

# The Arlington Connection

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PHOTO BY SHIRLEY RUHE/THE CONNECTION

Brothers Isaac and Aidan Lima try out driving the fire engine at the ceremony Saturday, April 26.

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MAY 7-20, 2025

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## News

### Early Voting Locations & Hours June 17, 2025 Democratic Primary Election.

Voters need an acceptable form of ID.

Voters mark and cast their ballot on the spot. They only need to bring an acceptable ID.

Location	Dates & Hours
<b>Courthouse Plaza</b> 2100 Clarendon Blvd, Ste 320	<b>May 2 - June 13</b> Monday - Friday.....8am - 5pm <i>*Courthouse Plaza will be closed on Monday, May 26 for Memorial Day</i> <b>June 7 &amp; 14</b> Saturday.....9am - 5pm <b>Extended Hours - June 10 &amp; 12</b> Tuesday & Thursday.....8am - 7pm
<b>Madison Community Center</b> 3829 N Stafford St	<b>June 7 &amp; 14</b> Saturday.....9am - 5pm <b>June 10 &amp; 12</b> Tuesday & Thursday.....2pm - 7pm
<b>Walter Reed Community Center</b> 2909 16th St S	<b>June 7 &amp; 14</b> Saturday.....9am - 5pm <b>June 10 &amp; 12</b> Tuesday & Thursday.....2pm - 7pm

See <https://vote.arlingtonva.gov/Elections> for more information, including how to vote by mail, detailed ID requirements and more.

### Two Arlington Primary Races

**House of Delegates - 1st District**  
Arjoon Srikanth  
Sean Phillip Epstein  
Patrick A. Hope

**County Board**  
James A. DeVita  
Takis P. Karantonis

SEE STATEWIDE CONTESTS, PAGE 5

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## Black Heritage Kept Alive with New Fire Station #8

BY SHIRLEY RUHE  
ARLINGTON CONNECTION

**T**he apparatus bay of Fire Station Number 8 was packed with descendants of the original Black volunteer firefighter department that started in 1918, members of the local neighborhood, friends and local officials. As Arlington County Fire Chief David Povlitz observed, “The amount of smiles and hugs here today is off the charts, amazing. It signifies the struggle, determination and progress.”

Noah Simon, chair of the Citizen’s Task Force to make a rec-

**“It was a beacon of light, a beacon of hope.”**

— Greg Emanuel

ommendation on the fire station, pointed out after 3,218 days the new fire station had become a reality, and “I’ve counted every one of them. I’m probably the most excited person up here.” Simon said he saw it as a great challenge and heard unbelievable stories along the way both of racism and of heroism.

Libby Garvey was the Arlington board chair at the time the project began to replace the aging fire station and move it to a new location. “We thought it would go quickly. Everyone thought it was a done

deal. But when we had the first meeting in a local living room I got quite an earful. It was not an easy conversation, and I realized it was about a whole lot more than a fire station.”

“Amen” reverberated from the back of the room.

The fire station had its beginnings back in 1918 when the Black neighborhood of Halls Hill was unable to get service from the White fire stations in the County. So they started their own volunteer group in a small garage with just a few people and no funding or equipment from the county. As time went on the Black volunteer fire department received fewer resources than the white volunteer companies in Arlington and were excluded from the transition to a career-based system in 1940 until 1951.

Then Julian M. Syphax and Alfred W. Clark became the first paid Black firemen in Arlington County.

But although each speaker at the Saturday ceremony told the story in a slightly different way, it became clear “the fire station was not about the building but about the people” as stated by Greg Emanuel, Arlington County Director of the Department of Environmental Services. It was considered a safe place in the community. “It was a beacon of light, a beacon of hope.”

It was a gathering place with the  
SEE BLACK HERITAGE, PAGE 4



Del. Patrick Hope and Fire Chief David Povlitz uncouple the fire hose (equivalent to a ribbon cutting) at the April 26 event.



Honored guests Hartman Reed, the last living member of the first paid Black firefighter at Fire Station Number 8, and Jerome Smith as the last living volunteer.



Fire station number 8 holds a grand opening event on Saturday, April, 26.



Del. Patrick Hope presents a plaque to Hartman Reed, the last living member of the first paid Fire Station number 8 team.

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# Black Heritage Kept Alive with New Fire Station #8

PHOTOS BY SHIRLEY RUHE/THE CONNECTION

FROM PAGE 3

only public telephone and a soda machine.

Del. Patrick Hope recognized Hartman Reed, the last living member of the first paid Fire Station Number 8 team with a plaque representing his courage and commitment. In addition, Jerome Smith, the last living station volunteer firefighter was recognized with applause by the attendees.

Wilma Jones, a lifetime resident of Halls Hill and the chair of the John M. Langston Civic Association remembers that the fire station was truly a community gathering place. People in the neighborhood lined up at the fire station with their ration books during World War II to get their sugar. She adds that the history and legacy were important reasons behind retaining the present location for the fire station, but that the data backed it up. "We were growing faster than the area where they wanted to move us, and that location didn't want the fire station relocated there."

Takis Karantonis, current chair of the Arlington County Board, said the initial fire station was located on the grounds of a former plantation 150 years prior where free slaves and a few families who could afford a home built a community and then were denied services from their own community. "They got together and said, 'We'll fix that.' Thank you so much for that. It inspires me every day."

Povlitz described the new, state-of-the-art 20,000 square foot fire station with three levels and three engine bays. "It is safe and comfortable to meet the needs of the first responders with modern training and rest spaces." The facility has a decontamination zone where firefighters throw in their uniforms to wash which is "huge" to guarantee their safety, and a pharmacy if they need immediate access for



**Takis Karontokis, Arlington County Board Chair.**



**Former Arlington County Board chair Libby Garvey**



**Arlington Fire Chief David Povlitz**



**Chair of Citizens Task Force Neal Simon.**



**Wilma Jones, long-time Halls Hill resident and chair of the John M. Langston Civic Association.**

an emergency. Povlitz says in 2024 they answered 2,100 EMS calls.

In closing Povlitz says, "Please check your smoke detector, and if you hear a chirp please make a change" to laughter from the crowd.

Mercedes Clark Baker, self described as daughter number four of the first Black captain Alfred Clark, ended the day's remarks. She said the powerful men and women who made this happen "had a lot to overcome but they didn't know they couldn't do it." She called the names of the original 14 firemen and asked the families in attendance to be recognized.

Every speaker thanked every other speaker and everyone else and rightfully so because it had taken a lot of people to overcome a lot of obstacles, both physical and political, to make this happen.

Some small children who couldn't wait for the program to end and the family activities to begin were peering through the glass windows at the ceremony while others were exploring the fire engines lined up outside. After the conclusion of the event, tours were offered along with a slice of cake baked by the Heidelberg Bakery across the street.



**Brothers Isaac and Aidan Lima try out driving the fire engine at the ceremony Saturday, April 26.**



**Nolan Watzman climbs on the fire engine sitting outside Fire Station Number 8.**



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## OPINION

# School Libraries Key To School Success

**L**ibraries can be an often-overlooked element of a school's success. Standards of Learning, reading goals and other programs that receive testing may be measured in a vacuum, but should they be? April is School Library Month, the perfect time to recognize the effectiveness of libraries in the academic and personal growth of students in our community.

National studies have shown that effective school libraries - those which collaborate with their teachers, encourage student visits, and teach information literacy skills - can improve reading scores on standardized tests (LRS, 2013). One contributing factor is the extension of work hours for library staff, which is now threatened in Arlington.

The APS 2026 budget unveiled on March 13th proposes to cut the hours of library aides by half as a cost-saving measure (APS,

2025, p. 11). Though this aligns with the budgetary goals of APS, it could inadvertently reduce the effectiveness of school libraries and, in turn, negatively impact reading scores. Many libraries, including some school libraries, supplement staffing with volunteer aides to ensure that the librarians can make the most effective use of their time.

As this School Library Month ends, I highly recommend that any interested parents or even students inquire with APS about volunteering in a school library. In addition to supporting the library staff, it is a great way to become more involved at your school. As a school librarian myself, I can say that my library volunteers have helped me focus my time on essential instructional planning and become great friends of the library itself.

**Samuel Barrett**  
Arlington

## Statewide Contests

FROM PAGE 2

**T**here is no June 17 primary for Virginia governor because the Democratic and Republican parties nominated their candidates, who will appear on the ballot in November. The Republican candidate for governor is Winsome Sears. The Democratic candidate is Abigail Spanberger.

For Virginia's lieutenant governor, there are six Democratic candidates in the primary: Levar Marcus Stoney, Babur Lateef, Aaron Rouse, Victor Salgado, Ghazala Hashmi, and Alexander J. Bastan.

There is no Republican primary for lieutenant governor because on April 21, Pat Herrity dropped out for health reasons after heart surgery. John Reid is the Republican nominee.

There are two Democratic candidates for attorney general in the June 17 Democratic primary: Jerrauld "Jay" Jones and Shannon Taylor. The winner will face off against the Republican candidate, Jason Miyares in November.

## Stamp Out Hunger

**S**tamp Out Hunger is the largest one-day food drive in America, and letter carriers are proud to deliver for every food bank counting on us — over 1.9

billion pounds of food collected since 1993. All you have to do is leave your donation of non-perishable food by your mailbox on Saturday, May 10.

### Let Us Know Your View

Connection Newspapers welcomes views on any public issue. Letters must be signed. Include home address and home and business numbers; we will only print your name and town name. Letters are routinely edited for length, libel, grammar, good taste, civility and factual errors.

#### Send letters

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# Encore Stage & Studio Shows Off Student's Courage To ...

BY SHIRLEY RUHE  
ARLINGTON CONNECTION

**E**ncore Stage & Studio, founded in 1967, held a benefit breakfast, "The Courage To ..." at the Washington Golf and Country Club on April 30. Student actors shared their own stories about the courage it took to ... practice and practice and yell out their first theatre line ever "Hip Hip Hooray."

The tables were filled with smiling parents, board members and community supporters as well as a good representation of student actors identified by their gold crowns. Their T-shirts in orange "Lion King," turquoise "Finding Nemo," and green "Student Directed One Act Plays" advertised the plays they had appeared in at Encore.

The program included presentation of the 2025 Celeste Award to Cindy Kane, recognizing her as the 2025 outstanding volunteer.

Encore's slogan is "Theatre by Kids for Kids." Their seasons include seven or eight productions a year produced by actors and crew members 9-18 years old. Encore also offers classes, workshops, private lessons and camps, with scholarships offered throughout the community.

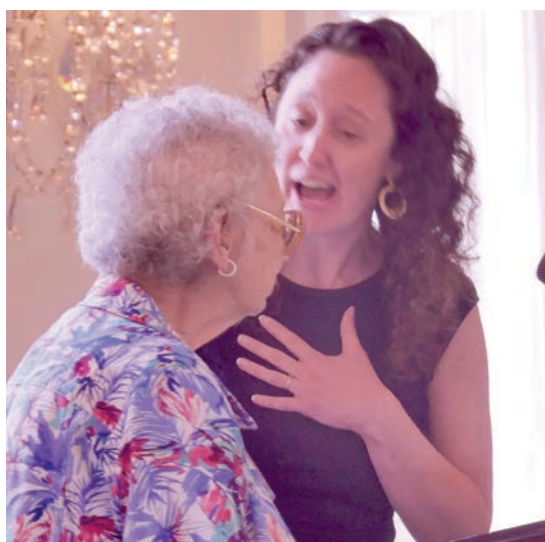
Encore says, "When children attend an Encore program they become storytellers, actors, costume designers, singers, dancers and most importantly, creative, self-confident kids."

The current production is "The Wizard of Oz" from May 30-June 8 at the Thomas Jefferson Community Theatre at 125 S. Glebe Rd. in Arlington.



An enthusiastic audience focuses on the performance of the Encore student actors at the benefit breakfast April 30.

**Sara Duke, Executive Director of Encore Stage and Studio since 2010, presents the Volunteer of the Year award to Cindy Kane.**



PHOTOS BY  
SHIRLEY RUHE  
THE CONNECTION



The student performers entertain their supporters, parents and members of the staff at the annual benefit gala held at the Washington Golf and Country Club.



Arnold Litzner with his Saturday lemonade stand.

## First Lemonade of The Summer Season

BY SHIRLEY RUHE

**N**ine- (almost) ten-year-old Arnold Litzner set up his lemonade stand at 9:30 a.m. on the corner of George Mason and Yorktown Boulevard on Saturday, May 3. He confessed he made the pitcher of lemonade with lemon-flavored Kool-Aid. A customer steps up and asks, "How much?"

"Anything," Arnold replies.

"I just have a two-dollar bill; is that ok?"

Arnold thinks it is very interesting to have a two-dollar bill and pours a large cup. He says he thinks he will use the proceeds of his lemonade stand to buy a game.





Picnic tables are filled with enthusiastic barbecue fans at the Doorways fundraiser May 1 at Rocklands.

# Doorways Fundraiser Assists with Family Support

BY SHIRLEY RUHE  
ARLINGTON CONNECTION

**I**t is hot and sticky— perfect weather for oysters and IPA at Doorways 19th barbecue fundraiser May 1 at Rocklands on Washington Blvd. Picnic tables are filled with families and friends enjoying pork barbecue with all the fixings.

The line for the Rocklands buffet of cornbread, baked beans, salad, and mac-and-cheese ends with the 80-pound BBQ pig that had been smoked over hickory wood for 10-12 hours. Rigo Marquez slices it and piles the meat on

each paper plate. Marquez says, “It was cooked with nothing on it; the flavor comes from the wood.” An hour into the event this pig is almost gone with another on the way.

If you have any space left on your plate, there are the oysters on the grill nearby. The grill master says he is smoking Maryland oysters 5-6 minutes and has 500 ready to grill if needed.

Ben Wohl from Right Proper Brewing in D.C. is offering several brews on tap while Jim Sheats One Man Band is entertaining the crowd nearby.

Joy Myers, Doorways Chief Development

and Strategy Director, says Doorways is starting to feel the contraction in philanthropy. “Right now the biggest need is to support the families in their living units. The biggest challenge has been their loss of income due to the economy and their inability to pay their rent and other expenses.”

Doorways is a community-based nonprofit providing services, shelter and supportive housing for survivors of domestic violence and sexual assault and their families.

**Bryce Zaporowski has wiped the BBQ off his face and is ready for his picture.**



Rigo Marquez is slicing an 80-pound pig at the Doorways fundraising barbecue on May 1.

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Jim Sheats One Man Band entertaining the crowd.



The grill is hot, as 500 Maryland oysters are smoked at the 19th Doorways barbecue fundraiser.



Ben Wohl fills a plastic cup with an IPA on draft from Right Proper in D.C.



# Bunnies, Tombstones and Hot Dogs At Walker Chapel Easter Egg Hunt

How much fun is an Easter Egg Hunt in a cemetery?

BY SHIRLEY RUHE  
ARLINGTON CONNECTION

There are Easter Egg Hunts and then there are Easter Egg Hunts in the cemetery. Walker Chapel United Methodist Church hosted a community Easter Egg Hunt in their historic cemetery on Saturday, April 19.

Some children lined up early while others twirled a hula hoop or posed with the bunny, and a few tried to peer beyond the gate to scout out eggs ahead of time. When 11:30 a.m. finally arrived, about 30 children crowded around the edge of the cemetery while the rules of the day were laid out.

“Children 4 years or younger can start right here; children 5-6 years-old can search in the middle while those over 7 have to head to the far side of the cemetery over by the road. If anyone older picks up an egg along the way, the Easter bunny will wave a flag and you have to give it up to one of the youngest egg hunters.”

Ready, set? Ready, set? Ready, go! The group scatters in all directions weaving around Ennis, Groom and straight past the Walker grave markers headed to the far side of the cemetery. Smaller children peer around the closer tall markers looking for a colorful egg hidden along the side.

In just over five minutes the Easter Egg Hunt is over, and the grilled hot dogs aren't quite ready for the kid who has scampered over to be first in line. Jean Anderson, a member of Walker Chapel, plops the hot dogs in buns as fast as they arrive from the grill, and most head right past the catsup and mustard, ignore the grapes and load their plate with popcorn.

Some of the children choose to find a place to sit and spread their eggs out on the parking lot to pry them open and find out what is inside. Sometimes it's a tiny chicken,



PHOTOS BY SHIRLEY RUHE/THE CONNECTION

Children run in all directions past the tombstones to gather up Easter Eggs on Saturday at Walker Chapel.

other times it's small bites of cherry candy. Ellie O'Connor and her sister Claire choose to investigate the fuzzy bunnies inside the

pens set up in the yard. Another pen nearby sits empty since the rooster has escaped and is pecking at a small carrot nearby.

Walker Chapel members estimate the tradition of holding the community Easter Egg Hunt goes back at least 35 years.



An eager hot dog fan



Now we have the egg but what could be inside it?



Jean Anderson dishes up hot dogs fresh off the grill after the Easter Egg Hunt at Walker Chapel Saturday, April 19.



# 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>

## 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.

## SPRINGTIME AT AMAZON'S MET PARK

Take advantage of the wonderful weather, music, activities, fitness classes and food at Amazon's Met Park, 1400 S Eads St, Arlington, with special events and weekly programming. Since its grand opening in 2023, Met Park has served as a top venue for community engagement events, and the program offerings continue to grow!

This May, Met Park has something for everyone, with series that are sure to become a regular part of DMV residents' routines. Whether you are looking to get moving or connect with others in the community, Amazon's Met Park hosts multiple events every week in partnership with local organizations to create special experiences for businesses, locals and guests.

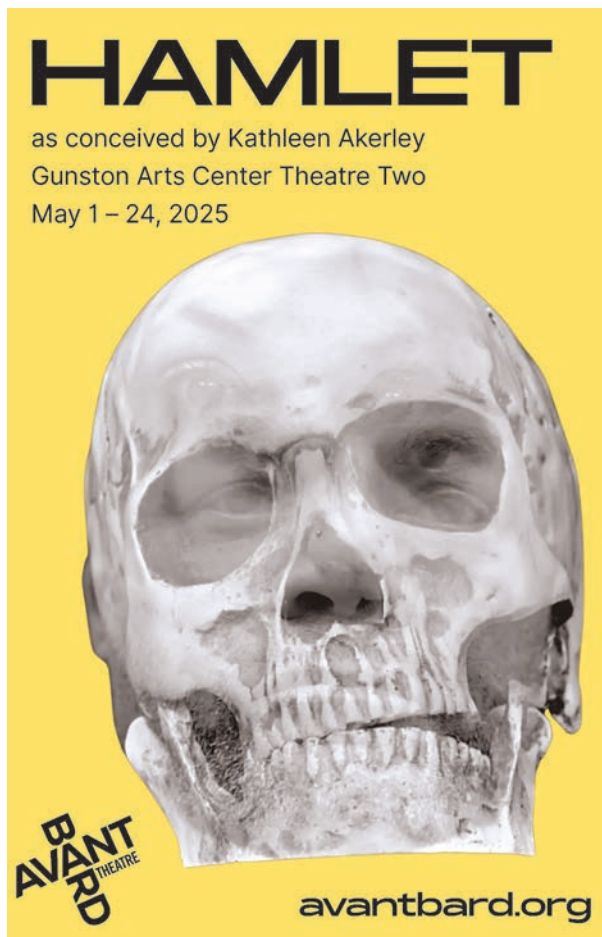
Met Park's May series and special events include: Crafts and Jazz Series

Live music and crafting series for the whole family in partnership with the Museum of Contemporary Art Arlington (MoCA), DC Jazz Festival and National Landing BID

Event dates:  
 10 a.m. – 1 p.m. every Sunday through June 15  
 4:30 p.m. – 6:30 p.m. every Thursday from May 8 to June 12

Farmers Market

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**A Passage of Force Through Matter: Current Painting can be seen at the Museum of Contemporary Art Arlington (MoCA) now through May 25, 2025.**

bread, teas, baked goods and more

Event dates:

10am – 1 p.m. every Saturday

11am – 2 p.m. every Tuesday

New Series: Bingo

Met Park is kicking off a new bingo series!

Event dates:

4 p.m. – 5 p.m. every other Wednesday through June. The bingo dates in May are the 7th and 21st

Doggie Days 2025

Showcasing Amazon's dog-friendly culture while bringing together Amazon employees, their canine companions, vendors, and community members.

Event dates and location:

The full week of May 12 – 16 from 11:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.

Location: WAS17 Near Banana Stand and WAS17 1st Floor Lobby. Rain Option: WAS17 COE; WAS17 1st Floor Lobby

Amazon Armed Forces Cycling Classic

The Amazon Armed Forces Cycling Classic is the region's premier cycling event, with opportunities to participate for cyclists of all abilities.

Event date: May 31, 2025, from 10 a.m. – 2:15 p.m. and June 1st, 9:45 a.m. – 2:15 p.m.

## NOW THRU MAY 23

**Shakespeare's Hamlet.** At Gunston Arts Center, Theatre Two, Arlington. Directed by Avant



**The Armed Forces Cycling Classic takes place May 31 to June 1, 2025 in Arlington.**

Check out Shakespeare's Hamlet now through May 23, 2025 at Gunston Arts Center in Arlington.

Drawing on his background in lighting design and technology for the stage, he creates fully immersive artworks. InSomething to Do With My Hands, Ice presents a new installation created for SOLOS 2025 that explores issues of care, maintenance, and creation.

## NOW THRU MAY 25

**Brandon Morse: Gradually, All at Once.** At Museum of Contemporary Art Arlington (MoCA). Truland Gallery, Lower Level. Brandon Morse, Continental Drift, 2025, Generative video, sound, mixed media. Brandon Morse works with generative systems in order to examine the poetic and metaphorical potential of physical phenomena such as entropy and emergence. Through the use of code and the creation of custom computer software, he builds simulations of seemingly complex systems. The resulting videos and video installations seek to draw parallels between the ways these systems work and the ways in which we, both individually and collectively, navigate the world around us. Brandon Morse: Gradually, All at Once takes place as part of MoCA Arlington's SOLOS 2025, part of the Museum's long-running SOLOS exhibition program.

## THURSDAY/MAY 8

**80th Anniversary of VE Day. 6:30 to 8:30 p.m.**

At GMU's Mason Square Auditorium, 3351 Fairfax Drive, Arlington. The Arlington Sister City Association (ASCA) presents an enlightening and engaging educational panel discussion to commemorate the 80th Anniversary of Victory in Europe (VE) Day, marking the end of World War II in Europe. Learn about the experiences of three of ASCA's Sister Cities — Aachen, Germany; Reims, France; and Ivano-Frankivsk, Ukraine — during this pivotal time in world history.

## FRIDAY/MAY 9

**Free Classical Music. 12 p.m.** The Friday Morning Music Club invites everyone to a free classical music concert on May 9 at Saint George's Church, 915 N. Oakland St., one block from Virginia Square Metro Station. The concert features Schubert's sonata for cello and piano; Reineke's sonata for flute and piano; and Beethoven's Waldstein piano sonata. Free, no ticket required. Visit <https://fmmc.org>

## FRIDAY/MAY 9

**Observance of 2025 Peace Officers Memorial Day.**

At 8 a.m. At Arlington County Justice Center Plaza, 1425 North Courthouse Road, Arlington. The Arlington County Police Department and the Arlington County Sheriff's Office will gather to honor and pay tribute to the memory of the seven law enforcement officers of Arlington County who made the ultimate sacrifice in service to our community. This solemn ceremony is held each year ahead of National Police Week which recognizes those law enforcement officers throughout the United States who have lost

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# ENTERTAINMENT

FROM PAGE 9

their lives in the line of duty for the safety and protection of others and provides support to their survivors. This year's ceremony will commemorate the 20th anniversary of the dedication of the Arlington County Peace Officer Memorial Statue, located in the Arlington County Justice Center Plaza.

## SATURDAY/MAY 10

**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 May's show is the hilarious Winston Hodges!

## WEDNESDAY/MAY 14

**Northern Virginia Bird Alliance Birdathon.** At Monticello Park, Alexandria. Please consider joining anytime Wednesday, May 14 (Rain date May 15) – you don't have to commit the whole day! Birders of all skill levels are welcome. They are hoping to see more than the 58 species (18 warblers) they saw last year. And whether or not you can join – consider donating. This is a fundraiser – and the contributions will go to Stretch Our Parks program – in Monticello Park and at the other sites - and to other NVBA activities. Visit the website: <https://donorbox.org/birdathon-2025/fundraiser/libby-lyons> Contact Libby: email ([libbylyons99@gmail.com](mailto:libbylyons99@gmail.com)) or text/call (202-415-4946.) Russ: email ([rrussell.bailey@gmail.com](mailto:rrussell.bailey@gmail.com)) or text/call (571-606-5534.)

## THURSDAYS, MAY 15 AND 22

**Rosslyn Cinema.** At Central Place Plaza, Arlington. Rosslyn Cinema returns for two nights of outdoor movies. Gather your family and friends at 8 p.m. for an evening at Central Place Plaza.

May 15: Twisters

May 22: The Wizard of Oz

Seating and cash bar will open at 6 p.m.; movies begin at 8 p.m.

## MAY 15 TO JUNE 29

**Student Art Show.** At Arlington Artists Alliance

Galleries, The Crossing Clarendon at 2700 Clarendon Blvd., Suite R330, Arlington. Arlington Artists Alliance will host its sixth partnership exhibition for high school students from the Arlington Career Center, at the Alliance Gallery @ The Crossing Clarendon. Through mentorship of Arlington Artists Alliance staff and volunteers, students will participate in developing and producing a professional art show. Students will learn all aspects of art show production including curating the exhibition, designing promotional materials, framing, pricing, and providing inventory details to the gallery. Gallery Hours Wed-Sun 12-6 pm; Opening Reception: Thursday, May 15, 2025 from 5-7 p.m. Visit [arlingtonartistsalliance.org/alliance-gallery](http://arlingtonartistsalliance.org/alliance-gallery)

## SATURDAY/MAY 17

**Arlington Palooza. 11 a.m. to 4 p.m.** At Lubber Run Community Center, Arlington. Bring your picnic blankets and dancing shoes to Lubber Run Community Center for a day filled with music, art, street vendors, food trucks, moon bounces, and more. Free!

## SATURDAY/MAY 17

**Spring Yard Sale and Open House. 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.** At 700 S. Buchanan St., Arlington. The Woman's Club of Arlington is holding an Open House, inviting the community to see the updated club house, meet some renters, learn about its programs and hear about its civic involvement. They are also seeking Yard Sale vendors to join. The vendor fee of \$20 is refundable if weather is severe. Please email with any questions: [womansclubarlington@gmail.com](mailto:womansclubarlington@gmail.com). Website: <https://womansclubarlington.org/>

## WEDNESDAY/MAY 21

**LGBTQ+ Community & Allies. 6 to 7:30 p.m.** At Arlington Central Library. LGBTQ+ Mental Health Panel Discussion: Join in a vital discussion on mental health issues in the LGBTQ+ community. Mental health professionals SC Nealy (LGBT+ Counseling Collaborative), Timothy Elliott (Timothy Q. Elliott, MSW LLC), and representatives from He She Ze and We and Safe Space NOVA will discuss the unique challenges LGBTQ+ folks face with mental health and barriers to mental health care, as well as resources and

strategies for improving your mental health as an LGBTQ+ person.

## MAY 23-26

**Veterans Art Exhibit.** At 3445 Washington Blvd., Arlington. American Legion Post 139 will host its first annual Veterans Art Exhibit Memorial Day weekend, May 23–26, 2025, at the newly renovated Post. This free public event invites the community to experience powerful, deeply personal works of art created by local veteran artisans. This unique exhibition highlights the creative talents of veterans and family members who have transformed their military experiences into meaningful works of art.

Event Schedule:

❖ Private Opening Reception (Invitation Only): Friday, May 23, 6 – 9 p.m.

❖ Artist Talk and Awards Ceremony:

Monday, May 26, 1 – 2 p.m.

## SATURDAY/MAY 24

**Lesson Zero. 9:30 p.m. to 12:30 a.m.** At The Celtic House, 2500 Columbia Pike, Arlington. Admission is free and street parking is available. For more information see [www.youtube.com/lessonzero](http://www.youtube.com/lessonzero) and [www.reverbnation.com/lessonzero](http://www.reverbnation.com/lessonzero).

## MAY 31 TO JUNE 1

**Armed Forces Cycling Classic.** The weekend kicks off on Saturday, May 31, with the Amazon Armed Forces Cycling Classic's Challenge Ride. The Challenge Ride offers a 21km closed course that welcomes cycling enthusiasts of all skill levels, and will now start and finish in our Nation's Capital. Participants will enjoy the opportunity to ride against the backdrop of Washington, DC, and Arlington's most iconic landmarks. Participants can aim for gold, silver, or bronze medals, awarded based on the number of laps completed during the three-hour event. The weekend's activities also include two days of races, featuring the nation's top Pro/Am men's and women's cycling teams. Saturday's race will be held on a short, spectator friendly course in DC, utilizing the same start/finishing area as the Challenge Ride. On day two, the racing moves to Arlington, VA, for the 27th edition of the Clarendon Cup Pro/Am bike races. [cyclingclassic.org](http://cyclingclassic.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.*

### ARLINGTON CELEBRATES NEW FIRE STATION 8

Arlington County's new Fire Station No. 8 is officially in service, celebrated with a grand opening Saturday, April 26, that reflected the inspiring story of the men who created the company in service to its community in the historic Langston Boulevard corridor.

Founded in 1918 as the Halls Hill Volunteer Fire Department in a segregated Black neighborhood, Fire Station 8 remained for decades the only Arlington, Va. station staffed exclusively by Black firefighters, even after the firemen became paid members of the Arlington County Fire Department in 1951.

This is the latest Fire Station 8 facility located at or near 4845 Langston Blvd. (formerly Lee Highway).

### TRAFFIC ALERT:

#### 2025 NATIONAL POLICE WEEK 5K

The Arlington County Police Department will conduct road closures in order to accommodate the 2025 National Police Week 5K on Saturday, May 10, 2025. The race begins at approximately 9:00 a.m. and the following roadways will be closed in

order to accommodate the event:

From approximately 6:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.  
Army Navy Drive, from 12th Street S. to S. Eads Street  
Southbound Route 110 ramp to Army Navy Drive  
From approximately 8:30 a.m. to 9:30 a.m.  
Army Navy Drive, from S. Eads Street to S. Joyce Street  
S. Joyce Street, from Army Navy Drive to Columbia Pike  
Southgate Road, from S. Nash Street to Columbia Pike  
From approximately 8:30 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.  
S. Eads Street, from Army Navy Drive to 12th Street S.  
11th Street S., from S. Eads Street to Army Navy Drive  
Columbia Pike, from S. Joyce Street to the Washington Boulevard Ramp  
Southbound Washington Boulevard, from Memorial Circle to Columbia Pike  
Southbound Route 110, from I-66 East and Wilson Boulevard to Army Navy Drive / I-395 North ramp  
Northbound I-395 ramp to Army Navy Drive (Exit 8C)  
Ramp to Army Navy Drive from exit 8A / Arlington Ridge Road/ Washington Boulevard

### VOLUNTEER DRIVERS NEEDED

Have some extra time to drive a neighbor to a doctor's appointment? You pick the days, times, and places that are convenient for you. There is NO MINIMUM driving requirement. Not only do you help older adults in need, you also get to meet wonderful folks, often with very interesting backgrounds and

stories to tell. The Shepherd's Center of McLean-Arlington-Falls Church (SC-MAFC), is an all-volunteer, non-sectarian, non-profit organization. Its mission is providing free transportation to seniors for medical and dental appointments or run errands to grocery stores and pharmacies. To sign up, visit the website at <https://scmafc.org/volunteer>, or email [contact@scmafc.org](mailto:contact@scmafc.org) with questions.

### 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.

## Vegging Out in Print



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

During my “formative years,” childhood to now, other than baby food vegetables my late mother no doubt fed me (they didn't/don't have cream cheese and American cheese sandwiches - my go-to food staple, in a jar), other than Green Giant corn niblets and/or seasonal corn on the cob, I never, and I mean never, ate vegetables. Now whether it was my maternal grandmother's Eastern European cooking or my mother's need to clean up the kitchen by a certain time, I was never made to eat or even exposed to many vegetables while eating at home. (When my mother did cook a vegetable - primarily for my father, she used a pressure-cooker. Whatever life those vegetables had going into that pot, they came out limp and lifeless.)

As my eating habits have evolved (even cavemen and women evolved), I have occasionally had vegetables on my plate. Never a large portion but enough that I wasn't the object of ridicule. Mostly I have come to semi-tolerate green vegetables, even spinach believe it or not, Popeye cartoons notwithstanding. Apparently, vegetables, as I learned later in life, are not necessarily supposed to be cooked in a pressure-cooker or squeezed/ eaten out of a can. And when prepared properly, some vegetables actually taste okay.

In summary, I've become mostly civilized when it comes to food. Nothing to brag about and nowhere near normal. If the dinner was not prepared/selected, off the children's menu, it's likely most choices I won't eat for any number of reasons: name, look, smell, texture, country of origin, et cetera. I don't own any big-boy pants, so yours truly is more often than not, yours stupid/stubborn.

Recently however, I crossed the line between me and normal. Inadvertently, due to availability, I bought some pre-packaged French green beans. After eating them I found their “pencil thin mustache” width appealing in taste and appearance and not because they reminded me of Ricky Ricardo, as sung by the late, great Jimmy Buffett. As with Mikey, from those old Life cereal television commercials, Kenny likes it.

Unfortunately, ever since that first unintentional purchase and subsequent serving for dinner, in repeated trips to our local Sprouts supermarket where I originally bought these fancy green beans, I have been too late. The beans are all gone. After my third unsuccessful venture into their store/produce section, I did the first of two actions I've never done before. First, I asked a produce employee about a vegetable's availability, since during my mid-afternoon arrivals, the beans were always gone. Her answer was that the French beans are popular, and they usually run out. She then suggested I return in the morning.

This brings me to the second action.

Never, ever, have I made a special trip - in the morning no less, to a supermarket/produce stand, whatever, to buy a vegetable. This kind of ‘special’ action typically is reserved for an Entenmann's or a Ben & Jerry's ice cream sale, but a vegetable? To invoke one of my wife Dina's favorite quotes: “Hardly.” I can't say I'm proud of my behavior, but neither am I embarrassed. As my father-in-law so often says: “It is what it is.”

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



# Play It Forward Reaches Out to Change Lives

BY SHIRLEY RUHE  
ARLINGTON CONNECTION

**W**hen Nicole Kovar gave up her weekly piano lessons and dreaded practices after five years, she never would have guessed where she would be today as the owner of her own business, Piano and More.

"I started taking lessons when I was eight years old in Houston, Texas and had a piano teacher in her late 80s. I didn't like her approach and it was a tug of war with my mother to get me to practice every week."

Finally she says her mother let her quit after five years "and when I look back I would have predicted I would never touch the piano again."

But she says, "My mother knew I was a musician and told me I could quit piano but had to play another instrument. So I taught myself guitar, took voice lessons." Kovar went on to get a masters degree in science and nutrition "but music always called me. It was always a big part of my life."

She started teaching piano on the side after work. It really expanded when she moved to Arlington, spreading like wildfire until she had 35 students and a waiting list that continued to grow. "Students were looking for a different method. If they don't care about technique, I don't drill them. I have standards but I try to add fun like storytelling and games." When parents saw kids who actually wanted to perform after 4-5 months, she says it caught the attention of other moms.

So Kovar started Piano and More, a non-profit business in Arlington, Falls Church and McLean that aims for happy students and happy performers. They offer in-home lessons for piano, guitar and voice. Kovar doesn't teach piano herself anymore. It takes all of her time now developing the business, marketing, and all the other areas, having a Board of Directors. She believes music has the power to provide lifetime benefits of strengthening the mind and providing an emotional outlet.

Kovar says she would attend the piano recitals of her teachers to observe what was happening and provide support. "I started to observe we're only serving a category type of population with extra income." She says this isn't something you can learn at school anymore, and having a piano at home is expensive. Even moving a free piano costs \$200-500, and

tuning it once a year costs \$150. "Low-income students don't have a chance, even in their future. It wasn't that way before; the piano used to be for everyone."

So in 2019 she decided to expand beyond Piano and More to establish Play it Forward where she partners with Title I schools that serve low-income students to provide free after school piano lessons. "The students get a keyboard to practice at home and their own music books. They are treated just like a paying client." She says it transforms their lives.

Currently she has three students at Randolph Elementary in Arlington and two who have moved on to Fairfax. "We have a mix of cultures with Hispanic and Asian students participating." She says there could be a lot more students served with additional resources, but they are limited by funds "and it is not currently as many as I would hope."

It costs about \$2,500 annually for each student to cover the piano lessons, keyboard, music and books and an occasional field trip. Until now Play It Forward has been funded by the profit from the tuition fees from the students in Piano and More but she says they are hoping to transition funding. "We are applying for grants, and we have a couple of private donors."

Kovar says the students are chosen through an application process involving a record of good grades, good attendance at school, teacher recommendations and assurances the students will practice plus their participation in the free lunch program.

"I have seen some really great stories with our Play it Forward students. I see their growth." She adds, "We have this really incredible student who started in 2019. She has just blossomed into a pianist. Her teacher explained 'This is an artsy girl who is a little different and uses music as her way to communicate with the world. She will do it forever.'"

"I have seen the pride on the faces of the parents who didn't know what to expect because this is not that common in their culture. They are wide-eyed, and they thank us for believing in their daughter."

She says they want to spread the word about the awesome benefits of playing the piano. "It is important to stick to something; kids are super busy and with today's gentle parenting, they let their kids just drop the activity."

"Music has impact on the brain and the soul and helps deal with anxiety."

Kovar looks back on her early



PHOTOS CONTRIBUTED

Play It Forward Spring Recital 2024 in Jordan Kitts.



Play It Forward Open Mic 2024 in TNR Cafe.



Play It Forward Winter Recital 2022 at Sunrise of McLean.

experience with piano lessons and her mother's fight with her on a

weekly basis to keep her going "because she knew music was going to

make a big impact. She gave me a lifetime gift."

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