Photo by Shirley Ruhe/The Connection

Lilly, a Wheaten Terrier, makes a diversion on her Sunday morning walk with her owners Casey and James Duchesne to investigate a large yellow Meeting Bowl. The Meeting Bowl is one of three large sculptures on exhibit at 15th Street N. and N. Courthouse Road. These Meeting Bowls are public spaces that are part of a public art initiative supported by Arlington Arts. Each Meeting Bowl seats eight and is intended to be used for gatherings, meetings, having lunch with friends or relaxing with, or without, one’s dog. The Meeting Bowls were installed on July 11 and will remain on display until Nov. 1 when they will move to Miami, Fla.
Supporting Crime Solvers

Lydia Robinson, whose brother Paul Zeller was killed in 2006, presented a check for $5,000 to the Arlington County Crime Solvers (ACCS) on Friday, July 28. Paul Zeller was a young Iraq War veteran living in Arlington with his sister when he was shot and killed walking home from the Pentagon City Metro station. Police are still looking for Zeller’s killer and trying to determine a motive. A reward had been offered at the time but was never paid. The family decided to donate the $5,000 to ACCS for tips that lead to arrests. ACCS is a private organization that was established in 2000 to set up two tip lines that will allow citizens to leave anonymous tips that can assist police in their investigations. From left are Lydia Robinson, sister of Paul Zeller; ACCS Board Member John Murphy; Detective R. Ortiz; ACCS Board Member Major Bruce Black, and ACCS President Andres Tobar.
By Vernon Miles
The Connection

Taking Back the Streets

The average Arlingtonian might not know who owns the streets. The side streets are maintained by the county, most of the major routes are managed by the state, but as long as they are kept in working condition it doesn’t really matter. But behind the scenes, if Arlington is able to acquire one of the main arterial roads through Arlington, it could be the beginning of new transportation and planning efforts in the heart of the county.

On July 18, the County Board unanimously voted to move forward with efforts to have the state transfer ownership of State Route 237, Fairfax Drive and 10th Street North, to the county. This stretch of road runs through the center of Arlington’s Metro corridor, from Ballston to Courthouse. The Commonwealth had expressed support for the county’s plans in a letter back in March, but the approval by the County Board marks the first step in a series of reviews before the transfer is finalized.

“The average person driving, biking, or walking, or taking a bus might not notice much of a difference,” said Sarah Crawford, from Arlington’s Transportation Division. “The improvements that happen are things they would have seen anyway, but maybe see it happen a year faster with less red tape.”

Crawford said the change will allow Arlington County to be more flexible with redevelopment that happens along Fairfax Drive. Currently, businesses seeking to redevelop property along Fairfax Drive must not only seek transportation plan approval from the County Board but must also work through the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT). According to Crawford, Arlington’s acquisition of the street would help streamline the process for businesses.

At the board meeting, County Board member John Vihstadt noted that this isn’t the first time the county has acquired a major street from the state. Nearly a decade ago, the county assumed responsibility of Columbia Pike as the first step towards streetcar plans that would ultimately be stopped in their tracks. But the transfer also allowed the County Board to push forward other transportation initiatives along Columbia Pike over the years, including left hand turn lanes and greater pedestrian accessibility.

Currently, Crawford said no such plans exist for Fairfax Drive, but Crawford said county ownership of the street would allow examination of those possibilities in the future. Vihstadt asked whether county staff had considered a similar acquisition for Lee Highway, but Crawford said the intense...
Checklists for ‘Aging in Place’

By Frank Davies

S

am Avery, in his 60s, didn’t realize he was part of a national movement often called “aging in place.” The North Arlington resident, whose health issues forced him to use a wheelchair, just wanted to be able to stay in his small home. He was able to achieve that with the help of Rebuilding Together, whose volunteers repair and improve existing homes, and Sun Design, a local architectural design and remodeling firm looking for more ways to contribute to the community.

In April, volunteers installed a ramp to Avery’s front door and made other repairs that improved the safety of his home and made his life more independent. “I’m able to get out of my house daily now,” he said. “This has really improved the quality of my life.”

National surveys by AARP show that older adults want to stay in their homes as long as possible. But that often requires modifications such as grab bars, double railings on stairs, better lighting or major work to make a home wheelchair-accessible.

“What we’re seeing in Northern Virginia is that people don’t want to move away from the area,” said Bob Gallagher, a Sun Design owner. He is doing more work on homes so that older adults don’t have to move, and making modifications to the houses of younger residents so a nearby parent can move in.

Rebuilding Together Arlington/Fairfax/Falls Church (RT-AFF) has years of experience in rehabilitating homes for low-income, often elderly, residents. Gallagher said it was “good to work with Rebuilding Together—that allowed us to get a lot further than on our own.”

Rebuilding Together also works with large national organizations like AARP and local groups such as the Arlington Neighborhood Village, which offers support services—rides to an appointment, simple home repairs, or just a weekly visit for companionship—so elderly residents can stay independent.

“Flourishing After 55”

“Flourishing After 55” from Arlington Office of Senior Adult Programs for Aug. 17

Senior centers: Lee, 5722 Lee Hwy.; Langston-Brown Senior Center, 2121 N. Culpeper St.; Walter Reed, 2909 S. 16th St.; Arlington Mill, 909 S. Dinwiddie St.; Aurora Hills, 735 S. 16th St.

Senior trips: American Treasure Tour, Oak, Pa, Monday, Aug. 7, $69; Serenity Tea Room, Frederick, Md., Wednesday, Aug. 9, $64; Virginia Quilt Museum, Harrisonburg, Thursday, Aug. 10, $41; Marine Barracks Evening Parade, D.C., Friday, Aug. 11, $5; Call Arlington County. 55+ Travel, 703-228-4748. Registration required.


Tennis for adults, 55+, 9 a.m., Bluemont Park tennis courts. Register, 703-228-4748.

Folk music sing-a-long, Monday, Aug. 7, 1:30 p.m., Lee. Details, 703-228-0535.

Healthy breakfast ideas, Tuesday, Aug. 8, 11 a.m., Arlington Mill. Register, 703-228-7369.

Modern approach to low-impact aerobics, Tuesday, Aug. 8, Aurora Hills. Register, 703-228-5722.

Budgeting for a purpose, Wednesday, Aug. 9, 7 p.m., Arlington Mill Details, 703-228-7369.

Heating loss affects the brain, Wednesday, Aug. 9, Aurora Hills. Register, 703-228-5722.

Drop-in basketball for women, Wednesday, Aug. 9, 6:30 p.m., Langston-Brown. Details, 703-228-6300.

Drop-in badminton, Wednesday, Aug. 9, Thursday, Aug. 10, 10 a.m., Walter Reed. Details, 703-228-0955.

Fall lawn and garden care tips, Thursday, Aug. 10, 10 a.m., Walter Reed. Register, 703-228-0955.

Knotting at night and other craft classes, Thursday, Aug. 10, 6:30 p.m., Arlington Mill. Details, 703-228-7369.

An Evening in the Garden at Walter Reed, Friday, Aug. 11, 7 p.m. Register, 703-228-0955.

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

DEADLINE AUG. 4

Leadership Center for Excellence is now accepting applications and holding an information session for the Young Professionals Full Class of 2017, a program that aims to develop leaders in various sectors across the D.C. Metropolitan area over a four-month period. The application may be found online at www.leadercenter.org with a rolling admission deadline until Aug. 4, 2017. An information session will be held on Tuesday, June 27 from 6-7:30 p.m. Interested parties may RSVP for info sessions and apply for the program at leadercenter.org/ypp-information-session.

FRIDAY/SEPT. 15

Application Deadline, The Energy Masters Training program, serving Arlington and Alexandria, is now accepting applications on a rolling basis for the positions of community adult and student apprentice. The program trains volunteers in energy efficiency, water conservation, and community education and outreach. To apply, student apprentices must be in college or high school and over 16 years old. Training will begin in late September. Visit Arlingtonenvironment.org/energy.

GET MORE WITH SNAP

Arlington and Alexandria Farmers’ Markets accept SNAP/EBT (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program) cards for purchases. SNAP/EBT customers can purchase farm fresh produce at local area farmers’ markets and get matching bonus tokens to add to their purchases. Virginia Cooperative will be on-site at several local farmers’ markets of Alexandria and Arlington to provide more information on SNAP and offer food tastings, prizes and more at the Arlington Farmers’ Market, N. 14th and Courthouse Road (second Saturday of the month) and Columbia Pike Farmers’ Market, 2820 Columbia Pike (third Sunday of the month).
Food Donation

Virginia Hospital Center Emergency Department staff donate 403 boxes of cereal to the Arlington County Food Assistance Center (AFAC). See https://afac.org/about/. Above are Marilyn “Dani” Sherman, RN, Virginia Hospital Center Emergency Department, shaking hands with Jolie Smith, director of Corporate and Community Partnerships, AFAC.

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County Fair

Candy apples are one of the staples at the Arlington County Fair, Aug. 16-20 at the Thomas Jefferson Community Center, 3501 Second St. S. Competitive exhibits, midway rides and games, entertainment, vendors, and racing picnics. Admission is free, and shuttle service is provided from locations throughout Arlington. Visit arlingtoncountyfair.us for more.

SUNDAY/AUG. 6
Columbia Pike Family Fun Day 9 a.m.-noon at the Columbia Pike Farmers Market, 2820 Columbia Pike. The event features games, arts and crafts, and science experiments to take home. Visit www.facebook.com/Columbia-Pike-Farmers-Market.

The Scotch Bonnets Concert 6 p.m. at Lubber Run Amphitheater, 200 N. Columbia St. Call 703-228-4712.

MONDAY/AUG. 7
Phoebe Legere Plays America. 9 p.m. at the Gateway Park, 1300 Lee Highway. Curated by WMUC-College Park radio personality Sean Epstein. $5. Call 703-525-8646 or visit galaxyhot.com.

TUESDAY/AUG. 8
Mosquitoes andTicks: Identification andControl. 7-8:30 p.m. at the Arlington Branch Library, 1644 N. McKinley Road. Learn what to do in the upcoming Cricket Crawl, a cricket and katydid monitoring event later in August. Call 703-228-3403.

LEGENDS AND LOVES: SUNDAY AUG. 13
Phoebe Legere Plays Americana. 9 p.m. at the Gateway Park, 1300 Lee Highway. Curated by WMUC-College Park radio personality Sean Epstein. $5. Call 703-525-8646 or visit galaxyhot.com.

ENTERTAINMENT

Submit entertainment announcements to www.connectionnewspapers.com/Clin- ender/. The deadline is noon on Friday. Photos/artwork encouraged.

ONGOING
Master Naturalist Class. Through Aug. 15, 2017. Registration is now being accepted for volunteer training for the fall 2017 class of Arlington Regional Master Naturalists. Arlington Regional Master Naturalists will be holding evening and weekend training this fall, beginning Sept. 5 through Dec. 17, on Tuesdays from 7-10 p.m. at Long Branch Nature Center. Visit www.arm.org.

Arlington Farmer’s Market. Every Saturday, 8 a.m.-noon at the corner of N. 14th Street and N. Wayne Avenue. A weekly celebration of local food including fresh produce, meats, dairy, cheeses, baked goods, free range eggs, specialty items, cut flowers, plants, herbs, and specialty foods. Visit www.arm.org.

Mobile Bike Repair. 6-8 p.m. on Thursday at 1900 Crystal Drive. Drop off your bike on Thursday morning and have it tuned up and ready to ride before heading home. Call 703-248-6800.


Art in the Park. Friday, Aug. 4 from 6-8 p.m. at Fort Littleton. Visit www.sigtheatre.org.

National Garden Festival. Through Aug. 12, 2017 on Tuesdays at 12-3 p.m. at Long Branch Nature Center. The Virginia Master Naturalist program prepares volunteers to provide education, citizen science, and outreach to conserve and manage natural resources and public lands. Call 703-228-6535 or visit www.arm.org.

Friday/Aug. 4
Meet the Artists. 5-8 p.m. at the Crystal Underground, 2100 Crystal Drive, Suite 212-A. Arlington Artists Alliance’s all-media, juried art exhibit called “Around the World” features original art depicting destinations explored. Visit www.galleryunderground.org.

Art in the Park. 6-8 p.m. at Fort Scott Park, 2800 Fort Scott Drive. The mobile recreation van brings fun recreation activities for the whole family to parks across Arlington. Call 703-228-4773.

When Harry Met Sally. 6-11 p.m. at Gateway Park, 1300 Lee Highway. Part of the Roslyn Cinema + Pub in the Park movie series, featuring a movie and food from one of the food trucks on site. Visit www.roslynva.com/go/gateway-park.

Dupont Brass Concert. 8 p.m. at Lubber Run Amphitheater, 200 N. Columbus St. Bras band music. Call 703-228-4712.

SATURDAY/AUG. 5
Avant Bard Concert 8 p.m. at Lubber Run Amphitheater, 200 N. Columbus St. American musical “The Gospel At Colonus” which goes gospel music from the Black church with blues and Motown to preach a message of redemption, transcenden
cence. Call 703-228-4714.

SUNDAY/AUG. 6
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Live Jazz

2017 Rosslyn Jazz Fest, on Saturday, Sept. 9 from 1-7 p.m. at Gateway Park, 1300 Lee Highway. A variety of jazz bands, presented by the Rosslyn Business Improvement District (BID) and Arlington Arts. Free. Visit www.rosslynva.org/jazzfest for more.

Center, 3501 Second St. S. Competitive exhibits, midway rides and games, entertainment, vendors, and racing piglets. Admission is free, and shuttle service is provided from locations throughout Arlington. Visit arlingtoncountyfair.us.

FRIDAY/AUG. 18
The Avengers. 6-11 p.m. at Gateway Park, 1300 Lee Highway. Part of the Rosslyn Cinema + Pub in the Park movie series, featuring a movie and food from one of the food trucks on site. Visit www.rosslynva.org/gateway-park.

FRIDAY/AUG. 25
Mary Poppins. 6-11 p.m. at Gateway Park, 1300 Lee Highway. Part of the Rosslyn Cinema + Pub in the Park movie series, featuring a movie and food from one of the food trucks on site. Visit www.rosslynva.org/gateway-park.

SATURDAY/AUG. 26
Arlington Police Block Party. 9 a.m.–4 p.m. at Kenmore Middle School, 200 S. Carlin Springs Road. The event includes various family friendly activities such as the ACPS Kids Zone, BMX Demonstrations, food and beverages. Visit www.facebook.com/ArlingtonCountyPolice/.

SUNDAY/AUG. 27
Speed The Magician. 6 p.m. at Lubber Run Amphitheater, 200 N. Columbia St. A “High Energy Magician and Illusionist” known for his hyperactive, fast-paced performance style. Call 703-228-4712.

Bat Fest. 6-30-9:30 p.m. at Gulf Branch Nature Center, 3608 Military Road. Leslie Stogres, director of the Save Lucy Campaign established to protect and conserve bats in this region. Ages 4 and up. Call 703-228-3403 or visit parks.arlingtonva.us/events/bat-fest-arlington/.

MONDAY/AUG. 28
Artists Benefit. 7:30 and 9:30 p.m. at Signature Theatre, Shirlington Village, 4200 Campbell Ave., Arlington. “Summer Hummer,” a fundraiser for “Taking Care of Our Own,” a program of theatre Washington that provides emergency assistance to Washington-area theatre professionals. Call 571-527-1833 or email gardinerj@sigtheatre.org.

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Saving Your Skin
How to prevent sun damage while enjoying summer vacation.

By Marilyn Campbell

August approaches and many head out for sun-drenched vacations with a skin-baring wardrobe. This much anticipated time of year doesn’t come without danger, primarily in the form of sunburn which can lead to skin damage, skin cancer, wrinkles and dark spots. Skincare gurus offer suggestions for protecting skin without sacrificing time outside.

“Sunscreen is the best protection from the sun,” said Cheryl A. Oetjen, DNP, FNP-BC, assistant professor of nursing at George Mason University. “This can be from lotions that are SPF 30 or higher or from skin-protective clothing. Wearing a hat can also protect your face to some degree. Sunglasses should also be worn.”

“Sunscreen is the best protection from the sun.”
— Cheryl A. Oetjen, George Mason University

To maximize the effectiveness of sunscreen, Oetjen advises being aware of some of the most commonly made application mistakes. “Ideally sunscreen should be applied 30 minutes prior to sun exposure,” she said. “This gives it time to soak into the skin. Avoiding the water for this time is also important.”

Avoid the sun between 11 a.m. and 3 p.m. when it’s most intense and use at least one ounce of sunscreen per application, says Oetjen. “The important part of applying sunscreen is ensuring that you are using enough,” she said. “Fair complexions, red hair and blonde hair often are indicators of a higher risk of sunburn, so it’s important to reapply often.”

Make sunscreen part of one’s daily skincare regimen, advises Colleen Sanders, RN, FNP, Marymount University in Arlington. “The recommendation is that you wear sunscreen every day if you’re going to be outside even for a short period of time,” she said. “It should be part of your everyday routine.”

Relying solely on the SPF found in some cosmetics like foundation or powder is unwise, says dermatologist Dr. Lisa Bronstein. “Makeup doesn’t necessarily provide the protection that it claims to provide,” she said. “There are a lot of tinted sunscreens out now that match a variety of skin tones and also give amazing protection from sun damage.”

“Wearing sunglasses with UVA and UVB protection as well as a hat will help prevent damage, says Sanders. “Common areas that people often forget to cover, and where we often find skin cancer, are the tops of ears and the backs of their hands,” she said. “These are places where people forget to put sunscreen.”

“Make sure the most sensitive areas are covered … these areas include the top of the ears, lips [and] the nose, added Oetjen. “Zinc oxide can be applied to sensitive areas.”

Infants who are younger than six months old should have limited exposure to the sun, says Oetjen. “The FDA has not approved a sunscreen for infants under 6 months so it is best for them to stay in the shade and wear sun protective clothing and hat,” she said. “The skin of infants is thinner and more sensitive to the sun and sunscreen.”

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APAH and Arlington Presbyterian Church worked together for more than 5 years on the development of Gilliam Place. Above are Nina Janopaul, APAH, CEO, Susan Etherton, APC, Jill Norcross, Laura London and Carmen Romero, both of APAH.

Demolition begins at Arlington Presbyterian Church. The historic stone will be reused in the façade of the new building.

APAH Breaks Ground on Gilliam Place

173 new affordable homes advance a faith-filled vision.

The Arlington Partnership for Affordable Housing (APAH) broke ground Thursday, July 27 on its newest project, Gilliam Place, which will be located at 3507 Columbia Pike. Gilliam Place emanated from Arlington Presbyterian Church’s (APC) vision to put their faith into action and property into mission service. Gilliam Place will provide 173 new committed affordable homes for lower income individuals and families. Nearly 9,000 square feet of civic/retail space will be added with a mix of non-profit tenants.

More than 80 people gathered for the community-based ceremony. John Milliken, chairman of APAH’s board of directors said, “I can’t emphasize enough how much importance to attach to the word ‘partnership’ in APAH’s name. We could not have a successful project without you all. APAH is proud to be Arlington County’s partner in affordable housing development and proud to be a part of a community with a shared vision of diversity and inclusion that makes it a very special place to live.”

Gilliam Place will be APAH’s most complex project to date, with a total project cost of $71 million and more than nine funding sources. The Virginia Housing Development Authority (VHDA) awarded APAH $31 million in tax credits through its annual competitive process and is providing both long-term and construction financing.

David Bowers, vice president of Enterprise Community Partners, recounted the origins of his organization’s faith-based initiative which has partnered with faith communities to create 1,200 more in the development pipeline. He expressed his gratitude for Arlington Presbyterian Church and APAH on the long-journey to Gilliam Place.

Susan Etherton, chair of APC’s Moving Forward Team, joined in the celebration expressing “deep gratitude for our faithful partners, the Arlington Partnership for Affordable Housing, and more broadly to our partners, the Arlington County Board vice chair; Art Bowen, director of Rental Housing, VA Housing Development Authority, VHDA; Ed Delany, Senior Director and Senior Capital Officer, Capital One; David Bowers, vice president of Mid-Atlantic Market Leader, Enterprise Community Partners; Susan Etherton, Moving Forward Team Chair, Arlington Presbyterian Church; the Rev. Derrick Weston, community organizer, Arlington Presbyterian Church; and Nina Janopaul, APAH president and CEO.
**Announcements**

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### School Notes

- **Cait O’Connor**, of Arlington, was named to the dean’s list at Colby College (Waterville, Maine) for the spring semester of 2017.

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- **James Raymond Wombles III**, of Arlington, made the dean’s list at University of Kentucky for the spring 2017 semester. Wombles is a freshman majoring in pre-marketing.

- **Pierce Jennings**, of Arlington, made the dean’s list for the spring 2017 semester at New River Community College (Dublin, Va.).

- **John L. Malanchuk**, of Arlington, graduated in May with a Master of Science in applied economics.

- **Max Golkin**, who plans to attend James Madison University in the fall, graduated in June from Washington-Lee High School with two scholarships:
  - The 2017 Hatch Scholarship in recognition of hard work, sportsmanship, and leadership on the Varsity basketball team.
  - The O.U. Johansen Award for Excellence, presented annually to a W-L senior “who most demonstrates the qualities of citizenship, scholarship, leadership, integrity, and service to school.”

- **Paul Hurd**, of Arlington, graduated from Roger Williams University (Bristol, R.I.) with a B.S. in computer information systems in May.

- **Nicolai Dominguez**, of Arlington, who is studying criminal justice, made the dean’s list for the 2017 spring semester at Rochester Institute of Technology (Rochester, N.Y.).

- **Dylan J. Gates**, of Arlington, a senior majoring in applied mathematics, has been named to the president’s list for the spring 2017 semester at SUNY Oswego (Oswego, N.Y.).

- **Xinye Liu**, of Arlington, graduated from The University of Akron (Akron, Ohio), earning a Master of Science in Polymer Sci./Polymer Mat Eng MS/BE.


- **Sophie A. Tsagronis**, of Arlington, was named to the Rhodes College (Memphis, Tenn.) honor roll for the 2017 spring semester.

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### Sea Turtle Conservation

**People**

Wakefield High School student Sydney Machion, 15, stands on the beach with a sea turtle conservation operation in Panama this July. Machion was in Central America on a Girl Scout initiative where she worked with the locals, practiced environmental stewardship and became immersed in the culture, earning her Outward Bound Costa Rica Destinations badge and learning life lessons outside of the classroom.

**School Notes**

- **Nina K. Olenick**, of Arlington, was named to the dean’s list at Colby College (Waterville, Maine) for the spring semester of 2017.

- **Yukiko Hashida**, of Arlington, graduated from Oregon State University (Corvallis, Ore.) with a Doctor of Philosophy in geology.

- **Lucy E. Carr**, of Arlington, child of Peter and Rebecca Carr, received a B.A. in religious studies from Hobart and William Smith Colleges (Geneva, N.Y.) this spring.

- **Max Golkin**, who plans to attend James Madison University in the fall, graduated in June from Washington-Lee High School with two scholarships:
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**Sea Turtle Conservation**

Wakefield High School student Sydney Machion, 15, stands on the beach with a sea turtle conservation operation in Panama this July. Machion was in Central America on a Girl Scout initiative where she worked with the locals, practiced environmental stewardship and became immersed in the culture, earning her Outward Bound Costa Rica Destinations badge and learning life lessons outside of the classroom.
amount of development planned and already being implemented along Fairfax Drive made it uniquely suited for acquisition in a way Lee Highway currently is not. The acquisition would also mean maintenance of the street would be Arlington’s responsibility as well, which puts an additional cost on the county. Crawford said no definite cost projection has been done. Arlington County receives $18,500 per lane mile from the state for road maintenance, but the county spends up to $10,000 more per mile than the state reimburses. According to the staff report, this means the new acquisition could cost the county $60,000 to $70,000 in additional net tax support. More precise projections will be established as part of the FY 2019 budget. “I am very supportive of this,” said County Board chair Jay Fisette. “It is a problem that we underestimate the burden. We have a great working relationship with VDOT… but it takes a lot more work and a lot more staff time.” This fall, county staff and VDOT will review and negotiate the terms for the transfer. The county might be able to leave the park space undisturbed and save the park’s existing tree canopy.

But concerns about the public engagement overshadowed the discussion of the actual community center itself. Joel Yudken, vice president of the Arlington Forest Citizens Association, was one of several local residents who expressed support for the new building but dismay at the limited window for public feedback. Yudken said the design was initially presented to the community on May 17, and that avenues for feedback focused on details for the interior space rather than big picture elements like the actual community center itself. Joel Yudken, vice president of the Arlington Forest Citizens Association, was one of several local residents who expressed support for the new building but dismay at the limited window for public feedback.

But eight years and five months later, here I was – and much sooner than I had anticipated. In spite of my diagnosis/prognosis, and the continuing anxiety concerning the previous week’s CT Scan/awaiting results from my oncologist follow-up, which I had to reschedule appointment with him Friday a week later to discuss my future: status quo or the great unknown; coinciding with the typical eating challenges/post-chemo side effect which lasts a week to 10 days after treatment. If this cycle of gloom doesn’t sound like fun, you’re right, but it’s a living/my life and I’m extraordinarily (I didn’t want to say “durned”) lucky to be able to live it.

And recently having spoken to a new stage IV – small cell cancer “diagnosee,” who’s a 24-hour microwave dinner Percocet every four hours because he’s in constant pain, I’ve come to know how hugely fortunate I am/have been since being originally diagnosed in late February, 2009. Sure, I’ve had my share of pain and discomfort, but in the medical-measuring system I’d give it a “1.” Hardly the stuff with which nightmares are made (see column in a few weeks, as yet untitled).

I’ve always been a great believer in context. Not so much comparison because what you see and what you get are not necessarily relevant, comparatively speaking, but more that the circumstances are all relative. It takes me back to Popeye the Sailor Man, who apologizing to no one, always said: “I yam what I yam.” And it’s a fact that there were other cancer patients at the Infusion Center, when I talk to cancer survivors, when I hear or read of other cancer patient circumstances, I try to live and learn, not take it personally, and count my blessings. Given the hand that I was dealt back on Feb. 27, 2009 I wouldn’t say “Wild” Bill Hickok (and his black aces and black eights) came to mind, but my life, according to the “11 month to two-year” prognosis I was given, certainly passed before me – and much sooner than I had anticipated.

In spite of my diagnosis/prognosis, and the miscellaneous ups and downs that I and most cancer patients endure, I’ve never given in to my oncologist’s initial assessment. It was so unbelievable hearing such grim news, especially considering that I was age 54 and a half, that it almost seemed like an out-of-body experience, sort of like Scrooge in Charles Dickens’ “A Christmas Carol.” Sure we were listening attentively and asked our share of questions, but it didn’t seem real or even about me, sort of. I mean at this juncture, I had no pain and no symptoms and no family history of cancer – and I was a life-long non-smoker. Yet here I was, in the bulls eye of a dreaded disease with no known cure receiving a modest life expectancy/two percent chance of living beyond five years.

But eight years and five months later, here I sit, breathe and try to work some words about a life mostly unexpected, and one in which I haven’t sweated too many details nor concerning myself with the “nattering nabobs of negativism,” to quote former Vice President, Spiro T. Agnew, specifically as it relates to lung cancer outcomes. Which are relevant, comparatively speaking, but more that the circumstances are all relative. It takes that can be made in his subject and how to avoid them.

-Werner Heisenberg

Week to Weak

By KENNETH L. LOUIE

And speaking, a few weeks later, of my “whirled,” (see July 5, 2017 column, “Not an Auto-Matic Fix”), at least as it relates to my next week or so, 24-hour urine collection on Tuesday, pre-chemotherapy lab work on Wednesday, in the connection office on Thursday, chemotherapy infusion Friday, continuing anxiety concerning the previous Wednesday’s CT Scan/awaiting results from my oncologist follow-up, which I had to reschedule appointment with him Friday a week later to discuss my future: status quo or the great unknown; coinciding with the typical eating challenges/post-chemo side effect which lasts a week to 10 days after treatment. If this cycle of gloom doesn’t sound like fun, you’re right, but it’s a living/my life and I’m extraordinarily (I didn’t want to say “durned”) lucky to be able to live it.
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