cost \$18. Registration # 912400-11.

SEE FLOURISHING, PAGE 9



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Arlington Students for Climate Action Host Free Pop Up Shop

Students volunteer to help reduce waste, keep fast fashion from landing in landfills.

BY EDEN BROWN
ARLINGTON CONNECTION

“Thank you for doing this,” was the most often heard phrase around Washington-Liberty cafeteria on Sunday, Feb. 2. The second annual Free Pop Up Clothing Shop held at the school is not just a great way to get rid of clothes that have been sitting unworn in the closet for months or years, finding them new homes, and keeping them out of the landfill, it is also an excellent opportunity for young people in Arlington to volunteer, show leadership, and get the word out to the community that fast fashion and throwing old clothes in the garbage bin are “so yesterday.”

This year, the students took

advantage of the pop up shop to also raise awareness and ask for donations for their trial composting project. Students for Climate Action want to set up composting bins in school cafeterias so the uneaten food does not go to the garbage dump, but instead gets collected by a local small business that does composting, turning food scraps into valuable soil-improving compost.

Donations from around the community included 1200 articles of clothing. Of these, about 400 items were taken home by happy “shoppers” (who paid nothing for them) and the remaining items were donated to organizations like Goodwill, CasaMirafior and PathForward. About 75 people left with clothes, and others stopped by to donate. One woman brought

a rackful of Hawaiian shirts, all practically new. She explained her husband, a recently retired second grade teacher, wore a different Hawaiian shirt every day to his class. Casual Adventure Outfitters was, as they were last year, MVPs in terms of donating hangers and clothes. The whole event was overseen by Eleanor Hodges of Eco-Action Arlington and volunteer Laura Wachtmann.

For more information on Eco-Action Arlington, see: <https://www.ecoactionarlington.org>, or to see their new GetGreenArlington app, see: @getgreenapp

SEE ARLINGTON STUDENTS, PAGE 12



PHOTOS BY EDEN BROWN

Carol Malzahn and Ann Borchevsky were at the pop up clothing shop to collect clothes they will gift to elders living in the Aarondale nursing home in Springfield. One in particular who is in memory care is 90 years old and loves when they bring her something - it lightens up an otherwise boring day. “It’s like going shopping for them,” they said. “But free!”



There were jeans of every style and size at the pop up shop. One family donated 12 pairs of old jeans.



Salwa Abulghaith and Jedeilliza Escobel, Seniors at Washington-Liberty High School, volunteered at the Free Pop Up Shop.



PHOTO BY LAURA WACHTMANN

Helen Hass stands with the many practically new Hawaiian shirts donated to the pop up shop.

For further information on Points of Light, please see:

<https://www.pointsoflight.org/awards/moving-past-mistakes-and-making-better-futures/>

Moving Past Mistakes and Making Better Futures

Meet Daily Point of Light Award Honoree Cheyenne Klapper.

BY KRISTIN PARK
POINTS OF LIGHT

This story first appeared on the Points of Light website.

It takes a certain kind of patience and persistence to be an advocate for systemic change. It’s the kind Cheyenne Klapper, 19, has in droves. Cheyenne is a freshman at the University of Virginia

who lives a life reflective of her principles. She’s six years into being vegan, and she advocates for environmental justice, animal rights and food policy. Her other primary focus is criminal justice reform. If all goes well, she intends to go to law school to continue the fight for change.

Much of Cheyenne’s contributions to criminal justice reform has been through the Center for Youth and Family Advocacy’s (CYFA) Youth Restorative Diversion Initia-

tive (YRDI). CYFA is a nonprofit founded five years ago by two defense attorneys determined to address the inequities and imbalances they saw amongst their caseloads. The YRDI includes programs designed around restorative justice, the practice of keeping juvenile offenders from going through the court system and, as is often the case, carrying the consequences of their mistakes for the rest of their lives.

“One of the misconceptions is that these

kids deserve punishment. Obviously, we want kids to think about their actions critically, but it’s not punitive,” Cheyenne explains. “Time and time again, when studies are put out about restorative justice measures, it shows that it creates thriving communities, and punitive measures create higher recidivism rates. That’s not what we want for the country.”

One such initiative is Youth Peer Court

SEE MOVING PAST, PAGE 12

Inaugural Super Bowl Soberride Launched

A local nonprofit organization announced today that free safe rides will be offered to would-be drunk drivers throughout the Washington-metropolitan area during this Sunday's Super Bowl LIX.

Offered by the nonprofit Washington Regional Alcohol Program (WRAP), the inaugural 2025 Super Bowl SoberRide® program will be in operation beginning at 8 p.m. on Sunday, Feb. 9 and operate until 4 a.m. on Monday, Feb. 10 as a way to keep local roads safe from impaired drivers during this traditionally high-risk period.

During this eight-hour period, area residents ages 21 and older celebrating with alcohol may download the Lyft app to their phones then enter the SoberRide code in the app's 'Payment' tab (under the 'Add Lyft Pass' option) to receive their no-cost (up to \$15) safe transportation home. WRAP's 2025 Super Bowl SoberRide promo code will be posted at 6 p.m. on Sunday, Feb. 9 on www.SoberRide.com.

"Nearly 40-percent of U.S. traffic fatalities during the 2022 Super Bowl period involved drunk drivers according to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration," said Kurt Erickson,

WRAP's President.

WRAP's 2025 Super Bowl campaign effort is the charity's first new SoberRide offering in a decade. WRAP also offers its SoberRide program on St. Patrick's Day, Cinco de Mayo, Halloween and the winter holidays through and including New Year's.

Sponsors of WRAP's 2025 Super Bowl SoberRide® campaign include 395 Express Lanes, Anheuser-Busch, Beer Institute, Brown-Forman, Constellation Brands, Diageo, District of Columbia Association of Beverage Alcohol Wholesalers, Enterprise Rent-A-Car, Foundation for Advancing Alcohol Responsibility, Giant Food, Glory Days Grill, Lyft, Molson Coors Beverage Company, New Belgium Brewing, Restaurant Association Metropolitan Washington and the Washington Area New Automobile Dealers Association. WRAP's 2025 Public Partner SoberRide® Sponsors include the District of Columbia Highway Safety Office, Maryland Highway Safety Office/Maryland Motor Vehicle Administration and Virginia Department of Motor Vehicles.

Since 1991, WRAP's SoberRide® program has provided 93,706 free safe rides home to would-be drunk drivers in the Greater Washington area.

SENIOR LIVING

FROM PAGE 7

tion # 912310-07.

Valentine's Day soiree, Friday, Feb. 14, 1 p.m., Aurora Hills 55+ Center. Enjoy an assortment of sweets and classic love songs by pianist Valerie Welsh. Registration # 912890-05.

Valentine's Day social, Friday, Feb. 14, 1:30 p.m., Langston-Brown 55+ Center. Treats, music, games and fun. Registration # 912890-06.

Inclusion is for everyone, join Robyn Mitchell from the Therapeutic Recreation Office for a discussion and interactive session on how the 55+ community can ensure that all are included, Friday, Feb. 14, 11 a.m., Walter Reed 55+ Center. Registration # 912400-04.

Introduction to the ukulele, Tuesday, Feb. 18, 4 p.m., Walter Reed 55+ Center. Taught by Sandy O'Shea. Limited ukuleles available. Registration # 912304-06.

Genealogy 101, learn to use primary sources, family records, and DNA services like Ancestry.com, Tuesday, Feb. 18, 11:30 a.m., Lubber Run 55+ Center. Led by experienced genealogist Eileen Bogdanoff. Registration # 912402-03.

Be an internet Jack-of-All-Trades with the help of Jennifer Weber, Director of Walter Reed 55+ Center, Tuesday, Feb. 18, 5:30 p.m. Learn to use online tools like Google, YouTube, educational platforms and become proficient in multiple tasks. Registration # 912403-03.

Piano lounge and sing-along of favorite love songs with pianist Valerie

Welsh, Wednesday, Feb. 19, 4 p.m., Lubber Run 55+ Center. Registration # 912304-27.

Game Guild, play boardgames with third through eighth grade students from Aspire Afterschool Learning Academy, Wednesday, Feb. 19, 4 p.m., Arlington Mill 55+ Center. Registration # 912600-05.

Black inventors in American history, presented by 55+ Operations Supervisor Cory Cox, Wednesday, Feb. 19, 2 p.m., Aurora Hills 55+ Center. Registration # 912400-13.

Opera appreciation presented by George Cecchetti, discuss storyline and watch video of Richard Wagner's "Die Walkure," the second opera of the Ring Cycle, Wednesday, Feb. 19, 1:30 p.m., Lubber Run 55+ Center. Registration # 912300-06.

Library of Virginia's digital records presentation by the Library's Outreach Specialist Peter North plus how to access valuable historical records and archives, Thursday, Feb. 20, 3 p.m., virtual. Registration # 912400-19.

BULLETIN BOARD

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

ARLINGTON FIRE

DEPARTMENT HAS NEW PIO

The Arlington County Fire Department is pleased to announce the appointment of Captain Jamie Jill as its new Public Information Officer (PIO). Captain Jill brings a wealth

of experience to the position, with 13 years of service in fire and EMS, as well as 11 years in public information. In this role, Captain Jill will serve as the primary point of contact for media inquiries, public information, and community updates. He will also oversee the management of the department's website and social media channels. Captain Jill will focus on ensuring the timely and accurate dissemination

of information to the community. Registration # 912302-08.

Just beneath the surface and behind the scenes of three professional artists, Friday, Feb. 21, 10:30 a.m., virtual. Presented by Community Arts Programmer Jim Halloran. Registration # 912302-08.

55+ Travel group will journey to the College Park Aviation Museum for a one hour guided tour, Friday, Feb. 21. Cost \$19, Arlington resident; \$22, non-resident. Registration # 902502-08.

Registration # 912400-19.

Registration # 912400-19.

SEE BULLETIN, PAGE 14

Route 50 Left-Turn Lane Extensions at Manchester Street Arlington County

Virtual Public Information Meeting

Monday, February 10, 2025, 7 p.m.

<https://www.vdot.virginia.gov/Route50Manchester>

Find out about plans to extend the westbound and eastbound Route 50 (Arlington Boulevard) left-turn lanes at Manchester Street. The project includes extending the westbound Route 50 left-turn lane to southbound Manchester Street from 230 feet to 500 feet; extending the eastbound Route 50 left-turn lane to northbound Manchester Street from 75 feet to 175 feet; and minimal widening along eastbound Route 50 just beyond the Manchester Street intersection (this may impact existing utilities, trees and slope and require a retaining wall).

The meeting will be held as a **virtual/online meeting**. Information for accessing and participating in the virtual meeting is available at <https://www.vdot.virginia.gov/Route50Manchester>. The project team will make a presentation beginning at 7 p.m. and answer questions after the presentation.

Review project information and meeting details on the webpage above or during business hours at VDOT's Northern Virginia District Office, 4975 Alliance Drive, Fairfax, VA 22030. Please call ahead at 703-259-2768 or TTY/TDD 711 to make an appointment with appropriate personnel.

Give your comments during the meeting, or by **February 24, 2025** via the comment form on the project website, by mail to Mr. Khalil Minhas, Virginia Department of Transportation, 4975 Alliance Drive, Fairfax, VA 22030 or by email to meetingcomments@VDOT.virginia.gov. Please reference "Route 50 Left-Turn Lane Extensions at Manchester Street" in the subject line.

VDOT ensures nondiscrimination and equal employment in all programs and activities in accordance with Title VI and Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended. If you need more information or special assistance for persons with disabilities or limited English proficiency, contact VDOT Civil Rights at 703-259-1775 or TTY/TDD 711.

State Project: 0050-000-950, C501, P101, R201

UPC: 124362

Federal: NHPP-5B01 (560)

In case an alternate date is needed, the meeting will be held Tuesday, February 18, 2025 at the same time.

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Can Data Centers Co-Exist with Responsible Development and Increased Energy Demands?

BY SEN. ADAM P. EBBIN

Every time you make an online purchase, scroll through social media, or check your email, a data center processes the information. Data centers contain storage for computer systems for everyday usage by consumers and businesses, and have grown exponentially in recent years, with usage expected to double in the next few years. Northern Virginia has the largest data concentration center in the world, handling 25 percent of Internet traffic in the Americas and 13 percent of the total in the World. One data center in Ashburn alone averages 31,000 credit card transactions per second. These transactions are a key part of our modern economy, and keep the Commonwealth on the cutting edge of innovation and commerce.

With the rise of artificial intelligence, data center demand is growing even faster than anticipated. More than 23 bills dealing with data centers were introduced

in the General Assembly, including my bill, SB 1449. More than 13 of those bills remained under consideration as of Monday, Feb. 3.

After spending a year researching the data center industry and soliciting input from more than a hundred diverse stakeholders, ranging from technology advocates and utilities to environmentalists and grassroots activists, the Virginia General Assembly's highly respected Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission (JLARC) released their findings in December. JLARC found that data centers are responsible for more than 74,000 jobs and \$9.1 billion in annual revenue in Virginia.

However, data centers are not without some concerns. They require a huge amount of energy to operate. Data center energy usage can vary from the equivalent of the average usage of 20,000 homes to over a million homes. By 2040, unconstrained demand could double our energy needs, and we must balance the economic benefits with the challenges and energy im-

pact of data centers.

Other potential data center challenges include power transmission lines, water usage, noise issues, and construction near historic sites. JLARC says we are a relatively water-rich state, but that usage could be more efficient. We must work with local governments to address these challenges and ensure that we are still on a path to transition to a greener energy mix as the demands around data centers increase.

My Bill, SB 1449, will empower localities to require a sound study before a data center (or other "high energy use facility" that uses more than 100 megawatts of power) can be sited within 500 feet of houses or schools. It will also allow local governments to decide whether a site assessment of potential impacts on nearby resources – such as water, agricultural land, parks, historic sites, or forestland – is appropriate before approving a new facility. Del. Josh Thomas of Prince William has similar, but not identical, legislation that has passed the

House of Delegates.

I believe my legislation will strike a reasonable balance: it will empower localities to make more informed choices as they manage responsible data center development, while not overly burdening an essential industry that already falls under many local, state and federal regulations that are intended to protect Virginians.

For the past 15 years, data centers have helped provide economic growth, jobs, and funding for community priorities in the Commonwealth, especially in Northern Virginia.

Loudoun County alone reaped \$875,000,000 in 2024 in tax revenue from data centers, an increase of 19.5% from the year before, helping the fast growing county to fund their needs with lower property taxes than neighboring jurisdictions. I am hopeful that we can continue to be a leader in technology and 21st century jobs. If managed correctly, data centers can provide jobs, substantial tax revenue, and further investment in the Commonwealth.

Proposed Budget Features Environmental Gains

Plans demonstrate commitment to Chesapeake Bay restoration and a climate-ready Commonwealth

BY CHESAPEAKE BAY FOUNDATION

Virginia lawmakers recognized the strong connection between thriving, healthy Virginians, a cleaner environment, and robust living resources with their proposed budget amendments released Sunday.

The Virginia House and Senate money committees unveiled their separate proposed spending plans Sunday. These plans make amendments to the budget previously pitched by Gov. Glenn Youngkin.

The proposed spending plans support a host of Chesapeake Bay Foundation initiatives including climate readiness following another year of record-breaking and costly extreme weather, investments in environmental education, and investments in cleaner water and air for future generations.

A conference committee of legislators will now negotiate a single set of budget amendments, which

will need approval from Gov. Glenn Youngkin before becoming law.

Creating a Climate-Ready Commonwealth

The Senate budget commits an additional \$50 million in general funds to the Community Flood Preparedness Fund, which is Virginia's only dedicated climate change adaptation program. The Community Flood Preparedness Fund has helped communities around the Commonwealth begin to adapt to flooding and sea level rise.

Advancing Environmental Education

The House budget includes an investment of \$1 million annually to support statewide competitive environmental education experiences grant program. This ensures that Virginia's youth meet state education standards and stay on par with neighboring states. The state's current investments of just 30 cents per student in environmental education lags significantly

behind neighboring states, falling far below Maryland (\$2.78 per student) and 48.3% less than Pennsylvania (58¢ per student).

Cleaner Water for Everyone

Each chamber's proposed budget includes significant investment in the state's Stormwater Local Assistance Fund (SLAF) with the Senate recommending \$40 million and the House \$50 million. Runoff from roofs, sidewalks and roadways is a major source of harmful pollutants reaching our waterways. SLAF provides matching grants to localities for projects that reduce polluted runoff, such as stream restoration, rain gardens, and other retrofits.

The House budget committed an additional \$48 million to fully fund wastewater treatment plant upgrades and \$26 million to ensure we can fund agricultural best management practices in the years ahead. Practices like fencing cattle out of streams, planting streamside trees and grasses, and many others are the most cost-effective steps Virginia can take to restore the Chesapeake Bay and local streams. At the same time, many of Virginia's sewage treatment facilities have made important progress

in nutrient reductions in recent years due to investments made by the General Assembly.

Chesapeake Bay Foundation Virginia Policy Manager Jay Ford released the following statement:

"Whether it's from the Eastern Shore or Southwest Virginia, communities are calling for help in dealing with extreme storms, flooding and pollution. We need ramped up resources to proactively tackle extreme weather and ensure cleaner rivers and streams for the long-term health of our children and our economy. Dollars spent in these areas pay back in dividends through reduced public health costs, increased quality of life and tourism, less disaster recovery spending, and sustainable billion-dollar Virginia fisheries.

"These budget proposals illustrate a dedication to a more sustainable and resilient future for Virginia. By prioritizing climate readiness, investing in environmental education, and protecting our natural resources, lawmakers can approve a budget that demonstrates their commitment to Virginians' health and a thriving economy."

BIRDING



PHOTO BY GLENDA BOOTH

A male northern cardinal



PHOTO BY GLENDA BOOTH

Nuthatches feed upside down.



PHOTO BY GLENDA BOOTH

A Carolina Wren

Bird-feeding Can Bring Winter Cheer

BY GLENDA C. BOOTH
CONNECTION NEWSPAPERS

In winter's cold grip, there's a show going on outside with multiple "actors," if you set the "stage."

Our avian neighbors will provide hours of entertainment and more importantly, education, at, around and under bird feeders. As many as 15 to 20 different species could visit a feeder throughout one day in Northern Virginia.

Part of the drama could be little birds like four- to five-inch-long Carolina chickadees patiently deferring to the larger, more ag-

gressive birds, like red-bellied woodpeckers, which are around nine inches long. But some plucky little birds like titmice might not give a hoot when the big ones arrive and compete successfully for a meal. Keen observers will learn that some birds like white-breasted nuthatches feed upside down at feeders while others like dark-eyed juncos, winter visitors, and year-round mourning doves snarf up seeds on the ground.

Around 60 million Americans feed birds at their homes, to support birds, to mitigate the habitat we've all degraded and destroyed and to address the decline of three billion North American birds since 1970 as report-

Information

Northern Virginia Bird Club, <https://nvabc.org>

Northern Virginia Bird Alliance, www.nvbirdalliance.org

Project Feederwatch, <https://feederwatch.org>

Great Backyard Bird Count, February 14 to 17, www.birdcount.org

ed by the National Audubon Society.

In the winter, many natural food sources are gone. Snow-covered plants and ground can be especially challenging for birds. Even

SEE BIRDING, PAGE 16



PHOTO BY GLENDA BOOTH

A downy woodpecker

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Arlington Students for Climate Action Host Free Pop Up Shop

FROM PAGE 8

Last year, as a senior in high school, Cheyenne Klapper was instrumental in setting up the first Free Clothing Pop Up Shop at Washington-Liberty High School, along with other students. (See Arlington Connection, February 3, 2024.) It was a big success, due in no small part to Klapper's leadership. The adults that helped set up the first clothing swap, including the executive director of Eco-Action Arlington Elenor Hodges, were amazed at the focus Klapper and her fellow

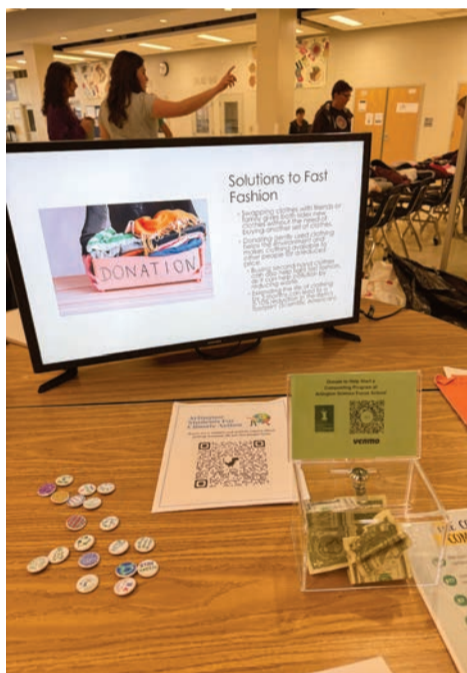
students in Arlington Students for Climate Action brought to the task. Klapper and her teammates in the Climate Action Group volunteered time during their busy senior year, making this event so popular it has now gone on for a second year. Klapper was recognized this year with an award from "Points of Light." Points of Light, based in Atlanta, Georgia, partners with nonprofits, companies and social impact leaders to motivate volunteers to meet critical needs. Its

SEE ARLINGTON STUDENTS, PAGE 14



PHOTOS BY EDEN BROWN

The donated items were separated by type and included things like almost new Merrell hiking boots and a Lily Pulitzer dress.



Students set up a video display of all the reasons why clothes are a major source of landfill in our country, and what we can do about it.



The composting project for local schools will be a pilot project at Arlington's Science Focus School, using a local composting business. The students collected \$28 in donations so far but the cost of the pilot will be considerably more.



A few of the students and their mentors, Laura Wachtmann and Elenor Hodges, pause for a photo after setting up all the clothes.

Moving Past Mistakes and Making Better Futures

FROM PAGE 8

(YPC). In YPC, an offender's case — a misdemeanor or nonviolent felony — is heard and adjudicated by other youth without burdening them with a criminal record or added trauma. The consequences are designed to address the root cause of the crime and often include volunteer service, education modules, apologies and/or letters of acknowledgement. In short, it's a second chance.

"We've had 100% compliance. We've received 70-plus cases at this point, and all of the young people that have been referred to us have decided to willingly go forth and complete our programs," emphasizes Zipporah Baldwin, director of programs for CYFA.

If anyone dropped out, they

would then be referred back to the police. In reality, the program is so successful, offenders often come back after making amends to volunteer as YPC ambassadors. In 2023, Cheyenne completed her high school's capstone internship with CYFA, joining during the launch of Youth Restorative Diversion Initiative. As part of the work experience for course credit, she volunteered around 350 hours during her senior year, starting with training and participation in Youth Peer Court roles as well as Promoting Empathy through Equitable Resolution (PEER). The latter brings both parties in a dispute together to discuss a restorative agreement vs. just the offender. Cheyenne also served as one of the first Youth Advisory Board (YAB) members.

"She had a huge hand in forming how things were going to work, and working out the most effective approaches and how to work with these teens who come through our program," Zipporah adds.

Zipporah describes her as a natural-born, dynamic leader with charisma that people are drawn to and look up to, even those her own age. In her role advising the YAB, Cheyenne realized meeting and discussing what is important to young people and reporting back wasn't enough. Making change was essential. Last summer, with the help of student volunteers, she completely overhauled the program.

"I created the new rules for the

Youth Advisory Board. I created the committees, and I looked at people to intern," she recalls. "We based it on the idea of student self-governance. I was inspired by UVA, where the clubs there are all student led."

Now, over 20 students, many of whom are also Peer Court ambassadors, are organized into four committees. Each committee has a specific purpose and is overseen by Cheyenne. They identify issues in the community or the nation as a whole and come up with steps for actionable change. Her goal is not to give orders but to inspire others to take initiative and ownership.

"She's willing to listen. And I think that's truly what makes a

beautiful leader," Zipporah states. "She has so much to offer. She has had so many diverse experiences. But in spite of all that, she's always willing to open up the floor for people to share their thoughts, to share their concerns."

Cheyenne also served as the inaugural program committee chair through which she led the organization of CYFA's first Listen Learn Lead Summit, a public event for students to learn about issues critical to their well-being and become agents of change for healthier, more equitable communities. CYFA also aims to teach young people their rights and how to interact with law enforcement.

For further information on Points of Light, please see:

<https://www.pointsoflight.org/awards/moving-past-mistakes-and-making-better-futures/>

ENTERTAINMENT

LADIES TENNIS MEMBERSHIP DRIVE

The Glebe Ladies Tennis Club (GLTC) is now holding its annual membership drive open to all women in or near Arlington who enjoy playing tennis. This is a congenial group of women tennis players of all levels. They currently have over 100 members who participate in a variety of tennis social events scheduled throughout the year. Members pay a small annual fee which covers the cost of reserving courts for Wednesday drop-in, the annual directory, and many other events. For more information or to join the club please visit our website at: <https://sites.google.com/view/glebe-ladies-tennis-club/home> Those who join by March 1, 2024 will be included in the Annual Directory.

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 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.

NOW THRU FEB. 15

Dominion Stage: The City of Conversation. At Theatre on the Run, Green Valley, Arlington. In 1979, Washington D.C. was a place where people actually talked to each other... where adversaries

www.CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM



Dominion Stage presents "The City of Conversation" now through Feb. 15, 2025 at Theatre on the Run in Arlington.

fought it out on the Senate floor and then smoothed it out over drinks and hors d'oeuvres. But it was all about to change. In this play spanning 30 years and six presidential administrations, Hester Ferris throws Georgetown dinner parties that can change the course of Washington's politics. But when her beloved son suddenly turns up with an ambitious Reaganite girlfriend and a shocking new conservative world view, Hester must choose between preserving her family and defending the causes she's spent her whole life fighting for. From the prolific pen of novelist, essayist, and playwright Anthony Giardina comes a play about politics in family, and families in politics. A searing new drama, *The City of Conversation* delves into the ever-changing tapestry of U.S. Government and the people who shape it off the senate floor.

NOW THRU FEB. 16

The Arlington Players: The Play That Goes Wrong. At Thomas Jefferson Community Theatre, Arlington Heights, Arlington. From Mischief, Broadway masters of comedy, comes the smash hit farce. Welcome to opening night of the Cornley University Drama Society's newest production, *The Murder at Haversham Manor*, where things are quickly going from bad to utterly disastrous. This 1920s whodunit has everything you never wanted in a show—an unconscious leading lady, a corpse that can't play dead, and actors who trip over everything (including their lines). Nevertheless, the accident-prone thespians battle against all odds to make it through to their final curtain call, with hilarious consequences!

THURSDAY/FEB. 6

SMPS DC Networking. 5-8 p.m. At The Filling Station, 4201 Wilson Blvd., Arlington. A Networking Charity and Comedy Extravaganza, join SMPS DC for this unique night of making new connections, catching

up with old friends and giving back to the community. A comedy show with some of the DMV's hottest comedians will close out the party. This year's charity drive will support Ronald McDonald House Charities of Greater Washington, DC (RMHCDC), a nonprofit that eases the hardship of children's illness on families through programs that directly improve the health and wellbeing of children. RMHCDC keeps families with sick children together and close to the medical care their child needs at leading local hospitals. RMHCDC programs not only provide access to quality health care, they enable family-centered care, ensuring families are fully supported and actively involved in their children's care.

THURSDAY/FEB. 6

Inside Signature Theatre With Eric Hissom. 1-2 p.m. In the Mead Lobby, Arlington. Eric Hissom is a DC area actor, director and playwright. Now he steps into the role of Loyd in the psychological thriller *JOB*. Come listen to a lively conversation with Education Director David Zobell as Eric discusses how he got into the business, his career highlights and his preparation for this role as a crisis therapist in the digital age.

THURSDAY/FEB. 6

State of the Pike. 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. - Virtual. Each year the Columbia Pike Partnership presents a program called the State of the Pike. Learn about all things happening now and coming up along Columbia Pike. Participants from the County include: Arlington Economic Development, Environmental Services Transportation, Community Planning, Housing and Development, Parks and Recreation, the Arlington County Police Department and Arlington Public Schools. You are welcome to participate, ask questions, and propose ideas. Register for this virtual session at <https://columbiapikpartnership.app.neoncrm.com>

FEB. 7 AND 14

Free Chamber Concerts. 12 noon. At St. George's Church, Virginia Square, Arlington. The Friday Morning Music club will perform two free chamber concerts in February at St. George's Church, 915 N. Oakland St., adjacent to the Virginia Square Metro. The February 7 concert will feature works by Beethoven, Ravel and Bolcom; the February 14, works by Schubert, Telemann, Ismail and Cassado. The one-hour concerts continue every first and second Friday of the month through May.

FRIDAY/FEB. 7

Hydroponics (Vegetables), 10:00 - 11:30 a.m. Online. Interested in learning how to grow vegetables year-round? Join Extension Master Gardener Intern Joe Larsen to explore the exciting world of hydroponics, a soil-free method of growing plants using mineral nutrient solutions in water. Hydroponics has become increasingly popular as a sustainable solution to growing food in urban environments, reducing water consumption, and boosting crop yields. Whether you're a beginner or someone looking to enhance your gardening knowledge, this class will guide you through the fundamentals of hydroponic systems, the different techniques, and the benefits of this innovative growing method. Attendees will leave this class with knowledge of the various hydroponic systems, how to build a DIY hydroponic system, best practices for growing, and how to troubleshoot various issues you may encounter. Free. RSVP at <http://mgnv.org/rsvp-for-public-education-classes/> to receive a link to participate.

SATURDAY/FEB. 8

Comedy Karaoke Trivia Funtime Show. 7:30 p.m. At Highline RxR, 2010 Crystal Drive, Arlington. Presented by The Capital City Showcase, which produces some of the best events in the DC area. Bring a team or fly solo and win prizes by dropping knowledge in a trivia competition, then duking it out in a karaoke battle! The headliner for February's show is the hilarious Patrice DeVeaux!

FEB. 11 TO MAY 4

"In the Heights." At Signature Theatre, Arlington. The joyous Tony Award-winning triumph by Lin-Manuel Miranda (Hamilton) and Quiara Alegría Hudes (Daphne's Dive). Latin rhythms and hip-hop lyrics infuse "96,000," "Paciencia y Fe," "Carnaval del Barrio" and the title song as this celebration of community and culture energetically bursts off the stage with Signature's trademark immersive style. Lights up on Washington Heights, NYC where the streets are full of music, and everybody's got a dream. With the neighborhood on the brink of gentrification, and a life-changing winning lottery ticket somewhere in their midst, the vibrant inhabitants share hope, loss and love as they plan their futures while cherishing their home. Specialty Nights: Discussion Nights March 18 and April 9; Pride Night April 25; and ASL Interpreted March 29 (2 PM)

WEDNESDAY/FEB. 12

Y'All Go Rhythm! 6:30-8:30 p.m.

At Museum of Contemporary Art Arlington. Art Happening: Come Together in Movement and Light in Dark Winter Days. At Innovation Studio + Store, National Landing, Arlington. During her residency at the Innovation Studio + Store, Negar Ahkami will be working on Y'All Go Rhythm!, an installation of interactive dance platforms inspired by the dynamic patterns in Persian architecture and the exuberant dancing at Iranian-American gatherings from her youth. Drawing on her cultural heritage, Negar explores themes of hospitality, universal connection, resilience, hope, playfulness, and release. She invites you to feel the movement and dance, as you feel inspired.

THURSDAY/FEB. 13

Pal-Entine Day Pop-Up. 5-7:30 p.m. At Bennett Park Art Atrium, Rosslyn. Got Pal-entine's Day plans? Gather your pals and join us in Rosslyn for a cozy night of friendship and festivities.

- ❖ Find your next page-turner at the pop-up book sale;
- ❖ Design heartfelt valentines cards for your pals or someone special;
- ❖ Enjoy live music from singer-songwriter @jessicaallossery;
- ❖ Get a refreshment at the cash bar;
- ❖ Take home a typewritten poem;
- ❖ Get creative and craft a friendship bracelet.

SATURDAY/FEB. 15

"Love at the Cinema." 7:30 p.m. At Gunston Arts Center, Theatre 1, 2700 South Lang Street, Arlington. The National Chamber Ensemble (NCE) invites you to an evening celebrating Valentine's and some of Hollywood's most romantic film scores. NCE Artistic Director Leonid Sushansky (violin), Rosanna Butterfield (cello), and Carlos César Rodríguez (piano) - all virtuoso artists - will perform beloved themes from *The Wizard of Oz*, *Ladies in Lavender*, *Maria, Scent of a Woman*, *Eyes Wide Shut*, *The Phantom of the Opera*, *The Devil's Violinist*, other works inspired by or included in romance films and more.

SATURDAY/FEB. 15

Lesson Zero. 9:30 p.m. to 12:30 a.m. The Celtic House, 2500 Columbia Pike, Arlington presents the music of Oasis recording artist LESSON ZERO. Admission is free and street parking is available. For more information see www.youtube.com/lessonzero and www.reverbnation.com/lessonzero.

SATURDAY/FEB. 15

"Love at the Cinema." 7:30 p.m. Presented by National Chamber Ensemble. At Gunston Arts Center - Theatre 1, 2700 South Lang Street, Arlington. For info: (703) 685-7590.

FRIDAY/FEB. 21

Winter Pruning for Woody Plants. 10:00 - 11:30 a.m., Online. Winter is an excellent time to prune many trees and shrubs. Extension Master Gardeners Molly Newling and Angela McNamara will explain why and how to prune to remove crossing and rubbing branches, suckers, water sprouts, and damaged wood. They will discuss the best practices for reducing shrub size, trimming

SEE ENTERTAINMENT, PAGE 15

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Legals

AT&T Mobility, LLC is proposing to collocate antennas and support equipment to the existing 148-foot-tall (158-foot overall height) building facility located at 900 S Walter Reed Drive, Arlington, Arlington County, VA 22204 (N38° 51' 49.0" and W77° 05' 16.0"). 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 #E 007/JC. Comments must be received within 30 days of the date of this notice.



**Brown v. Board of Education
SCHOLARSHIP
COMMITTEE**

ACCEPTING APPLICATIONS
THROUGH APRIL 11, 2025

The Brown v. Board of Education Scholarship Program was established by the General Assembly to provide educational opportunities for persons who were denied an education in Virginia between 1954 and 1964 due to the closing of the public schools during Massive Resistance. The scholarship is now available to those individuals and to their descendants. The program is open to eligible applicants for the 2025-2026 school year. For applications and information on eligibility, visit:
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NEWS

**Arlington
Students**

FROM PAGE 12

website says they are “the world’s largest organization dedicated to increasing volunteer service, engaging nearly 4 million volunteers across 38 countries to create healthy, equitable communities where all can thrive.” Points of Light starts from the premise that volunteers are essential to helping solve critical problems and that volunteering brings deep value to the individual, the communities in which they serve and our global society. “I just try to remember how important it is that I’m using my passion and empathy to create change. Any movement toward the goal is a step in the right direction,” Klapper shared. Points of Light’s Chief Development Officer, Katherine O Hare, CFRE, was honored to join Volunteer Arlington’s 8th Annual MLK Day of Service, where Klapper was presented with her award.

BULLETIN BOARD

FROM PAGE 9

nation of information, fostering transparency, and enhancing community engagement with the department’s fire and EMS operations.

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.

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.

ONGOING

Create a Wildlife Sanctuary. The Audubon at Home Wildlife Sanctuary certification program assists homeowners in restoring their home’s natural habitat by providing information on sustainable gardening practices. These practices include using native plants, removing invasive species, reducing use of pesticides and fertilizers, and creating space for native flora and fauna. Visit audubon.org.
SEE BULLETIN, PAGE 7

NVSO Elects New Chairman, Reveals Dates for 2025 Events

The Northern Virginia Senior Olympics (NVSO) committee recently elected Rod Hupp of Falls Church 2025 Chairman. Hupp, 72, is a retired IT Project Manager and an active NVSO participant having entered 22 events in 2024 and winning many gold and silver medals. Hupp is also a member of the Elks and does Civil War reenactments.

The NVSO committee has set 2025 dates as Saturday, Sept. 13 through Sunday, Sept. 30.

Hupp said, "The end date could change to

accommodate possible new events and the growing participation." He also said, "We set a new record for participation last year at 1,040 and expect to set a new record again."

To participate in NVSO events senior adults must be 50 years old by Dec. 31 and live in one of the sponsoring Northern Virginia jurisdictions (see website at nvso.us). Registration remains the same at \$20, is online only and will open July 7, Save the Date.. Over 70 indoor and outdoor events, most by gender, some co-ed and in five and 10 year age groups. Gold, silver and bronze

medals are awarded after each event.

Thomas Jefferson Community Center in Arlington will host opening day festivities Saturday, Sept. 13, followed by track and rowing events. Remaining events will take place during the following two weeks at venues throughout the sponsoring jurisdictions. Volunteer opportunities are available (see website) as is information on how to become a Gold, Silver or Bronze Patron. Additional information is available at nvso1982@gmail.com.

www.nvso.us

ENTERTAINMENT

FROM PAGE 13

hedges, and carefully removing larger limbs. The results will be trees and shrubs with healthier and fuller growth, better flowers and fruit, and a more attractive home landscape. Free. RSVP at <http://mgmv.org/rsvp-for-public-education-classes/> to receive a link to participate.

SATURDAY/FEB. 22

Feel the Heritage 2025. Noon to 5 p.m. At Charles Drew Community Center,

Arlington. Arlington's 31st annual Feel the Heritage Festival welcomes hundreds each year to learn about the Arlington's historically African-American neighborhoods with live entertainment, delicious food and dozens of vendors.

SATURDAY/FEB. 22

"Women in the Military: A Long and Honored Tradition", 10:30 am – 12:00 pm at Lubber Run Community Center, 300 N. Park Drive, Arlington. Presented by Arlington AAUW.

Speaker is CDR Sandra Lawrence, USN Ret.

FRIDAY/FEB. 28

Native Spring Ephemerals. 10:00 11:30 a.m., Online. While they bloom for only a short time, ephemerals such as Bloodroot, Trout Lily, and Virginia Bluebells can add beauty to the home garden in spring while providing critical support to early-emerging pollinators. Join Extension Master Gardener Elaine Mills for a greatly updated

BULLETIN BOARD

FROM PAGE 14

bonva.org/audubon-at-home-1/ for more.

Naloxone (Narcan) can save the life of someone who is overdosing, if given in time. Anyone who assists a person in need is protected from liability by the Good Samaritan Law. Naloxone (Narcan) is available without a prescription for a fee at all pharmacies. Obtain it for free by attending a REVIVE! training. Contact Emily Siqveland at 703-228-0913 or esiqveland@arlingtonva.us or visit health.arlingtonva.us/opioid-awareness/ for available training sessions. The Chris Atwood Foundation also offers training to the public. Visit www.chrisatwoodfoundation.org/naloxone for details.

Monthly Memory Café. 1-3 p.m. at 7910 Andrus Road, Suite 6, Alexandria. The Memory Café, a social gathering for individuals living with memory loss and their families, virtually. Registration is free and highly recommended to reserve spots, which are open on a first come first served basis. To reserve a spot, please call 571-210-5551 or email bdesai@seniorhelpers.com. Visit www.dementiacare-connections.com/memory-cafe or www.seniorhelpers.com/arlington-alexandria-va for more.

Aging Matters. 2-3 p.m. Tuesdays on WERA 96.7 LP FM on Arlington's community radio station. Each week host Cheryl Beversdorf interviews individuals with expertise about a broad array of aging related topics affecting the lives of older adults and their loved ones. Visit www.facebook.com/agingmatterswera to listen to programs. <https://www.mixcloud.com/AgingMatters/>

Volunteer Bike Repair Night. First Tuesday of the month, 6-9 p.m. at Phoenix Bikes, Barcroft Park, 4200 S. Four Mile Run Drive. Volunteers gather to refurbish bikes, sort parts or help with essential tasks. No experience necessary. Public Financial Fraud, Waste and Abuse Hotline. Arlington County public hotline that offers a confidential and secure way to report suspected incidents of financial fraud, waste and abuse. Anyone can submit a complaint to the hotline at 1-866-565-9206 or at arlingtonva.ethicaladvocate.com. The hotline website is

available in English and Spanish. Phone calls can be taken in many languages.

Created by the Arlington Initiative to Rethink Energy (AIRE) in partnership with the Arlington Public Library, the nation's First Energy Lending Library made its debut on Earth Day. Meant to resolve energy issues in the Arlington community, efficiency tools can be borrowed, such thermal imaging cameras, energy meters and books play a vital role in achieving a "greener" home. Open Sun-Sat 10 a.m.-9 p.m. 1015 N. Quincy St. Visit library.arlingtonva.us/locations/central-library or call 703-228-5990.

Arlington Rotary Club Lunches. Thursdays, 12 - 1:30 p.m. Club meetings are at 12:15 to 1:15 on the second and fourth Thursdays of each month. On the 2nd Thursday we meet at a restaurant in Arlington (currently Texas Jacks BBQ). On the 4th Thursday we meet via Zoom (click HERE to join). Newcomers are welcome to join the Zoom meeting.. Organization comes together for humanitarian services. Listen to guest speakers on various topics of interest. Visit <https://arlingtonrotaryclub.org/>

Job Seeking Help. 5-9 p.m at Columbia Pike Branch Library, 816 S. Walter Reed Drive. Receive job-related help from the staff and volunteers with applications. Free, but requires registration. Visit www.arlingtonva.libcal.com.

Arlington PFLAG Community Group. 7:30-9 p.m. on the second Tuesday of each month, PFLAG promotes the equality and well-being of gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender people and their families. Meets at the Unitarian Universalist Church of Arlington, 4444 Arlington Boulevard. Contact arl.pflag@gmail.com for more or go to www.pflagdc.org

Helmsmen Toastmasters meet Thursdays, 7:30-8:45 a.m. at Pentagon Library and Conference Center. Toastmasters is an international organization that helps everyone speak, think, lead and listen better. Most clubs are meeting online at this time. Contact Carl Sabath carl.e.sabath.civ@mail.mil or 703-695-2804 or Elizabeth Femrite elizabeth.m.femrite.civ@mail.mil or 571-256-8674.

Soil Testing. Virginia Cooperative Extension is offering soil testing services to analyze soil and determine what is needed to condition soil for plantings. The routine soil test is all one normally needs for a fertility evaluation. Pick up soil sampling box at the Virginia Cooperative Extension Arlington office, 3308 S. Stafford St., 8 a.m.-5 p.m. Monday-Friday. Send filled soil sample box with form and fee to the Virginia Tech Lab for analysis. Fees vary, visit www.soiltest.vt.edu/Files.

Alzheimer's Association Support Group has meetings. They are open to people with Alzheimer's, their caregivers, family members and friends. Free. Call the Alzheimer's Association 24/7 Helpline at 703-359-4440 or 800-272-3900 before attending a group for the first time to verify meeting information, obtain directions or other information about the group. A complete list of all groups in the National Capital Area region can be found at https://www.alz.org/nca/helping_you/support_groups.

Pentagon Legacy Toastmasters meet Tuesdays 5:15-6:30 p.m. in the Pentagon Main Cafeteria/food court, left of Dunkin Donuts. Most clubs are meeting online at this time. Toastmasters is an international organization that helps people speak, think, lead and listen better. Call 703-695-2604 www.toastmasters.org.

The Friends of the Planetarium Visit www.friendsoftheplanetarium.org to find up-to-date show times, a schedule of future events, information about Friends of the Planetarium membership, astronomy news and events, the history of the David M. Brown Planetarium, a link to the Friends' store, and more.

The Northern Virginia Regional Park Authority announces that cyclists and pedestrians will now have access to the W&OD Trail beyond normal daylight hours. The new W&OD Trail hours are from 5 a.m. to 9 p.m., from Shirlington in Arlington County, to the western town limit of Herndon in Fairfax County.

Lifeline Personal Alert System. Virginia Hospital Center Senior Health staff locally manage the personal emergency response system. Help is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Monthly cost starts at \$42. Call 703-558-6859 for more.

"Diechotomy"



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

As a longtime cancer patient, I've always made a point of exuding as much positivity as I could muster (or die trying). My theory was that if I put out positive vibes than I'd likely receive them back. And by receiving positive vibes, et cetera, I'd feel more positive myself. Basically, it's a cyclical/selfish strategy to make me feel positive/good. And if there's one emotion a cancer patient can't get enough of, it's positivity – with a side of humor.

After 15+ years of various interactions with people who see me regularly and others who hardly see me at all, I have become hip to their well-intentioned observations. The dichotomy is, most of the comments about my appearance have been wrong but said for the right reason: my self-image/self-confidence. They tell me I look great. Incredibly so almost given the ravaging effects of chemotherapy. And though I'm not a look-in-the-mirror type guy, I certainly see what I look like every morning as I look in the mirror while I brush my teeth and often, it ain't pretty. The treatment's side effects don't usually enhance your appearance. Far from it, in fact. (The understatement of the last decade and a half. Hardly is chemotherapy to be confused with a health and beauty-type spa.)

As the years have passed (thank God!) I have noticed an unintended consequence of these, almost universally, flattering descriptions of my appearance. The "You look great, Ken" is invariably followed by a comparison to how bad I looked the last time this person saw me. Which in arrears now means I looked terrible before; my face was drawn, its color was off, my pallor was gray and so forth. Meant as a sincere expression of encouragement and my improvement/wherewithal on my condition, they are all too familiar. I can't look good now and have looked bad before when before I – at that time, you said I also looked good and so on so on going back to 2009, when my chemotherapy began. Every present I was told I looked good compared to every before when I was told I looked bad. It was sort of an ambidextrous-type comment: I looked both bad and good - simultaneously. Irrespective of the truth, I was praised with positivity. As such, my reflection in the mirror bothered me less as their opinions seemed to affect me more. And if I did receive any negative/possibly honest opinions, I would recall one of my late father's go-to advisories: "Every knock is a boost." Regardless of what observations were made to/about me, I took it all in stride. Never too high. Never too low. And when the always good now/always bad before juxtaposition became clear to me, I laughed. I guess that's what friends and family do for people they care about.

Not that occasionally there wasn't an ounce (literally) of truth to their intended-to-be-sincere comments, but I never believed half of the over-the-top descriptions of how good I looked anyway. Besides, it was more important/beneficial to me that people's attitude toward me was upbeat and encouraging. Granted, the truth might set you free, but I needed/preferred that the lies carry me forward.

Undergoing chemotherapy is a long slog. And for me there were no guarantees. I'm not cured by any means, but I sure am grateful for all the positivity I received.

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

BIRDING



PHOTO BY GLENDA BOOTH

A red-bellied woodpecker



PHOTO BY GLENDA BOOTH

Birds like this cardinal like to fluff their feathers in bird baths.



PHOTO BY GLENDA BOOTH

Other wildlife like this deer eat bird seeds too.

Bird-feeding Can Bring Winter Cheer

FROM PAGE 11

with human-introduced feeding, birds still consume three-quarters of their diet elsewhere, says Cornell University experts.

What Backyard Birds Need

The key to attracting birds is to meet their three basic needs for food, water and shelter. The more a property can include those elements, the more birds will use the property. A bird bath usually attracts birds. As for shelter, nearby evergreens and brush piles are ideal. Birds like “staging areas,” nearby vegetation and trees where they digest or monitor feeders before darting over for a meal.

For seed-eating birds, black oil sunflower seeds are the all-around favorite because they are high in fat and have thin shells that are easy to crack. Some birds will also eat sunflower hearts, nyjer and safflower seeds, suet and nuts.

The more diverse the food, the more diverse the birds that show up.

Experts recommend growing and leaving some natural food for winter's birds, like leaving native berries and other fruit on bushes, trees and plants like dogwood, holly, cedar, Virginia creeper, sassafras, sumac and American bittersweet. Ground-foraging birds will find seeds that fall from summer's flowers. Leaf litter can provide a banquet of insects, seeds and nuts.

Some people save and dry squash and melon seeds. For some birds, seeds are not a major part of their diet so fruit like dried raisins and currants, soaked in water or frozen



PHOTO BY GLENDA BOOTH

A house finch and female northern cardinal

berries, “served” on a plate can attract the non-seed-eating birds.

Where to Put Bird Feeders

For bird watching, the feeder should be visible from your home and easy to fill. Ideally, birds need natural shelter like trees and shrubs nearby for cover and from which to come and go, but far enough away so that squirrels and cats cannot jump from the vegetation onto feeders. Brush piles can provide escape cover.

More than one billion birds die from window collisions in the United States each year, says the Northern Virginia Bird Alliance. Birds mistake the reflection of trees and vegetation in windows for open space



PHOTO BY LARRY MEADE

Rufous Hummingbird at a hummingbird feeder

and fly into the glass. It's not just skyscrapers. One- to three-story buildings, including homes, cause 44 percent of the bird deaths from window collisions, and buildings four to eleven stories high cause most of the remaining deaths, says the Alliance. The Cornell Lab of Ornithology recommends placing feeders at least 30 feet away from windows.

Regular Cleaning

It's important to keep bird feeders and the ground below them clean because bacteria can accumulate and spread disease, especially as temperatures warm. Wash feeders around twice a week with mild soap and water, rinse well and dry.

Store bird seed in a tight, dry container, preferably metal, to prevent disease and protect the seeds from rodents and other critters.

Birds also need water to drink. If the water is less than two inches deep, they'll use it to fluff up their feathers. Experts recommend changing the water daily and scrubbing the bird bath weekly.

Why feed birds? Larry Meade, president of the Northern Virginia Bird Club, says, “Feeders give people enjoyment and engage them with their local birds. Also, Project Feederwatch and the Great Backyard Bird Count provide an opportunity for people with feeders to collect valuable data on bird populations.”



PHOTO BY LARRY MEADE

American Goldfinch at a feeder



PHOTO BY LARRY MEADE

House Finch at a bird feeder



PHOTO BY LARRY MEADE

Pine Siskin at a feeder