

More than 30,000 runners crowd the streets of Arlington at the start of the 42nd annual Marine Corps Marathon Oct. 22.

The Arlington Connection

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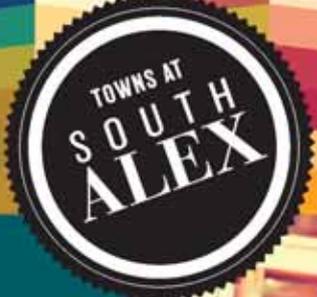
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Facing Local Drug Use Epidemic

Some parents were unaware; some knew well the pain of drug use in youths.

BY EDEN BROWN
THE CONNECTION

Carolyn Weems has a message for Arlington parents who think their son or daughter couldn't become a drug addict. "It's not if my kids are going to be exposed to drugs," she said, "It's when." For Weems, and her daughter, awareness came too late.

About 250 parents listening to Weems tell the story of her daughter, who died of an overdose, overflowed into the halls of the Central Library on Oct. 12. The topic was not new. Opioid use has been in the headlines. What was new was that Arlington, the suburban sanctuary full of A-plus rated high schools and travel soccer players, is a place where youths are dealing drugs in the school bathroom.

Caitlyn Weems was a healthy, happy, soccer playing youth until she injured herself playing soccer and took the narcotics-laced painkillers the doctor prescribed. "You would never have guessed she was doing drugs," said Weems. "She looked healthy. There is so much I wish I had known: how addictive opioids are, how easy it is to get drugs, how heroin is like Russian Roulette. It's not about bad people. It's about good people from good families. These kids are trying it at parties, in the bathroom; they smoke it, then they snort it, then they skin pop it, and then they inject it." She added:

"It's not about bad people. It's about good people from good families. These kids are trying it at parties, in the bathroom; they smoke it, then they snort it, then they skin pop it, and then they inject it. You have to have the heroin talk with your kids."

— Carolyn Weems, mother of Caitlyn, who overdosed on heroin



PHOTO BY EDEN BROWN/THE CONNECTION

The panel addressing the drug problem in Arlington County was moderated by Mark Segraves of NBC 4; from left, Chief of Police Jay Farr, Commonwealth's Attorney Theo Stamos, APS parent Ari Garbow, Department of Health and Human Services Dr. John Palmieri, and Carolyn Weems, parent and member of Virginia Beach School Board.

"You have to have the heroin talk with your kids."

Captain Jay Farr, the Arlington County police chief, said his officers, as first responders, had some grim statistics to report. "But the most telling of the things I've learned, is who it strikes," he said. "When our office of criminal investigations did the statistics, we learned 90 percent of the users had been prescribed the drug legally.

Opioid Overdose Statistics

Calendar Year	Total Incident	Total Opioid Involving Opioids	Non-Fatal Overdoses	Fatal Opioid Overdoses
2015	73	10	6	4
2016	122	45	33	12
2017 thru 10-06-2017	108	54	41	13

Source: Arlington County Police Department

We saw a 67 percent rise in events from 2015 to 2016 and a rise in non-fatal overdoses this year. And this hits every single zip code in Arlington County except one, and it hits all demographics and economic strata." Farr added that it hits every age group too. While 56 percent of the cases they see are in the 21-35 year old age range, some are older than 66 and some are as young as 16.

Commonwealth's Attorney Theo Stamos said the idea for having a town hall in Arlington originated in her office, because she

gets all the autopsy reports for the county. "I started seeing more and more accidental overdoses," she said. "When I looked into the problem, I learned there were Williamsburg Middle School kids buying LSD on the dark web — at school — and there were athletes who could not play sports because they tested positive for drug use, and that at Yorktown High School, the principal had to take the doors off the bathroom to keep people from dealing drugs — or doing them — in the bathrooms." Stamos said APS was also a part of the growth that

Yorktown Takes Steps against Substance Abuse

Citing expectations for behavior, and then consequences.

BY EDEN BROWN
THE CONNECTION

"Yes, of course we are aware there are certain hotspots around Yorktown where kids are engaging in (illegal) activity," said Dr. Mila Vascones-Gatski, the substance abuse counselor at Yorktown High School. The community as a whole has to be aware too. We say: "If you see something, say something."

Yorktown and other local high and middle schools share six substance abuse counselors who are working to educate parents, teachers, and youth about the drug epidemic.

Vascones-Gatski, and the other counselors in the system, spend half the week at another school. She says Yorktown is going through all the senior classes to do outreach: they want the youths to know that smoking a substance these days is different from what it was. These days, it's so concentrated. These days, there is a national epidemic with opioids, and youths can die from overdoses. She notes that risk taking behavior is prevalent in the age group she counsels: "The kids think: I already took the risk, so why not take the bigger risk? They don't see the consequences."

Vascones-Gatski said the school is trying to stay ahead of the problem. Bridget Loft,

Yorktown's new principal, took the doors off the bathrooms at school because students were using bathrooms to deal or use drugs. One of the most popular and easily disguised items of drug use, is the juul, a highly concentrated nicotine vaporizer which youths use to get a buzz.

Vaping equipment, or the tiny juul which looks like a flash drive, can be refilled with marijuana, tobacco, or a substance of the student's own invention. Youths often plug them into their school-issued laptops to charge them in class. "Anything you can put into a liquid or an oil can be used to fill the juul," said Vascones-Gatski. And that means

SEE YORKTOWN, PAGE 14

Details

Important information for parent awareness:

- ◆ Nov. 13: PTA meeting at Yorktown High. The school resource officer (SRO) will be there to present information to parents.
- ◆ Nov. 15: Discussion of the Risk Behavior Survey for APS, Walter Reed Community Center, 7 (to read this report see <https://apcyf.arlingtonva.us/2017-yrbs-school-reports/>)
- ◆ Arlington Public Schools podcast: <https://www.apsva.us/school-community-relations/aps-podcast/>
- ◆ www.READYCoalition.org
- ◆ www.secondchancearlington.org
- ◆ www.drugfree.org
- ◆ The most common drugs abused in high schools are xanax, adderall, nyquil, coricidin — in large amounts.
- ◆ Parents are very powerful, and sending a message, early, is important.
- ◆ Parents should talk to other parents.

Who Will Help Dreamers and Refugees?

Individuals, religious groups and other organizations share same goal.

BY SHIRLEY RUHE

The supporters all agree on one thing. As Imam Ali Siddiqui said, “Nobody asked these kids whether they wanted to come to America. They go to school, they work hard, build a career. It will be a loss to send them back.” Figures distributed by The Commonwealth Institute in October 2017 show that if all Virginians who are eligible for Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) became citizens, state and local tax contributions by young Virginians would rise from the current \$35 million to \$52.9 million a year.

As President Trump’s executive order released Sept. 5 threatens 800,000 DACA recipients with deportation, communities of supporters rally to their defense.

Individuals and groups converge from all directions to provide sanctuary, educational assistance, moral support, employment counseling and sometimes “in your face” advocacy for immigrant assistance. Each group has a plan and a niche but they are all working for the same goal — passage of the Dream Act, which will offer the opportunity for a long, but legal, path to citizenship for undocumented immigrants.

Norma Kacen is part of the Northern Virginia Friends of Refugees, an Arlington-based group, which she co-founded with Wendy Chan in the fall of 2016. “I grew up on Federal Hill in Providence, Rhode Island, an ethnic ghetto. It was a closed world with circles of ghettos — Portuguese, Italian, French, German, Polish,” she said, drawing circles with her finger on the table.

Kacen has recently been up on Capitol Hill as a volunteer lobbyist with the American Association of University Women visiting key senators to urge passage of the Dream Act. “All of the comments were ‘we couldn’t afford it,’ but,” she says, pulling out a talking sheet, “ending DACA and kicking recipients out of the labor force would cost the United States \$433.4 billion in GDP and decrease Social Security and Medicare contributions by \$24.6 billion over the next decade.” This is according to the Center for American Progress, a self-described progressive independent nonpartisan policy institute.

As of November 2016, 645,000 DACA recipients nationwide are employed, and they pay taxes. Kacen said, “My challenge to the senators was yes, we pay for their education like anyone else who pays taxes.” But most of the senators were unmoved by the arguments. Kacen says it is

also important to acknowledge a breakdown of DACA by Congressional districts because “some our representatives only listen to their own constituents.”

Northern Virginia Friends of Refugees was established to combat the anti-Muslim rhetoric and to be a welcoming friend to all refugees. “We didn’t want to duplicate the efforts of others so we partner with other organizations,” she said.

RECENTLY THE GROUP held three advocacy workshops for people supportive of refugees. About 50 people attended one of the workshops at Fairfax Presbyterian Church, Mt. Olivet Presbyterian Church in Arlington and a Muslim site in Fairfax. These workshops are non-partisan with the purpose to teach the skills necessary for effective advocacy.

“I was really delighted and it was extremely heartening that millennials attended. Every organization is trying to figure out what they can do to attract the disengaged millennials,” Kacen said.

The second event, which was held in the spring, brought American professionals together with the often highly skilled immigrants to help the immigrants navigate the workplace. “So we connect the immigrants together with American professionals in their own field to allow the professionals to talk.” Many of the refugees were doctors, architects, engineers and entrepreneurs in their countries and now have low-level jobs in America. The purpose of these life skills programs is to increase connections to help the immigrants reach their potential.

The third focus for this year is a large community event planned for the spring. It would be intended to show the resilience of the immigrants by “focusing on the incredible skills in the cultural arts such as music, arts and fashion. It is to show the capacity to overcome, the triumph of the human spirit,” she said.

Are they making progress? Kacen paused, “It’s hard to say. But ... there are so many people engaged.”

Monica Sarmiento is executive director of Virginia Coalition for Immigrant Right (VACIR), a coalition that began in 2013 with eight organizations, now grown to 16. She says their organization is focused on how to have more comprehensive immigrant reform in Virginia. “Many organizations have their niches demographically or ethnically but we tend to be looking at what we’re doing statewide and collaboratively. The most important empha-



PHOTO BY SHIRLEY RUHE

Remembering her youth in Rhode Island, Norma Kacen of Arlington traces circles on the table as she describes neighborhood ghettos of people segregated by ethnicity.



Sumi Yi



Monica Sarmiento



The Rev. Laura Martin

sis is to push different community representatives at the table — African, Korean, Muslim.”

Sarmiento says since VACIR is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization they don’t directly lobby but have encouraged people to call their members of Congress, and the 16 organizations who are part of the coalition often engage in advocacy. For instance the Commonwealth Institute has prepared a fact sheet outlining how DREAMers grow our economy with 61 percent opening a bank account, 64.5 percent buying their first car, 97 percent becoming employed or enrolled in school. It adds that young people with DACA status contribute nearly \$711 million to Virginia’s economy annually including nearly \$35 million in state and local taxes. The conclusion is that ending DACA could reduce Virginia state and local tax revenue by almost \$13 million a year.

Members of VACIR include such groups as Legal Aid Justice Center, SEEC, VOCOLAO, NAKASEC, The Commonwealth Institute and Virginia New Majority. These groups have focused on the constituents of two U.S. representatives in Virginia, Scott Taylor (R-2) and Barbara Comstock (R-10), who they are trying to convince “to do the right thing and support a clean Dream Act.”

Sarmiento says the VACIR board had decided for the first time to endorse a clean Dream Act, the first time they had endorsed

any legislation. “A clean Dream Act would not have such provisions as mandatory verification (death by 1,000 papers), an increase in ICE agents, increased money for deportation, funding for the border wall, inability to sponsor family members, no pathway to citizenship.”

She says there needs to be a much larger conversation to spotlight the injustices happening now with undocumented immigrants who have already lost their DACA status due to President Trump’s executive order or who will lose their Temporary Protective Status (TPS) if it is not renewed. These people could be deported any day. She says 300,000 of these are from Latin America; 200,000 of these are Salvadoran. Sarmiento was raised in Northern Virginia but her parents emigrated from El Salvador fleeing war. “They were fortunate my grandmother lived here and got her legal status through the Reagan amnesty act so my father got legal status.”

Sumi Yi, Virginia community organizer for National Korean American Service & Education Consortium (NAKASEC), a community-based progressive Asian American and Pacific Islander organization, says their mission is to organize Korean and Asian Americans to achieve social, racial, and economic justice. She points out that out of the cur-

SEE WHO WILL HELP. PAGE 13

The Few. The Proud. Local runners take top spots in 42nd Marine Corps Marathon.

BY JEANNE THEISMANN
THE CONNECTION

For 24 miles, Kieran O'Connor looked over his shoulder and saw no one. The Arlington resident took an early lead, running alone through miles of empty streets. But in Crystal City, he saw something he didn't expect — Desta Beriso Morkoma was quickly closing the gap.

"I was dehydrated more than I expected to be in the second half of the race," said O'Connor. "But I did my best and Morkoma ran a great race."

In the end, it was the 32-year-old Morkoma, also from Arlington, who became the champion of the 42nd Marine Corps Marathon, finishing with a time of 2 hours, 25 minutes and 13 seconds.

"It's a year I worked hard to win," said Morkoma, who finished second in last year's race.

Wesley Turner of Danville, Va., came in second place with a time of 2:27:34 with O'Connor placing third with 2:28:06.

"I ran alone for most of the race," said Turner. "But you just try to run your own race and I feel good about how I did today."

Sarah Bishop, a mother of four from Fairfax, took first place in the women's division after pleading her case nine days ago asking organizers to allow her to run.

"I came in fourth last year and really felt good and wanted to run," said Bishop, who completed the course in 2:45:06, just 6 seconds shy of qualifying for the Olympic trials. "This is my home turf so the win is very special to me."

Bishop was followed by Meghan Curran of Fort Carson, Colo. (2:50:23) and Suzanne Hutchins of Gastonia, N.C., who finished with a time of 2:53:35.

Arlington runners took the top two spots in the men's division of the MCM 10K race: Denzel Ramirez, 34, finished in 34 minutes and 16 seconds, followed by Craig Morgan, 26, (32:21) and Erik McMillan, 20 of the US Air Force Academy in 32:49.

Bethany Sachtleben, 25, of Alexandria shattered the women's 10K course record with a time of 34:06. She was followed by Julie Tarallo, 28, of Washington (38:00), and Amy Smith, 29, of Seattle (38:54).

"Groundpounder" Al Richmond, 79, of Arlington, completed his 42nd Marine Corps Marathon in 6:48:35. "I felt strong today," said Richmond, who has completed every Marine Corps Marathon since its inception.

Full results can be found at www.marinemarathon.com.



Arlington's Desta Beriso Morkoma, 32, crosses the finish line in two hours, 25 minutes and 13 seconds to win the 42nd annual Marine Corps Marathon Oct. 22 in Arlington.



Sarah Bishop is presented the champion's trophy from Gen. Robert Neller at the 42nd Marine Corps Marathon Oct. 22 in Arlington. Bishop, 35, of Fairfax, completed the course in 2:45:06.



Weary runners work their way through the crowd after completing the 42nd Marine Corps Marathon Oct. 22 in Arlington.



Arlington's Kieran O'Connor, 30, runs The Marine Corps Marathon's Blue Mile, where more than 275 fallen service members are remembered in photos along the Potomac River. O'Connor, who led the Oct. 22 race for more than 24 miles, took third place after finishing in 2 hours, 28 minutes and 6 seconds.



T.A.P.S. founder Bonnie Carroll, left, poses for a photo with Ellyn Dunford, who ran the MCM 10K in memory of Robert Kelly, son of White House Chief of Staff John Kelly.



Arlington resident James Butcher, 31, points to his medal after finishing the Marine Corps Marathon in 3:59:30.



Michael Wardian from Arlington completed the marathon in 2:54:05.



Running for Team Manion, Army veteran Jacob Marquis of Bangor, Me., completed his mission to run one step for every combat death since the Revolutionary War while carrying the U.S. flag - a total of 1,012,000 steps. Marquis, 44, began his quest in 2013 and completed the final 39,000 steps Oct. 22 in Arlington. He finished with a time of 4:26:00.



Bethany Sachtleben, 25, of Alexandria, shattered the MCM 10K course record with a time of 34 minutes and 6 seconds. The previous record was 34:43 set in 2010.



William Weidman from Arlington finished with a time of 3:00:43.



John Sabol from Arlington crossed the finish line in 3:12:24.

PHOTOS BY MARK MOGIE/THE CONNECTION

PHOTO BY TOM MANNING/THE CONNECTION

OPINION

Don't Stay Home

Your vote counts this round; nation is watching.

Every year is election year in Virginia. Virginia offers multiple examples that prove every vote counts.

This year, each Virginia voter will vote for Governor, Lieutenant Governor, Attorney General and their member of the House of Delegates. Virginia is one of two Governor's races, and many are watching the Virginia race to as a harbinger of what to expect in 2018.

No matter how you vote, polling shows that the Governor's race could be very close.

EDITORIAL While there are quite a few uncontested races for members of the House of Delegates, several races could also be close, with the outcome likely to depend on turnout.

There is every reason to get out and vote.

Absentee Voting in Person

Voting early if you qualify is a good choice.

There are 19 valid reasons to vote absentee in Virginia, including the possibility that you will be working and commuting to and from home for 11 or more hours between 6 a.m. and 7 p.m. on Election Day. Check the Virginia Department of Elections list to see if you are eligible: elections.virginia.gov/casting-a-ballot/absentee-voting/index.html

There are two ways to vote absentee: in-person and by mail. To vote by mail, you will need to apply for an absentee ballot; if you vote absentee in-person you will fill out the application when you arrive at the in-person absentee location.

See your locality's elections website for more.

Bring Photo ID, There Are Alternatives

Virginia has voter identification requirements; plan to bring photo identification with you to vote, whether absentee or on Election Day.

Any registered voter who does not have one of the required forms of identification can apply for a free Virginia Voter Photo Identification from any general registrar's office in the Commonwealth. Voters applying for the Virginia Voter Photo ID complete the Virginia Voter Photo Identification Card Application,

General Election Day, Tuesday, Nov. 7

On Election Day Polls are open from 6 a.m.-7 p.m.

have their picture taken, and sign the digital signature pad.

Among accepted ID: valid Virginia Driver's License or Identification Card; valid Virginia DMV issued Veteran's ID card; valid U.S. Passport; other government-issued photo identification cards issued by the U.S. Government, the Commonwealth of Virginia, or a political subdivision of the Commonwealth; valid college or university student photo identification card from an institution of higher education located in Virginia; valid student ID issued by a public school or private school in Virginia displaying a photo; employee identification card containing a photograph of the voter and issued by an employer of the voter in the ordinary course of the employer's business.

A voter who does not bring an acceptable photo ID to the polls will be offered a provisional ballot.

To find a registration office where you can obtain photo ID, even on the day of an elec-

tion, visit: vote.elections.virginia.gov/VoterInformation/PublicContactLookup.

Provisional Ballot Process for Voters Who Arrive Without Identification

If you arrive at your polling place on Election Day without an acceptable form of photo identification, don't panic or give up. You will be given the opportunity to vote a provisional ballot. After completing the provisional ballot, the individual voting will be given written instructions from the election officials on how to submit a copy of his/her identification so that his/her vote can be counted.

A voter will have until noon on the Friday following the election to deliver a copy of the identification to the local electoral board or to appear in person to apply for a Virginia Voter Photo ID Card. Also by noon on Friday following the election, the voter may appear in-person in the office of the general registrar, in the locality in which the provisional ballot was cast, and apply for a Virginia Voter Photo ID Card. At the completion of the application process, the voter may request a Temporary Identification Document. This document may be provided to the electoral board to suffice the identification requirement.

On the Ballot

Governor

Ralph S. Northam (D)
Edward W. "Ed" Gillespie (R)
Clifford D. Hyra (L)

Lieutenant Governor

Justin E. Fairfax (D)
Jill H. Vogel (R)

Attorney General

Mark R. Herring (D)*
John D. Adams (R)

House of Delegates

45th District
Mark Levine (D) incumbent, unopposed
47th District
Patrick Hope (D) incumbent, unopposed

48th District

Rip Sullivan (D) incumbent, unopposed

49th District

Alfonso Lopez (D) incumbent
Adam Roosevelt (R)

Arlington School Board

M. D. "Mike" Webb (I)
Monique C. O'Grady (I)
Alison Priscilla Dough (I)

CONTACT: Arlington Voter Registration and Elections

2100 Clarendon Blvd, Suite 320, Arlington, VA 22201
Hours: 8 a.m.-5 p.m. Mondays-Fridays
vote.arlingtonva.us
Phone: 703-228-3456
TTY: 703-228-4611
FAX (main): 703-228-3659



Fall Heritage Festival

Nine-year-old Sarah Torchinsky and her 5-year-old sister, Anna, push the wooden beam around in circles to mash a mixture of apples into cider at the Gulf Branch Fall Festival Oct. 21. Sarah says, "This is hard to turn. You have to use all of your weight." But it is worth the effort since cups of hot cider are available for tasting at the table nearby.



Marianne Chernin concentrates as she wraps a blue piece of yarn across her hand and then one by one she loops a strand from the bottom over each finger to finger knit a blue headband.



Caleb Malovany has finished decorating his pumpkin and is giving advice to his 6-year-old sister, Mira, at the pumpkin-decorating table at the Fall Heritage Festival.

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'Quartet Uncorked'

Happy Hour Series at Bennett Park Art Atrium attracts crowd.

BY EDEN BROWN
THE CONNECTION

A "Happy Hour Series" on Oct. 20 and Nov. 3 is brightening the longer days of autumn at the Bennett Park Art Atrium, 1601 Clarendon Boulevard, in Arlington. The Quartet Uncorked event offered a wine pairing with Bistro 360, which did a tasting of two whites and two reds; the upcoming City Serenade concert will be paired with the Deschutes Brewery for beer tastings.

The musicians who played on Oct. 20 treated an audience of music lovers — some brought sheet music to follow along — to Joaquin Turina's La Oracion del Torero, Op. 34, Giacomo Puccini's Crisantemi, and Maurice Ravel's String Quartet in F Major. Violinist Matthew Richardson's choice of music made it possible for less savvy residents and serious musicians alike to enjoy the hour.

The acoustics in the atrium were good, and if the traffic going by sometimes created a distraction, the



PHOTO BY EDEN BROWN/THE CONNECTION

Matthew Richardson, violin; Jennifer Wade, violin; Elizabeth O'Hara Stahr, viola; and Andrew Rammon, cello.

suspended sculpture by Kendall Buster was the antidote. Organizers may not have thought they would have as many attendees as they did. If you arrive late, bringing a flat pillow for the overflow seats along the planters is a good idea.

The mission of the Arlington Philharmonic is to make classical music accessible to every Arlington citizen, to promote the value of classical music in civic life, and to build strong, creative partnerships with schools, local government, businesses, and other organizations. To learn more about upcoming programs and donate, see www.ArlingtonPhilharmonic.org

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ENTERTAINMENT

Signature Theatre Stages 'An Act of God'

Show is written by David Javerbaum, a long-time producer of "The Daily Show."

BY STEVE HIBBARD
THE CONNECTION

Signature Theatre in Arlington is staging "An Act of God" now through Nov. 26. Written by 13-time Emmy Award winner David Javerbaum (long-time producer of "The Daily Show"), this comedy delivers a new meaning to the phrase "divine intervention."

Inhabiting the body of D.C. actor Tom Story (MetroStage's "Fully Committed"), and flanked by his ever-faithful archangels, the show is about God gifting his mortals with an entirely new set of Ten Commandments in a sinfully funny whirlwind of comedy heaven.

Director Eleanor Holdridge said she's been coming to Signature Theatre since she arrived in town a few years back to teach, and she loved the programming and the sense of excitement the theater seems to generate. "I've found the audiences to be literate, liberal, compassionate and hungry for dialog and laughs," she said.

So, when Signature's Co-Founder and Artistic Director Eric Schaeffer called her to direct this piece, she was thrilled. "It's such a perfect play for today's America," she said. "It is insidiously funny, making us think about who we are and our relationship to religion and to God even as we laugh, examining our biases, our knee-jerk assumptions of how belief and society work together; and the humor of 'The Daily Show' going deeper within the live medium of the-

ater."

"An Act of God' is a strange hybrid between play and stand up," she added. "At first glance each page of the script reads as almost strictly stand-up: set-up, joke/set-up, joke, and the topical wit and humor seem to skim the surface of what it is to be alive in today's America."

She continued: "And yet, as we work on it there is a deeper arc that puts it more into the form a play. There is a deep-seated reason why the character God has inhabited Tom Story to bring his new commandments. There is a resonance in all the painful questions that the arch-angel Michael keeps asking that are at the core of what it is to be human."

And thus, the biggest challenge, she said was to balance the two forms in a way that holds the audience, "and to make sure we're not sacrificing the deep truths under the surface for the comedy, and conversely, the deep truths for the easy laugh," she said.

It helped immensely that Signature has three fine actors — Tom Story, Evan Casey, Jamie Smithson — who happen to be funny (rather than just comedians) to investigate and uncover the emotional truth and get the laughs, she said.

Regarding Tom Story, she added: "I've known him for about 20 years, (we keep remembering new projects we did together back in the day) and his humor and chops and ideas and dazzling acting ability seemed a perfect match."

She said on Feb. 17 of this year, Javerbaum wrote: "God's done with Twit-



PHOTO BY MARGOT SCHULMAN

Evan Casey (Michael), Tom Story (God) and Jamie Smithson (Gabriel) star in "An Act of God" at Signature Theatre.

ter.' And his successful book, his wildly successful Twitter account in the voice of God inspired this play," she said. "Which, in turn, sparked his closing down of God's Twitter Account."

She added: "I think he found that, through the character of God, he could find a unique voice for observations of who and where we are as a nation; what we do in God's name. As I've worked on it, I've found a surprising amount of faith in humanity within the work, even while on surface it seems like a cynical take. Somehow, through God's quixotic wrath and unconditional love, we can find power in our own humanity."

Above all, she wants the audience to have fun with the show. "I want them to laugh

not just at America but themselves. I want to celebrate the best in how we practice faith of whatever brand and root out the worst in our easy use of religion to justify bias and personal ends. I want to investigate, through humor, what is wrong with our culture, and strive to make it right," she said.

Signature Theatre's Specialty Nights for "An Act of God" include Discussion Nights on Oct. 25, Nov. 8 and Nov. 14; Pride Nights on Nov. 3 and Nov. 17; and Open Captioning on Nov. 19, at 2 p.m.

"An Act of God" will be performed through Nov. 26, at Signature Theatre. Tickets are \$40 to \$104. Show times are Tuesdays through Saturdays at 7:30 p.m. and 8 p.m.; Saturday and Sunday matinees at 2 p.m.; and Sunday at 7 p.m. The venue is located in The Village at Shirlington at 4200 Campbell Avenue, Arlington, VA 22206. Visit www.sigtheatre.org or call 703-820-9771.

CALENDAR

Submit entertainment announcements at www.connectionnewspapers.com/Calendar/. The deadline is noon on Friday. Photos/artwork encouraged.

ONGOING

Peter Pan on Stage. Through Nov. 19, various times at Syntetic Theater, Crystal City, 1800 S. Bell St. Take flight to Neverland with Peter Pan, his Lost Boys and the Darling children. Ages 7+. \$35 and up. Student tickets start at \$15. Senior citizens and military receive \$5 off. Call 866-811-4111 or www.syntetictheater.org.

Arlington Farmer's Market. Every Saturday, 8 a.m.-noon at the corner of N. 14th Street and N. Courthouse Road. A weekly celebration of local food including fresh produce, meats, dairy, cheese, baked goods, free range eggs, specialty items, cut flowers, plants and herbs. Email csingiser@cfwdc.org or call 917-733-6402.

FRESHFARM Market. 3-7 p.m. on Tuesdays at 1900 Crystal Drive. Shop from local farmers and producers with seasonal fruits and vegetables, fresh-cut flowers, container plants and herbs, farm-raised eggs, all-natural meats, artisan baked goods, and specialty foods. Visit www.crystalcity.org.

THROUGHOUT OCTOBER

Clean Cars for National Breast Cancer. 4:30-9:30 p.m. at Mr. Wash Car Wash, 101 North Glebe Road. Pink suds, pink towels, clean cars, in honor of National Breast Cancer Awareness Month. Visit www.mrwash.com.

WEDNESDAY/OCT. 25

Volunteers of America Chesapeake. 8-9 p.m. at Army Navy Country Club, 1700 Army Navy Drive. Volunteers of America Chesapeake's 8th Annual Harvest for Hope. Free. Call 410-837-7222.

THURSDAY/OCT. 26

Gin and Jazz Gala for Uganda. 6-10 p.m. at New District Brewing Company, 2709 S. Oakland St. Live and silent auction items during cocktail hour, followed by dinner and dessert, and games to support the efforts building schools, clinics and changing the face of rural Uganda. Visit <http://aahuganda.org/gala/>.

FRIDAY/OCT. 27

14th Annual Construction Competition. 5 p.m.-midnight.

Organized by the American Institute of Architects / Northern Virginia Chapter (AIA NOVA) and AFAC, Northern Virginia's Construction competition celebrates the commitment local architects have made to support their community and have fun while doing so. Watch teams build on Oct. 27. The structures will be on public display at the airport through Nov. 5. Visit www.canstruction.org/.

Nocturnal Nature Campfire. 6-7 p.m. at the Gulf Branch Nature Center, 3608 Military Road. Sit around the fire ring for stories, special animal guests, games, songs and S'mores. \$5. Call 703-228-3403.

"Bits and Pieces." 7:30 p.m. at the Theatre on the Run, 3700 S. Four Mile Run Drive. The performance incorporates spoken word, movement, music and kinetic imaging and animation by Hong Huo. \$10-\$30. Visit janefranklin.com or call 703-933-1111.

SATURDAY/OCT. 28

CROP Hunger Walk. 8 a.m.-noon at First Presbyterian Church, 601 North Vermont St. Walk to end hunger around the world and in Arlington with the 40th Annual CROP Hunger Walk. Funds raised support Arlington Food Assistance Center and the

global hunger initiatives of Church World Service. Visit www.crophungerwalk.org.

Octoberfest Fall Bazaar. 9 a.m.-3 p.m. at Walker Chapel United Methodist Church, 4102 N. Glebe Road. Used clothing, furniture, outdoor and household items, crafts, jewelry, boutique, Christmas items, and bake sale. Cafe serves breakfast and lunch and there is a petting zoo. All proceeds go to charity. Call 703-538-5200 or visit www.walkerchapel.org.

Champion Trees Bike Ride. 9 a.m.-noon, meet at Shirlington Branch Library, 4200 Campbell Ave. Ride over mostly level, paved pathways, while stopping at points of natural and environmental interest along the way. For ages 12+. Register with Vincent Verqueij at 703-228-1863. Call 703-228-6545.

Family Fun Dance Day. 9:30, 11 a.m. and 3 p.m. at Theatre on the Run, 3700 S Four Mile Run Drive. Jane Franklin Dance team with music by Mark Sylvester, Tobias Tenenbaum, and Jon Kamman. \$15. Visit janefranklin.com or call 703-933-1111.

Community Walking Tour. 11 a.m. Courthouse Square Tour meets at Courthouse Pop-up Plaza (Surface Parking Lot), 2100 Clarendon Blvd. Join a 90-minute community walking

tour with artist-in-residence Graham Coreil-Allen to explore, question, and reimagine Courthouse's public spaces in partnership with WalkArlington and Courthouse 2.0. Examine how Arlington's history, public art collection, and civic buildings have shaped the community and discuss Courthouse Square's future planning efforts. Free. Visit grahamprojects.com/.

Arlington Free Clinic Annual Benefit Gala. 6 p.m.-midnight at Ritz-Carlton, Tysons Corner Tysons Galleria, 1700 Tysons Blvd. McLean. Cocktail reception and silent auction, including getaways, art and photography, sports items, and much more. \$300. Visit www.gala.arlingtonfreeclinic.org.

OCT. 28-29

American Fine Arts Craft Show. 10 a.m.-8 p.m. on Saturday; 10 a.m.-5 p.m. on Sunday at the Hyatt Regency Crystal City at Reagan Airport, 2799 Jefferson Davis Highway. 100 contemporary artists and designers. Adult \$15, senior \$12, student \$8, under 12 free. Visit AmericanArtMarketing.com.

Donation Drop-Off Weekend. 11 a.m.-1 p.m. in the St. Agnes Catholic Church, Parking Lot by the Parish Hall at 1910 North Randolph Street.

HALLOWEEN FUN

FRIDAY/OCT. 27

Rosslyn Harvest Fest. 4-10 p.m. at Central Place Plaza, 1800 N. Lynn St. Vendors, crafts, gifts, food, music, a pie eating contest, cornhole, pumpkin toss and a kids' and pets' costume contest. Visit www.rosslynva.org/do/rosslyn-harvest-fest.

11th Annual Vampires Ball. 8 p.m. at Synetic Theater, 1800 S. Bell St. Dance the night away with music courtesy of Resident Composer and Halloween DJ, Konstantine Lortkipanidze. The event will include an open bar, light appetizers, and a costume contest with prizes. \$60-\$75. Visit synetictheater.org.

SATURDAY/OCT. 28

Halloween Spooky Paws Stroll. 10 a.m.-noon in the Market Common Clarendon, 2700 Clarendon Blvd. Doorways for Women and Families 7th Annual Dog Walk. Visit www.doorwaysva.org for more.

Spooky Cupcake Wars. 10 a.m.-noon at Arlington Mill Community Center, 909 South Dinwiddie St. Every family will learn new ways to decorate this popular dessert and create a "spooky" cupcake design to take home. \$8. Call 703-228-4747.

Rosslyn Harvest Fest. 10 a.m.-5 p.m. at Central Place Plaza, 1800 N. Lynn St. Vendors, crafts, gifts, food, music, a pie eating contest, cornhole, pumpkin toss and a kids' and pets' costume contest. Visit www.rosslynva.org/do/rosslyn-harvest-fest

Community Walking Tour. 11 a.m. Courthouse Square Tour meets at Courthouse Pop-up Plaza (Surface Parking Lot), 2100 Clarendon Blvd. Join a 90-minute community walking tour with artist-in-residence Graham

Vampire's Ball

11th Annual Vampires Ball, at 8 p.m. Oct. 27 at Synetic Theater, 1800 S. Bell St. Dance the night away with music courtesy of Resident

Composer and Halloween DJ, Konstantine Lortkipanidze. The event will include an open bar, light appetizers, and a costume contest with prizes. \$60 to \$75. Visit synetictheater.org.



Coreil-Allen to explore, question, and reimagine Courthouse's public spaces in partnership with WalkArlington and Courthouse 2.0. Examine how Arlington's history, public art collection, and civic buildings have shaped the community and discuss Courthouse Square's future planning efforts. Free. Visit grahamprojects.com/ for more.

Fall-O-Ween Festival. 1-4 p.m. at Market Common Clarendon, 2800 Clarendon Blvd. Bring the entire family and join us for the fun. Festivities will include: ini pumpkin decorating, Scarecrow decorating station, trick-or-treating & kids' crafts at stores, petting zoo, Big Barn Puppet Shows at 1, 2 & 3 p.m., music with Kidsinger Jim, face painting, balloon art & sand art, funnel cakes. Free. Email

hilaryshure@regencycenters.com or call 703-442-4341.

Day of the Dead. 6-7 p.m. at the Long Branch Nature Center, 625 S. Carlin Springs Road. Celebrate the Day of the Dead with Calaveras, the decorative sugar skull masks and costumes, holiday snacks, and see some night animals up close. Afterward, there is a night hike through the candlelit forest. \$5. Call 703-228-6535 for more.

Haunted Trail. 7-9 p.m. at Douglas Park, 1718 S Quincy St. Bring a non-perishable food donation then walk through gates, coffins, tombstones, picket fences and caldrons and pumpkin painting and games. This event benefits Arlington Food Assistance Center and Randolph Elementary School PTA. Call 703-228-6525 for more.

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ENTERTAINMENT



COURTESY OF YORKTOWN THEATRE

'Voices out of Chaos'

The Yorktown Theatre III & IV classes are performing "Voices out of Chaos," an original play developed by the students in response to current events. The show follows a young girl's journey as she attempts to make sense of the chaos created by the barrage of daily headlines. Free performances will take place on Oct. 27 and 28, in the Yorktown H.S. auditorium, at 7 p.m., followed by a Q&A session. The theatre classes will also be taking this show to the Virginia High School League competition on Jan. 20, 2018. The performances are free and open to the public.

CALENDAR

"Share the Journey" is sponsored by the Migration and Refugee Outreach Program which is collecting donations of household and personal items. Call 703-525-1166.

suspect or victim. Email jdoll@marymount.edu.

FRIDAY/NOV 3

Yoga Dialogue. 6:30-8:30 p.m. at Sun & Moon Yoga, 3811 Lee Highway. Guided meditations, silent reflection, dialogue principles, and mindfulness practices to support us as a group in candid conversations about the divisions in our country and to learn from our different views and ideas in a respectful space. By donation only - all proceeds will go to hurricane relief. Visit sunandmoonstudio.com.

Meet the Artists. 7 p.m. at Marymount University's Ballston Center Gallery, 1000 North Glebe Road. Talk with artists Jeremy Flick and Jon Malis about their exhibit "Metaphrase." Visit marymount.edu.

Moon Night Hike. 7-8 p.m. at Fort C.F. Smith, 2411 24th St N. Experience the trails under the moon, learn a new constellation, and meet nocturnal critters. 703-228-3403.

After Hours Dance Party. 7-9 p.m. Columbia Pike Branch Library, 816 South Walter Reed Drive. Caz Gardiner, a Washington, D.C.-based singer/songwriter performs rock and reggae. Call 703-228-5710.

Auto-Audio. 7:30 p.m. at the Theatre on the Run, 3700 S. Four Mile Run Drive. New works by Forty+/ Excerpts from Aflight. Post-performance at Capitol City Brewing Company. Minimum donation \$10. Visit janefranklin.com or call 703-933-1111.

SATURDAY/NOV. 4

Birding Arlington. 8-9:30 a.m. at at Gravelly Point, George Washington Memorial Pkwy. Use spotting scopes, and stroll around the park looking for waterfowl, songbirds and maybe a Peregrine Falcon. Ages 8 and up. Call 703-228-3403.

Whitetail Deer Campfire. 6-7 p.m. at at Gulf Branch Nature Center, 3608 N. Military Road. Stories, special animal guests, games, songs and S'mores. \$5. 703-228-3403 or gulfbranchnaturectr@arlingtonva.us.

SUNDAY/OCT. 29

Roosevelt Memorial Jubilee. 10 a.m.-5 p.m. at Theodore Roosevelt Island, George Washington Memorial Parkway. 50th anniversary of the Roosevelt Memorial with historical re-enactors, games, tours, Teddy Bear Storytimes, exhibits, vendors. Visit theodorerooseveltisland.org/.

Evolution: Past Present Future Dance Show. 6 p.m. at Kenmore Middle School, 200 S. Carlin Springs Road. Metropolitan School of the Arts youth dancers in ballet, tap, jazz, and hip-hop. \$15. Visit metropolitanarts.org.

MONDAY/OCT. 30

Breakfast with the Chief. 8-10 a.m. at the Hyatt Centric, 1325 Wilson Blvd. Join Arlington County Police Chief M. Jay Farr for a networking and Q&A session. Visit police.arlingtonva.us/ or call 703-558-2222.

WEDNESDAY/NOV. 1

Northern Virginia Bird Club Walk. 8:30-11 a.m. at Long Branch Nature Center, 625 S. Carlin Springs Road. Search of resident and migratory birds, bring binoculars. Free. Call 703-228-6535 or visit longbranchnaturectr@arlingtonva.us.

NOV. 2-3

P.E.A.C.E. Investigative Interviewing Training. 9 a.m.-5 p.m. in Marymount's Ballston Center Conference Room, 1000 North Glebe Road. The P.E.A.C.E. approach has been adopted by numerous police forces, including those in Canada, Australia, New Zealand and many other countries. It is designed to maintain respect for the interviewee, whether the person is a witness,



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Popular Tech Items for Your Smart Home Kitchen



photo: Amazon.com

Smart home technology began as something entertaining to talk about or watch in the movies. But more and more we are seeing homeowners integrate many of the smart home technology products available on the market today. What are some of the products that we are seeing being used?

Amazon Dash Wand

With the Amazon Dash Wand, not only can you scan items in the kitchen to add them to your shopping list, but you can also ask Alexa to order things, read out recipes or even convert measurements.

Samsung Family Hub Refrigerator

Samsung's smart fridges come with a giant touchscreen that will display your calendar, let you play music, and let you order new groceries when you're running low.

GeniCan

GeniCan sits with your garbage can to make sure you never forget the groceries you need. To add items to a shopping list, you simply swipe the item's barcode on GeniCan's barcode reader. You can then find the item added to a list on the GeniCan app on your smartphone.



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Nathan Eberhart, 12, Boy Scout First Class, Troop 647, asked Chief of Police Jay Farr what he and his troop could do to spread awareness of the problem.



Also present at the library were DEA personnel, addressing "red ribbon week" and providing awareness of Narcan an opioid blocker used in the treatment of overdoses. The Arlington County police displayed typical drug paraphernalia to look for: the FedEx envelope is how drugs can arrive in the mail; youths are ordering them over the internet via the "dark web."

PHOTOS BY EDEN BROWN THE CONNECTION

Facing Local Drug Use Epidemic

FROM PAGE 3

made the town hall meeting happen.

One of the most disturbing stories of the night was from a parent, Ari Garbow, who said he has three children in the Arlington school system. "Nine months ago, I wouldn't have been here. But almost exactly nine months ago, I was having wine and cheese with friends when I got a call from our two younger children at home, who were in hysterics. They said there were police outside the home with their older brother." Garbow rushed home to see police cruisers outside his house. "For the next 48 hours, we watched as my 10th grader had to be subdued on the ground, chained to a hospital bed, and put into juvenile detention."

"We were — and we are — really good parents," he said. "We bonded with our kids, had good chats with them, did the talks about drugs and marijuana, and heard back from them that they felt they could say 'no' to drugs and alcohol and not feel uncomfortable. My son was getting good grades in school, he seemed happy and we had a great relationship. But then, when he was a freshman in high school, we heard from another parent that our son had boasted to their son about being high. When we confronted him, he protested: but it's legal in so many places."

Garbow said he and his wife tracked their son carefully after that. They thought they had it under control: they engaged in therapy for him to deal with anxiety and depression, which a lot of youths have in Arlington County. They didn't smell the strong smell of marijuana anywhere at home. But then, they found out he was doing marijuana daily the first week he tried it, then multiple times a day, then vaping it, then abusing alcohol in the house. They learned that much of the use and purchase of drugs and alcohol took place at school, and that with the lunch money he was given, he had purchased LSD, not lunch.

"We thought we knew everything," Garbow said, "but when I look back on it, I realize there was no way this kid was going to tell us the truth: he was addicted. My kid was taking his lunch money to school and there was a smorgasbord of drug choices for him to spend it on, instead of food."

Dr. John Palmieri of the Arlington County Department of Human Services said drug use is common, starting early, becoming increasingly complex and has more serious consequences than it used to.

He referred the residents at the meeting to the Risk Behavior Survey filled out by Arlington teens. Risky behavior is up, he said. Con-

sequences are not clear to the adolescent. And the potency of the drugs out there is much higher. He suggested parents be on the lookout of warning signs like fatigue, red eyes, emotional changes, increased argumentativeness, breaking rules, withdrawal, clothing changes, and different friends. But he warned that not all youths demonstrate these signs.

For more information, Palmieri recommended the website "Partnership for a Drug Free America" or www.drugfree.org.

APS School Superintendent Dr. Patrick Murphy addressed the comments of some irate parents who wanted to know why they weren't better informed about the drug epidemic in Arlington County and its schools. What was the school system doing to keep kids safe? He stressed the importance of education and awareness about the drug issue: the purpose of the evening's town hall meeting. "The message I want to send," he said, "is education, awareness, prevention — and that we're in this together. Schools can do a lot, but it's only one piece of the puzzle. Bringing the canines into school (to do drug searches) was a difficult decision; it was painful. But in light of these stories we've heard tonight, we don't feel it was too much."

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Dreamers

FROM PAGE 4

rent 800,000 DACA 135,000 are Asian-Americans. The current efforts focus on DACA with phone banks, vigils and visits to Virginia legislators urging them to support of the Dream Act. “Representatives Barbara Comstock and Scott Taylor are on the fence about whether to co-sponsor the legislation,” said Yi. NAKASEC is planning a day soon when they will join with other organizations and knock on every door they can find. “Come on; we can do this,” she said.

Yi says that Korea is a land of opportunity with a great educational system. “I can go there now and make a lot of money but what keeps us rooted here is liberty and freedom. In Korea,” she said, “You have to think a certain way. Culturally and value-wise, I’m American.”

Yi takes a moment to reflect on their recent 30-day vigil in front of the White House.

She said they slept on benches, talked to people, got signatures and even did the “DACA dance.”

“The Secret Service told us we were the weirdest demonstrators they had ever seen at the White House; we even had a karaoke night. But we raised a lot of money,” Yi said. “Some people were supportive but others were being really mean. We had kids with us and I could see they were so hurt. I don’t know what’s going to happen but we’re stronger together. We have to do something.”

She declares they’re going to get education and driver’s licenses for everyone in Virginia. “This moment is bigger than all of us.”

SIXTY FOUR PLACES of worship joined together after the election with the announcement of upcoming anti-immigration legislation. Imam Ali Saddiqui, who is part of a transitional leadership team for the group, says Sanctuary DMV (D.C., Maryland, Virginia) includes a number of Protestant churches as well as several synagogues, Catholic churches and his Muslim Institute. One of their actions has been organizing rallies in support of DACA and immigrant rights. “I was just there last week at the Immigration Customs Enforcement (ICE) office in D.C. and at the mayor’s office.” Since there was just a raid where ICE went after 500 undocumented immigrants and 14 were arrested, the group was asking for their release and for the mayor not to cooperate with ICE officials.

In addition, they have been visiting congressional offices in support of the Dream Act and phoning members of Congress. “Actually this is on a party line. Democrats are very supportive and Republicans not.”

He says you hear the argument that immigrants cost the government money and don’t pay taxes. “Let me tell you my own story. I came here from Pakistan on March 23, 1969 originally as an asylee. I looked for a job and started working and paying taxes March 24 and have paid ever since.”

The Rev. Laura Martin, associate pastor for at Rock Spring UCC in Arlington and also a member of DMV Sanctuary, says there are a number of unresolved issues about the concept of offering sanctuary to an immigrant in a church building. “We are trying to come up with a wider definition of sanctuary such as offering solidarity or support for immigrants when they have an order for deportation. So in the spring another member of the congregation and I picked up a woman living in D.C. with her two children in a



PHOTO BY SHIRLEY RUHE

Imam Ali Saddiqui, transitional leader for Sanctuary DMV, demonstrates outside of ICE office in D.C.

small apartment with 13 people. We were there to support her for her deportation hearing. The woman had fled El Salvador, which is the murder capital of the world. We took her to Rosslyn to immigration court. All of us had to go through a metal detector including the children, and they took away the food in her purse.”

Martin says 80 different cases were all given the same 11 a.m. time for consideration. “It wasn’t a grand court — it was an institutional setting with low ceilings, bright light and so crowded that people, even with babies, couldn’t sit down. It was very procedural and you heard the same thing dozens of times. They took cases with attorneys first so we had to wait for a long time.”

Martin says somewhere along the way the woman’s heavy ankle bracelet started beeping because the battery was low. “There was nowhere to recharge it so it just kept beeping until we got to Subway for lunch in the late afternoon and she could plug it in.” When it came her turn the bilingual judge asked if the immigrant needed time to get an attorney and postponed her case until August.

Then they had to go to Vienna for a regular ankle bracelet check-in. “They could track where she was.”

Martin said the Sanctuary DMV group is not involved in case management so she doesn’t know what happened at the August court date. “The courts can’t keep up. They are rescheduling out to the end of 2018.”

An excerpt from a poem sent by Martin to the congregation concludes:

“I have known the grandmothers who Smile even though they have left Their country of spices and markets, Have left their open windows with blue curtains Have left the tramping of war, Have left their songs and language, And believed America when we said, “This is the land of the free.””

This is the third article in a series focusing on DACA.

DACA by Congressional District

U.S. Rep.	DACA Recipients	DACA Eligible
Beyer (D-8)	2,000	5,400
Comstock (R-10)	1,600	3,700
Connelly (D-11)	2,400	5,300

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Legals

ABC LICENSE
XHR Arlington TRS LLC trading as The Ritz Carlton Pentagon City, 1250 South Hayes Street, Arlington, Arlington County, Virginia 22202. The above establishment is applying to the VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGE CONTROL (ABC) for a Wine & Beer On & Off Premises; Mixed Beverage Restaurant (seat capacity over 150 seats) license to sell or manufacture alcoholic beverages. Marcel Verbaas, President authorizing advertisement. NOTE: Objections to the issuance of this license must be submitted to ABC no later than 30 days from the publishing date of the first of two required newspaper legal notices. Objections should be registered at www.abc.virginia.gov or 800-552-3200.

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Announcements

NEWS

Yorktown Focuses on Drug Use

FROM PAGE 3

pretty much anything that can be inhaled or smoked, can also be vaped. “We’ve even seen photos of kids vaping (drugs) at school because these kids document everything on social media. “We do have a problem with juuls compared to other schools,” she said. Yorktown is an affluent school and juuls are expensive: they can cost \$40 to \$50 per case with card charger.”

Some Yorktown teachers and parents have known about this problem for a while; students have told their parents about the ease of doing juuls in the middle of a class. “You can inhale it right in the middle of the class, even with the teacher looking, because it’s so small it fits in your palm,” said one student. And why? “It’s to fight boredom, mainly.”

Teachers have long complained that the “Patriot Period” — a scheduled “down period” designed to loosen up the packed schedule and let high school students catch up on a class or seek help with their work — was not adequately supervised and allowed students to roam the halls, and sometimes the fields and woods. One teacher, who did not want to be identified, said of the Patriot Period in 2016-2017: “There is no accountability during Patriot Period. No one checks on the kids. They could be anywhere.” Loft was brought to Yorktown from Swanson Middle School this fall in part to deal with this problem head on. She says it is an ongoing process. Her primary role in this effort is to be transparent with parents, students, and teachers about the consequences of substance abuse.

She has shared the Risk Behavior Survey, which monitors risky behavior in 6-12 graders locally and by school, with teachers, and then did a show and tell for them on actual vaping devices they might see in the classroom or around school. She plans to share the same information at the Nov. 13 PTA meeting.

Loft said she is having class meetings, talking about expectations for behavior, and then consequences. Those are: if a student is found vaping on school property the student will receive an out-of-school suspension, which can be expunged from the record if the student participates in the second chance program. The school wants to solve the abuse problem, not ruin the lives of students. Her tactics seem to be having an effect: several Yorktown students said consequences were rare previously and risks they might have taken last year, they wouldn’t take this year because they know the current principal is serious, and is watching.

Loft has also worked with government classes, with ninth graders about decision-making, providing

them with the testimony of someone who has been in recovery for 20 years, and on early release day, she invited Kevin Shird, a convicted drug dealer who wrote a book about his experience after he was released from prison, to speak about his own bad choices. She recommended the podcast produced by APS which provides tips to parents (see box).

On Dec. 7, she will reprise a presentation Mike Krulfeld, Yorktown’s director of Student Activities, organized last year, where students with struggles with substance abuse talked about their lives, and parents shared similar stories. She reiterated Superintendent of Schools Dr. Patrick Murphy’s comments from the town hall meeting: parents, schools, and students are “in this together” and education, awareness, prevention — and partnership — are the keys.

As for Patriot Period, Loft said she wanted to see how Patriot Period was working before she changed it. Patriot Period is now in its second year. The driving motivation for the idea was to get extra help embedded in the school day for students who needed it. She has put together a group of staff to evaluate whether it is having any positive effect for students who need it, and just how accountable it is. Loft has not set a date for her decision on Patriot Period, but she is engaging in small tweaks while she observes. One of the things she has done is to add a layer of accountability: if students are given directives by teachers to report to them for Patriot Period, then they need to show up, and if they don’t, the school has to be aware of the no-show. Loft is also increasing the activity of student resource officers who roam in the area behind Yorktown which has been notorious for congregating (and substance abuse). Additional coverage for sports events and events like prom, will also be deployed.

Still, just two weekends after Shird made his emotional plea to the Yorktown senior class, to make good choices at this point in their lives, a “Powder Puff” football game took place at Jamestown Elementary’s playing field, where Yorktown students, among others, were engaged in alcohol and substance abuse. The game was interrupted by the police, who confiscated substance abuse items and took names.

Will Yorktown students be suspended? When asked, Loft said, “Given that the Powder Puff game was not a school-sanctioned event and did not occur on school grounds nor during school hours, Yorktown’s administrators will follow our usual procedure in following up with the students’ parents and referring the students who had been drinking at the event or using substances to our substance abuse counselor, Dr. Mila Vascones-Gatski, who will determine if referrals to Second Chance are appropriate.”

BULLETIN BOARD

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

- ❖ Fire Station #1, 500 S. Glebe Road
 - ❖ Fire Station #5, 1750 S. Hayes St.
 - ❖ Fire Station #8, 4845 Lee Highway
 - ❖ Fire Station #9, 1900 S. Walter Reed Drive
- Visit newsroom.arlingtonva.us/events/national-prescription-drug-take-back-day-2/.

SATURDAY/OCT. 28

Drug Take-Back Day. 10 a.m.-2 p.m. The Arlington County Police Department (ACPD), Arlington County Sheriff’s Office and the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) will give the public a chance to bring medications for disposal to the sites listed below. The service is free and anonymous, no questions asked. Sites cannot accept liquids, needles or sharps; only pills or patches will be accepted. ACPD will be collecting prescription drugs at the following sites:

SATURDAY-SUNDAY/OCT. 28-29

Donation Drop Off. In the St. Agnes Catholic Church parking lot by the Parish Hall at 1910 North Randolph St. “Share the Journey” is sponsored by the Migration and Refugee Outreach Program which is collecting donations of household and personal items on Saturday, 11 a.m.-1 p.m. and Sunday, following the noon mass-2:30 p.m. Items will be collected in the St. Agnes Catholic

Church Parking Lot by the Parish Hall at 1910 North Randolph in Arlington. Needs for refugee families includes new twin and queen size bedding, brooms with dust pans, baking dishes, mixing bowls, new kitchen utensils and kitchen knives as well as floor lamps, alarm clocks, shower curtains and rings and hand can openers (no electric.) They currently are not accepting diapers, any type of clothing, toys or used car seats. Call 703-841-3891 with questions.

SUNDAY/OCT. 29

Newcomers’ Fall Reception. 1-3 p.m. at St. Mary’s, 2609 N. Glebe Road. New to St. Mary’s? Let us get to know you at our Newcomers

SEE BULLETIN, PAGE 15

"FLOURISHING AFTER 55"

"Flourishing After 55" from Arlington Office of Senior Adult Programs for Oct. 30-Nov. 4.

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. 18th St.

Senior trips: Brandywine River Museum, Chadds Ford, Pa., Monday, Oct. 30, \$101; backstage tour Wolf Trap, Tuesday, Oct. 31, \$9; U.S. Naval Academy tour and high tea, Annapolis, Wednesday, Nov. 1, \$58; Textile Museum, D.C., Thursday, Nov. 2, \$15; "The Price," matinee, Arena Stage, D.C., Sat., Nov 4, \$94. Call Arlington County 55+ Travel, 703-228-4748. Registration required.

NEW PROGRAMS:

Understanding gardening, Monday, Oct. 30, 1 p.m., Walter Reed. Register, 703-228-0955.

Karaoke time at Lee, Monday, Oct. 30, 1:30 p.m. Register early, 703-228-0555.

What to do with heirlooms, Monday, Oct. 30, 1 p.m., Langston-Brown. Register, 703-228-6300.

How to use Craigslist, Tuesday, Oct. 31, 1 p.m., Walter Reed. Register, 703-228-0955.

Free blood pressure check, Tuesday, Oct. 31, 10-11 a.m., Walter Reed. Details, 703-228-0955.

Moving to a retirement community, Tuesday, Oct. 31, 1 p.m., Lee. Register, 703-228-0555.

Local history discussion, Wednesday, Nov. 1, 12:30 p.m., Lee. Details, 703-228-0555.

Study of words, Wednesday, Nov. 1, 11 a.m., Lee. Details, 703-228-0555.

Walter's Walkers, 30 minutes, Wednesday, Nov. 1, 8:30 a.m., Walter Reed. Details, 703-228-0955.

Food Safety 101, Thursday, Nov. 2, 10 a.m., Walter Reed. Register, 703-228-0955.

World history discussion, Thursday, Nov. 2, 1 p.m., Walter Reed. Details, 703-228-0955.

Behind the scenes of Ten Thousand Villages stores, Thursday, Nov. 2, 11 a.m., Langston-Brown. Details, 703-228-6300.

A fresh look at Classical Greek Theatre, Friday, Nov. 3, 1:30 p.m., Aurora Hills. Register 703-228-5722.

What's a Podcast, Friday, Nov. 3, 5-7 p.m., Connection Library, Crystal City Underground. Register, 703-228-4756.

BULLETIN BOARD

FROM PAGE 14

Reception. Tell us what you're interested in, meet clergy, ministry leaders and other newcomers. Additionally, we'll welcome the newest Merrow Scholarship Fellow from Virginia Theological Seminary at this reception. Visit smarysarlington.org.

SUNDAY/NOV. 12

"Life's Final Choices." 2 p.m. at Unitarian Universalist Church of Arlington, 4444 Arlington Blvd. Maureen Albrethsen, a licensed funeral director, will discuss medical treatments when death is near; disposition of one's body (burial, cremation, or donation to science), and planning for a "life celebration." The meeting is presented by the Memorial Society of Northern Virginia, a nonprofit group of volunteers. Free, open to all. Call 703-271-9240 or email info@memorialsocietyva.org.

FRIDAY/NOV. 17

Design Competition Deadline. The Office of the Arlington County Treasurer invites high school students who reside or attend school in Arlington to participate in the 14th Annual Decal Design Competition at taxes.arlingtonva.us/decal-design/.

GET MORE WITH SNAP

Arlington and Alexandria Farmers' Markets accept SNAP/EBT (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program) cards for purchases. SNAP/EBT customers can purchase produce at area farmers' markets and get matching bonus tokens to add to their purchases. Virginia Cooperative will be on-site 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).

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Weakened Wherewithal



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

Say that three times quickly. Heck, say it one-time slowly. And then welcome to my whirled: the world of cancer treatment and survival. A 'whirled' in which, eight years and nearly eight months post diagnosis, I continue to live, breathe and write.

Occasionally it happens, as it is happening now, that some of the most excruciating demands of being a cancer patient, occur simultaneously – or a reasonable facsimile thereof. For me that means 24-hour urine collection, pre-chemotherapy lab work, chemotherapy infusion, CT Scan and then the appointment with my oncologist to discuss all the results; occurring over 13 days – with intermittent days off for good behavior.

Typically; meaning every minute, every hour, every day, every week, etc., maybe not every second, I am thinking about cancer; though I wouldn't say I'm preoccupied (others might). And of course, it's certainly understandable and reasonable to do so when every day over a fortnight, you are waiting – as we say in the sales world – "for the other shoe to drop."

Having endured this cycle over the last eight and a half years with varying regularity, I can honestly say that whatever symptoms have manifested themselves – or not – have never provided any consistent assurance that my life/life expectancy had not changed for the worse. It's not until the appointment with my oncologist occurs – or sooner if he emails me the scan results, that I learn the facts of my case.

All of that being said, as my friend Frank has often said to me: "You're in pretty good shape for the shape you're in." Don't I know it.

However, yes there's always a 'however' in the cancer-patient-surviving-against-all-odds 'whirled,' there are no guarantees. In fact, there are only two guarantees: death and taxes. The former is way too close for comfort and the latter, I'm already taxed to the hilt, emotionally. Somehow, I have to get through because "the alternative is gloomy" to quote Dr. Mobley, the doctor in Miles City who treated Augustus McCray in the epic miniseries, "Lonesome Dove." And so I try not to be gloomy.

However, there's that word again, circumstances/schedules randomly bring down the weight – and wait of my 'whirled.' These 13 days can never pass quickly enough. But that presumes a good result, which one would want to know as soon as possible. But what of a bad result, leading to an exponential increase in anxiety – and fear, ultimately leading to a treatment unknown. That I might not want to know so soon. Not that not knowing serves any point or helps coordinate the next treatment plan, I'm more afraid of hearing something I haven't heard much of since February 2009. To quote my late mother quoting somebody: "No one gets out of this life alive."

That of course is the point of this column, and the effect of having all this cancer stuff happen at the same time. I can take it, generally; as my late father used to say: "KB, I have confidence in you. You have broad shoulders." Nevertheless, I worry about the figurative straw breaking my emotional back. Cancer can do that. It did it to my mother-in-law, Peggy, where over a few days the situation went from bad to worse to finally, the worst.

Somehow, I have to compartmentalize all this negative energy and focus on the positive. And that positive turns out to be an early email from my oncologist basically saying that my lung cancer remains stable. Now we can go to my appointment on Monday "unencumbered," to once gain quote my late father. The pressure is semi off. Talk about relief.

Now maybe I can relax and try not to think about my next infusion, my next scan and my next appointment with the oncologist. There's no harm in trying, right?

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

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Check your windshield. Does your sticker say **10/17, 11/17, or 12/17?** If so, your VA Safety Inspection is now due

VIRGINIA STATE INSPECTION

FREE

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