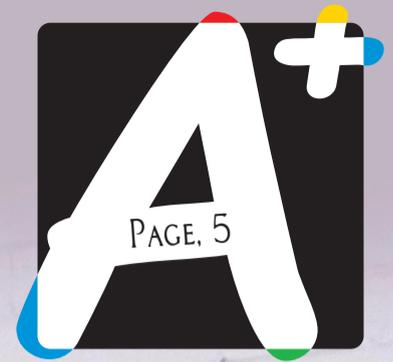


The Arlington Connection



Hagan Donovan, 10-years old, and his 13-year-old brother, Cooper, funnel oats into plastic bags at Arlington Food Assistance Center (AFAC) on Monday, Jan. 15. Both say they have done this in the past but not on Martin Luther King Day. "We have packed sandwiches one time and greens another at Marymount."



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PHOTO BY SHIRLEY RUHE/THE CONNECTION

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On the Road Ahead

BY VERNON MILES
THE CONNECTION

The final plans for Arlington are approved in the County Board meetings, but they start at the commissions. At its first meeting of the year, on Jan. 11, the Transportation Commission laid out some priorities and transit goals for 2018.

Commission Member Kristin Caulkins said this year's update to the Capital Improvement Plan, which happens every two years, is a chance for the commission to assess one of the county's longstanding transportation issues. Briefings on CIP issues will start to take place in Arlington County's boards and commissions starting next month.

"This is a good opportunity to look at on street parking across the county as a whole," said Caulkins. "There's about eight different categories for parking restrictions with hours all over the place. We need to think



PHOTO BY CONNOR ORTMAN/THE CONNECTION
Parking meter in Clarendon with current parking hours listed.

about when our metered parking stops; six o'clock is very early. It's a big bite of the apple to take, but it's becoming decisive

Transportation Commission looks at top issues for 2018

enough that it's probably worth it to talk about."

Commission Chairman Chris Slatt echoed Caulkins' call for a comprehensive review of the county's on-street parking policy.

"[We need to] look at on street parking more holistically," said Slatt.

One of the other topics raised as a priority for 2018 was beginning work on a vision zero plan. Vision Zero is a public safety strategy that pursues a goal of zero traffic crashes. The program began in Sweden in 1997 and emphasizes that no deaths caused by a road transportation system are acceptable. Alexandria adopted a Vision Zero policy in 2016, and approved an action plan in December, 2017. Slatt says the topic of Vision Zero first came up in Arlington through the bicycle work group. However, Slatt says the members of the work group said that a Vision Zero plan was larger than the scope of their work, particularly since the majority of the lives saved are those of drivers. Slatt said there had been some in-

terest from the County Board and that staff was currently at work on a plan. The topic is scheduled for future hearings at the Pedestrian Advisory Committee.

The commission also briefly touched on the need to begin looking at policies with regard to self-driving cars. While the prospect isn't a pivotal one for 2018, it was still agreed that the issue would likely begin to gain traction in the near future.

Finally, Slatt briefly noted that the Transportation Commission would have to look at car sharing in 2018, a type of program that has been in a state of limbo in terms of County policy.

"We have to look at car sharing," said Slatt, "whether companies want to come in and do point-to-point or fixed space. But to my knowledge, we're still in a weird extended pilot with Car2Go and there's nothing official yet, so I want to get back on that."

The Transportation Commission's next meeting will be held on Feb. 8.

Going Out on a Limb Caring for Arlington's trees in winter.

BY VERNON MILES
THE CONNECTION

Cold snaps, a weather phenomena common to the east coast, can leave a lot of Arlington residents confused. Is it t-shirt or heavy coat weather? Sometimes it changes midway through the day. But as frustrating as it can be for humans, arborist Steve Nagy and assistant district manager for The Care of Trees, says it can be just as confusing for local trees.

"In the mid-atlantic region, we never know what the weather is going to be like," said Nagy.

"If you have a real cold snap, like we did, trees come out of their dormant period and you can get frost damage if trees come out with leaves."

For Arlingtonians with yards and trees, Nagy said it's important to maintain care for your trees over the winter months. Nagy says for smaller trees, like pine trees, bradford pears, and tiny elms, be aware that

heavy winds and ice can cause these trees to break apart and even damage the home.

"These trees tend to break apart under heavy loads," said Nagy. "They break apart, fall on houses and screened in porches. An arborist will be able to come out and say 'you can probably brace these limbs' or 'they may be able to cut back and reduce the weight on overextended limbs.'"

For the larger trees around Arlington, he said these are mostly tulips and oaks, Nagy says it's important to have these trees inspected.

"Have an arborist come out and look for defects on larger limbs," said Nagy. "Last year, we had that oddball snowstorm in April. The trees, if it's a steady kind of mild winter, they don't dry out on the inside. The cells are holding onto that moisture. Then, when you get a sudden drop in temperature, you get cracking. Younger, thinner trees will split and crack. That's rapid expansion of those shrinking cells. Then you have a crack that runs vertical, and that

leads to decay. It will heal, then it will wound again, opening and closing, like picking at a scab. That can ruin a nice, small ornamental tree."

Nagy says removing dead limbs can be a vital part of keeping these types of trees in a healthy condition. Even in winter, Nagy said an arborist can identify which of the limbs is dead.

Remove dead limbs, that enforces the tree to put its energy elsewhere rather than reinforce broken stud or limb. Arborist can identify larger dead limbs.

John Noelle, arborist for the City of Alexandria, also said that many people in the region hesitate to do tree-care in the winter because they can't tell which branches are alive or dead.

"If you're pruning a small tree, it's fairly easy to tell which of the limbs or branches are alive," said Noelle. "Take your thumbnail or a knife and scrape a twig. If it's green underneath, then it's alive."

Noelle also said the presence of buds on

twigs is another way of telling which tree limbs are alive.

For maintaining year-round tree care, Noelle also said it's important to mulch trees, but doing it improperly can have disastrous effects.

"Just spread one or two inches," said Noelle. "A big problem we have around here is when people put too much mulch down or put it all up against the trunk of the tree; volcano mulching. That happens a lot around here and that's bad for the tree."

Noelle and Nagy emphasized that it's important for local tree owners to keep up their care for their trees throughout the winter months.

"Despite concerns about whether you can tell if branches are alive or dead, it's a great time to have your larger trees pruned," said Noelle. "It's a great time to engage tree companies. They're looking for work, so the prices might be a little better and they will be able to tell which branches are alive or dead."

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Making It a Day On, Not a Day Off

600 volunteers sign up for MLK Day of Service.

Nine-year-old Shane Laughlin plays Bingo with Melvin Zunn at Culpepper Garden on Monday, Jan. 15. "I'm 87-years-old," Zunn says. The ball spins around and G-58 is called out. "Oh, you got one." Playing Bingo with senior citizens was one of the volunteer opportunities offered at MLK Day of Service sponsored by Volunteer Arlington.

PHOTOS BY
SHIRLEY RUHE
THE CONNECTION



A table of participants are busy writing letters to active duty service men and women as one of the volunteer choices at Culpepper Garden on Jan. 15. Some of the other opportunities included purchasing items for welcome kits for Bridges to Independence families, cleaning up trash and debris with Arlingtonians for a Clean Environment and assisting with screening immigrants for Just Neighbors.



Five-year-old Matthew Backer, and his 11-year-old brother Daniel, are loading mesh bags with six large carrots each at Arlington Food Assistance Center (AFAC) as part of the volunteer activities for MLK Day of Service. Matthew says this is his first time bagging for AFAC; his brother says he has done it a lot in the past.



Charles Meng, executive director of AFAC, tells the volunteers at MLK Day of Service that AFAC reached 2,376 families last month. "We reach three groups: the unemployed and underemployed, the elderly and the physically and mentally disabled. "They walk among us." Meng says 1,200 come to the site at 2708 S. Nelson Street and others to the 17 distribution sites around Arlington. "They pick up 40 pounds on average per visit."



It is barely over 20 degrees but volunteers are layered and armed with yard tools to remove invasive species on Culpepper Garden grounds for MLK Day of Service. Other outdoor volunteers are cleaning up the resident gardens around the corner.

New Building, New Governor, New Day

BY ADAM EBBIN
STATE SENATOR (D-30)



The start of a General Assembly Session always feels like the first day back to school, with the same faces in a familiar setting. But this year it feels like I've transferred to a whole new school with a new principal and lots of new classmates. We've moved into our temporary home for the next three years, the Pocahontas Building, on the southside of Capitol Square, while the former General Assembly Building on the northside is torn down and replaced.

Last Wednesday marked Gov. Terry McAuliffe's final State of the Commonwealth, and Monday was Gov. Ralph Northam's first. Those addresses bookended the Inauguration of Dr. Northam as our 73rd Governor. I've been

RICHMOND REPORT

fortunate to attend the ceremonies of all five of the governors I've served with, and participating in this process, fundamental to democracy, inspires a deepened appreciation of our Commonwealth's history and the great honor to be a part of it. Despite the cold and even a few snowflakes, I greatly enjoyed witnessing, once again, the peaceful transfer of power. Reflecting on the outgoing and incoming remarks from Governors McAuliffe and Northam, I was moved by two optimistic visions for the future: the belief in second chances and a call for hope.

In his Inaugural Address, Governor Northam acknowledged our Commonwealth's complicated heritage: Virginia helped set the stage for the American Revolution when Patrick Henry, our first elected Governor, cried "Give me liberty or give me death" — while only half a mile away one of the largest slave markets in America was growing. Governor Northam said that as Virginians we have a "responsibility to shape the future — to leave this place better than we found it." He called on us all to rise above the shouting and the shallow tweets from Washington and once again lead the way.

With the party breakdown in both chambers nearly tied, Dr. Northam's Inaugural message must be realized: "If we work together today, tomorrow will be better for all of the Virginians who have placed their trust in us."

We welcomed 19 new members to the House of Delegates — 15 Democrats and four Republicans.

The freshman Democratic class is as diverse as the Commonwealth itself. These talented and promising new delegates are majority female and include Millennials, a VMI alumna, two Latinas, the first Asian-American woman, a former news anchor, the first out lesbian, and the first openly transgender legislator in the United States. Our LGBT caucus now proudly includes five members. Other signs of progress include Governor Northam's majority-female Cabinet, and our new Lt. Governor, Justin Fairfax, who became only the second African-American elected to statewide office in our 400 year history. His first day presiding over the Senate was on Martin Luther King Day.

I've introduced 23 bills so far and intend to file up to seven more. Eight are on the topic of election reform, including no-excuse absentee voting (SB 602), which will be heard by the Senate Privileges and Elections Committee where I serve as a member. On the subject of gun violence prevention, I've introduced a bill to prohibit carrying loaded firearms while intoxicated (SB 2), universal background checks (SB 5), and a ban on bump stocks (SB 1). The urgency of banning bump stocks was further underscored by the brave testimony of Courtney Carroll, a survivor of the Las Vegas tragedy who lives in Richmond. I'm continuing my fight to decriminalize marijuana, this year with bipartisan support. Other topics I'm also pursuing include preventing sexual abuse of public and private school students; allowing a governor to serve two consecutive terms; and establishing an office to assist immigrant service organizations. I intend to co-patron a

range of legislation including funding for Metro, redistricting reform, and a repeal of the misguided rate freeze that has provided millions in over-earnings for Dominion Power. I also look forward to assisting our new Governor's efforts to expand and strengthen the New Virginia Economy as we develop our new two-year budget.

While I will be working out of Richmond through mid-March, I will be home to attend Town Hall Meetings and build a community dialogue on the state issues you care about most. A number of my colleagues will be joining me.

TOWN HALL MEETINGS Mount Vernon

Saturday, Jan. 20, 9:30-11 a.m., Walt Whitman Middle School, 2500 Parkers Lane, with state Sen. Scott Surovell and Del. Paul Krizek.

Lee District – Mount Eagle

Saturday, Jan. 20 12-1:30 p.m., Mount Eagle Elementary School, 6116 N. Kings Highway, with Del. Mark Sickles.

Lee District – Hayfield

Saturday, Jan. 20, 2-3:30 p.m., Hayfield Elementary School, 7633 Telegraph Road, with state Sen. Scott Surovell, Del. Paul Krizek and Del. Mark Sickles.

Alexandria

Saturday, Jan. 20, 10 a.m. – 12 p.m., Mount Vernon Community School, 2601 Commonwealth Ave., with Del. Mark Levine.

Arlington

Saturday, Jan. 27, 1:30-3:30 p.m., Walter Reed Community Center, 2909 16th Street S, with Del. Alfonso Lopez.

Please consider following me on Twitter @AdamEbbin, liking my facebook page at facebook.com/ebbincampaign, emailing me at district30@senate.virginia.gov, and taking my survey at AdamEbbin.com/Survey.

First Week in Richmond

BY BARBARA FAVOLA
STATE SENATOR (D-31)



It is always exhilarating and humbling to sit in the Chamber as the President of the Senate gavels an unruly body of 40 senators into order. On Jan. 10, Lieutenant Governor Ralph Northam did just that. The next day, Lt. Gov. Northam presided over the Senate for the last time. We wished him well and sent him off to be inaugurated as the 72nd Governor of Virginia.

HIGHLIGHTS OF MY WEEK

Transparency: Committee votes will now be recorded and live-streamed, so Virginians can hear the substantive debates on bills as they work their way through the process. Most bills,

COMMENTARY

especially controversial ones, face their defeat in committee meetings. This long overdue bit of sunshine will enable Virginians to see for themselves how seriously lawmakers are tackling issues important to them. The link to view meetings can be found under the "Members and Session" tab of the virginiaassembly.gov website.

Education: Option for Four-Year Teaching Degree: I am proud to say that my bill SB 76 to enable prospective teachers to potentially gain a teaching degree in four years, rather than five, passed out of the Senate Health &

SEE FAVOLA, PAGE 11



PHOTO BY MICHAEL MCMORROW/THE CONNECTION

30 Degrees

Mist below Chain Bridge at 10 a.m. Jan. 14.

NEWS DEPARTMENT: arlington@connectionnewspapers.com

Steven Mauren

Editor
703-778-9415
smauren@connectionnewspapers.com

Mike Salmon

Assistant Editor
msalmon@connectionnewspapers.com

Vernon Miles

Reporter
757-472-3435
vmiles@connectionnewspapers.com

Eden Brown, Shirley Ruhe

Contributing Writers
arlington@connectionnewspapers.com

ADVERTISING:

For advertising information
sales@connectionnewspapers.com
703-778-9431

Debbie Funk

Display Advertising/National Sales
703-778-9444
debfunk@connectionnewspapers.com

David Griffin

Marketing Assistant
703-778-9431
dgriffin@connectionnewspapers.com

Editor & Publisher

Mary Kimm
mkimm@connectionnewspapers.com
@MaryKimm

Executive Vice President

Jerry Vernon
703-549-0004
jvernon@connectionnewspapers.com

Editor in Chief

Steven Mauren

Art/Design:

Laurence Foong, John Heinly,
Ali Khaligh

Production Manager:

Geovani Flores

Special Assistant to the Publisher

Jeanne Theismann
jtheismann@connectionnewspapers.com
@TheismannMedia

CIRCULATION

circulation@connectionnewspapers.com



New Year, New Order Local organizers teach methods for streamlining a space.

BY MARILYN CAMPBELL

With the holidays now a memory, local organizers are getting requests from those with overflowing buckets of ambition to create and maintain a clutter-free space.

“One of the first things to learn is that a few minutes spent on a few tasks each day can go a long way in maintaining order,” said Jodie Jacobs of SOUPerior Organizing. “Decide how important a clean, clutter-free space is to you and follow through on keeping it that way. Prioritize it like other important things in your life.”

One habit that Susan Unger of ClutterSOS teachers her clients to focus on simple things that can be done easily and frequently. “In general, I recommend keeping up with household duties on a daily basis so none of them become a bigger project,” said Unger. “For example, don’t leave dishes in the sink. Load the dishwasher after every meal and put all cooking and food prep items away so the counters are clear.”

Establishing a daily routine so that tidying becomes second nature is a technique that Unger uses in her own life and teaches to her clients. “I always make my bed first thing in the morning,” she said. “Having a neat bedroom is a great way to start the



Teaching children to put away toys at the end of the day can create a peaceful environment.



Small tasks such as putting away clothes each day can lead to an organized space.

PHOTOS COURTESY OF JODIE JACOBS

day.”

Also on her recommended list of daily tasks: apparel. “Be sure to put all clothes away on a daily basis rather than leaving them on a chair or the floor,” said Unger. “Clean clothes should be hung up or put in drawers and dirty clothes in the laundry basket.”

In fact, Unger tells clients to gather the entire family at the end of each day and spend 10 minutes tidying as a group. “Make a sweep of your house and determine which items need to be put in their proper place,” she said. “It makes for a less stressful and

more pleasant morning when you’re not waking up to clutter sitting around,” said Unger.

Deal with mail on a daily basis so it doesn’t pile up, advises Unger. “Immediately recycle or shred the junk mail and put bills, items to file and reading in an appropriate place.”

Whether it’s a small basket by the front door or storage boxes placed under a bed, one technique for tidiness is having a designated space for items. “Kids’ homework should have a landing place like a backpack,” said Jacobs. “The backpack should

go in a particular place, like on a hook. You have to figure out what works for your family.”

Keep bathrooms in order by adding over-the-door hooks to hold towels, suggested Todd Martz, Home on Cameron in Alexandria. “This might make the room appear smaller, but it [offers] a place to put towels,” he said. “Include a decorative bag on the door hook for toiletries so they’re out of the way.”

“Add an ottoman or coffee table with storage,” continued Martz. “Maximize the space next to a utility or laundry room by adding a ... shelf to hold blankets.”

Whether it’s once a week or once a month, schedule time to spend on organization projects and record it on a calendar, advises Jacobs. “Tie it to something that you already do and select a time that won’t be overrun by other events, she said. “If you know that every Sunday at nine o’clock, you always watch a television show, set aside that time to go through mail, pay bills and respond to invitations while you’re watching. That way, your time won’t get bumped for a soccer game or business meeting.”

One caveat that Jacobs offers her clients is, “Maintaining a routine doesn’t mean that you won’t slip up at times,” she said. “You have to hold yourself to realistic standards or you’ll get discouraged.”

lost (adj): 1. unable to find the way. 2. not appreciated or understood. 3. no longer owned or known

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Question Headlines about Nutrition

Discussing “Nutrition for Real Life.”

BY SHIRLEY RUHE
THE CONNECTION

Brochures on “Eating Right for The Older Adults,” “Smart Snacking” and healthy recipes sit on the table at Langston-Brown Community and Senior Center. The first class in a new series, “Nutrition for Real Life,” is about to begin. It is being offered to Arlington seniors.

Tori Gwilliam, nutrition educator for Arlington Parks and Recreation’s Office for Community Health, is demonstrating a barley salad with cranberries and pears. Gwilliam has lined up a large bowl of arugula alongside a container of cooked barley and ingredients for the lime-sherry vinegar dressing with avocado oil.

Gwilliam says they will be concentrating on “Nutrition in the News” — the messages people get and how to evaluate them. She explains how to apply the latest research in the science of health and nutrition to real life. For instance, if you read something that sounds too good to be true, it probably is. And if something seems to be a quick fix, it

probably isn’t, because complicated medical problems seldom have simple, effortless solutions.

She continues to explain that balance is important. Half of your plate should be fruits and vegetables but you shouldn’t leave out a food group. “What you don’t eat can affect your health, too.”

Gwilliam points out studies are often released with headlines about “the last weight control diet you will ever need” or “lose pounds while you sleep.” But she advises to ask how many other studies have come to the same conclusion. Ask who was studied, how many people, and were the results based on testimonials. She asks how you can find reliable sources and hands out a list of credible websites. “We need the build a box of tools to help evaluate these claims.”

The best part is yet to come — tasting the salad. The following classes in the series will be held at various senior centers in Arlington County and include a demo, taste testing and nutrition information. Gwilliam is a registered dietitian nutritionist with a passion for healthy eating.



PHOTO BY SHIRLEY RUHE/THE CONNECTION
Tori Gwilliam demonstrates how to make a barley salad with avocado oil. She says it is pretty expensive so you may not want to buy it but “I thought you might like to taste something different.”

Police Seek Help In Identifying Suspect



Suspect

The Arlington County Police Department’s Homicide/Robbery Unit is seeking the public’s assistance in identifying a bank robbery suspect captured on surveillance footage.

On Friday, Dec. 22, 2017, at approximately 3:22 p.m., a male suspect entered the Wells Fargo Bank located at 1701 N. McKinley Road in Arlington and passed the teller a note, demanding money. After obtaining an undisclosed amount of money, the suspect exited the bank and fled on foot heading towards Washington Boulevard.

The suspect is described as a white male, 40-50 years old, approximately 5’3” - 5’6” tall. He was wearing a gray winter hat, dark red coat and blue jeans at the time of the incident.

The Arlington County Police Department requests that anyone with information regarding this incident contact Detective C. Riccio at 703-228-4180 or Criccio@arlingtonva.us. To report information anonymously, contact the Arlington County Crime Solvers at 866-411-TIPS (8477).

Artists Explore Roles in Today’s Challenges

“You, if no one else” will be on view Jan. 20-March 31 at the Arlington Arts Center with the opening reception on Jan. 20 from 6-9 p.m. This show features 10 contemporary artists and collaborations.

The show looks at the many-layered nuances of how artists interact with, engage in, and protest against, politics and civic life. “At a time of substantial turbulence, “You,

if no one else champions the role artists can play in supporting and expanding our democratic traditions and political institutions.”

The title was inspired by Tino Villanueva’s poem of the same name.

“... defend everything you understand with words

You if no one else

will condemn with your tongue

the erosion each disappointment brings.”

The show includes the spectrum of artistic modalities from Lizania Cruz’s “Flowers for Immigration” depicting flower arrangements created by undocumented bodega workers in New York City to Phillip Buehler’s large scale panoramas in small, enclosed structures to Mel Day and Michael Namkung’s videos merging pictures and voices of hundreds of par-

ticipants singing “Hallelujah.”

The Arlington Arts Center is located at 3550 Wilson Blvd. It was established in 1974 as a non-profit contemporary visual arts center that presents and supports work by regional artists. It has nine exhibition spaces, working spaces for 13 artists, and three classrooms.

— SHIRLEY RUHE

Melwood Ability Awards Honor Individuals, and Organizations

With MGM National Harbor as the setting, the Melwood Ability Awards launched with fanfare on Dec. 7. The awards honor outstanding individuals and institutions in the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area that are making a lasting difference to people with differing abilities.

Melwood’s 2017 Ability Awards were presented to recipients in four categories:

❖ **Research & Innovation:** George Washington University Autism and Neurodevelopmental Disorders Institute, Washington, D.C. This award is presented to a company, organization, or persons who develop innovative programs, systems or services that empower people with differing abilities to transform their lives and thrive in the workplace. Dr. Kevin Pelphrey, institute director, and founding donors Nelson and Michelle Carbonelle were recognized.

❖ **Corporate Leadership:** CVS Health, national. The Corporate Leadership Award is presented to a company or organization that has launched initiatives in communities that aim to provide job training, employment op-



Lifetime Achievement Award recipient, Linda Chandler, president and CEO of Arlington-based Linden Resources, with Tracy Wareing Evans (left), chair, Melwood Board of Directors, and Cari DeSantis, president and CEO, Melwood.

portunities, and improve the quality of life for people with differing abilities. Accepting the award was Charnetia Young, advisor, Workforce Initiatives, Pharmacy Services.

❖ **Lifetime Achievement:** Linda Chandler, president and CEO, Linden Resources, Arlington. The Lifetime Achievement Award



Melwood’s 2017 Ability Awards recipients at MGM National Harbor on Dec. 7.

is presented to a leader in the Washington metropolitan area who, over the course of his or her career, has exemplified compassion and made a significant impact or contribution in the lives of people with differing abilities through business services, advocacy, and community resources.

❖ **Community Impact:** Don Thompson, Don’s Café, Hyattsville, Md. The Community Achievement Award is presented to a small

business owner in the Washington metropolitan area who offers a diverse and inclusive workforce by hiring and training people with differing abilities, and who also inspires integrity and demonstrates ethical leadership.

Melwood, through its Linden Resources affiliate, operates 16 centers throughout northern Virginia and D.C., serving people with differing abilities. See www.Melwood.org.

ENTERTAINMENT



Yorktown Theatre is doing an encore performance of "Voices Out of Chaos" on Friday, Jan 19 at 7 p.m.

PHOTOS BY JIM COATES

'Voices Out of Chaos' Returns to Yorktown High School

The Yorktown Theatre III & IV class will once again be 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. The free performance will take place on Friday, Jan. 19, in the Yorktown High School auditorium, at 7 p.m., followed by a Q&A session. On Jan. 20, the group will perform the show at the Virginia High School League competition. The performance is free and open to the public.



Mason Seeger and Camille Pivetta



Bettina Atubire



Bibho Prasai

CALENDAR

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

ONGOING

Artists' Exhibition. Through Jan. 31, various times at the Courthouse Plaza lobby. Through the Lens of Frank Hallam Day and Anne Rowland images of Arlington's built and natural environments. Visit publicart.arlingtonva.us/.

Family Skate Night. Saturdays through March, 6:30-9 p.m. at Thomas Jefferson Community Center, 3501 2nd St S. Bring the whole family to Thomas Jefferson Community Center for Family Skate Night with a live DJ, moon bounces and snack bar, this is a crowd-pleaser for the entire family. Only \$2 to skate and \$3 to rent a pair of wheels (moon bounce and concessions are additional). Cash only. Visit parks.arlingtonva.us/locations/thomas-jefferson-community-center.

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.

Mobile Bike Repair. 8 a.m.-3 p.m. on Thursdays at 1900 Crystal Drive. Drop off your bike on Thursday morning and have it tuned up and ready to ride before heading home. Email DC@velofix.com, or phone 855-VELO-FIX.

Food Truck Thursdays. 11 a.m.-2 p.m. at 1900 Crystal Drive and 201 12th St. Actual truck schedules are subject to change so be sure to follow

your favorites. Visit www.crystalcity.org.

Healthy Lifestyle Runs. Saturdays, 9 a.m. at Roosevelt Island, George Washington Memorial Parkway. American Cancer Society partners with parkrun USA to promote fitness in the fight against cancer. Free. Visit www.parkrun.us/rooseveltislanddc/.

Friday Night Live. 8 p.m. Fridays at the Church at Clarendon, 1210 N. Highland St., Suite A. Local musicians perform. Free. Visit 1bc.org.

Arlington's Historical Museum Open on First Wednesdays. The Arlington Historical Museum is open to the public on the first Wednesday of every month from 12:30-3:30 p.m. The museum consists of exhibits chronicling Arlington County's history from Native American settlements up to the present day. The museum will continue to be open on Saturdays and Sundays from 1-4 p.m. Admission is free. The museum is located in the former 1891 Hume School building at 1805 S. Arlington Ridge Road. Contact Garrett Peck at

571-243-1113 or at garrett.peck@arlingtonhistoricalsociety.org.

Invasive Plants Removal. Work parties are held every month to keep the parks free of destructive invasive plants. Teens, adults and families welcome. Every second Sunday of the month 2-4:30 p.m. at Gulf Branch Nature Center, 3608 Military Road; call 703-228-3403. Every third Sunday of the month 2-5 p.m. at Long Branch Nature Center, 625 S. Carlin Springs Road; call 703-228-6535 or Visit registration.arlingtonva.us. Free, no registration required.

Storytime. Wednesdays and Fridays, 10:30-11 a.m. at Kinder Haus Toys, 1220 N. Fillmore St. Storytime with Ms. Laura. Call 703-527-5929.

Lego Club. Monthly on the first Wednesday. 4-5 p.m. Glencarlyn Branch Library, 300 S. Kensington St. The library provides tubs of legos and a special challenge and after the program the creations are displayed for everyone to see. No registration required. Call 703-228-6548.

WEDNESDAY/JAN. 17

Locavore Film Series. 7:30-9:30 p.m. at Arlington Cinema & Drafthouse, 2903 Columbia Pike. Four films with an international flavor include, "The Gauchos of Argentina" and "The Painted Truck," both by Judith Dwan Hallet, "Voices/Peace" by Amy DeLouise, and "Chinatown" by Yi Chen. Tickets: \$10. Proceeds after the first 50 ticket sales go to the filmmakers. Call 703-486-2345 or visit arlingtondrafthouse.com.

JAN. 18-21

This Is My Brave Auditions. 8:30 a.m.-noon at Arlington Central Public Library, 1015 N. Quincy St. This Is My Brave is a show about what it's like to live through mental illness and come out on the other side. Visit thisismybrave.org/events/.

SATURDAY/JAN. 20

Opening Reception. 6-9 p.m. at Arlington Arts Center 3550 Wilson

Signature Theatre Presents '4,380 Nights'

Annalisa Dias's play is part of the 2018 Women's Voices Theater Festival.

BY STEVE HIBBARD
THE CONNECTION

Signature Theatre is presenting the world premiere of "4,380 Nights" from Jan. 16 to Feb. 18. For the last 12 years, or 4,380 days, Malik Djamal Ahmad Essaid has been held without charge by the U.S. government at the Guantanamo Bay Detention Center. As he languishes in his cell, his interactions with those on the outside are juxtaposed with historical events in a exposé into the most dangerous prison of all — fear.

With a fluidity that spans time and place, D.C. playwright Annalisa Dias delivers a critique of power, humanity and what it means to be American. "4,380 Nights" is presented as part of the 2018 Women's Voices Theater Festival.

Dias said as of December 2017, some 41 men are still being detained by the U.S. government at Camp JTF Guantanamo. "All of these 41 men have been held at Guantanamo for over 10 years. Since the U.S. opened the facility in January 2002, nine detainees have died," she said. "In many ways, this play is a cry. A cry for those who have endured and are enduring unspeakable suffering. A cry for those in whose names suffering is caused. A cry for a fu-

ture free from walls, free from division, and free from fear."

She said that writing this piece required an enormous amount of research and sensitivity to the fact that the government is still actively holding men at Guantanamo. "This play walks a fine line between fiction and reality. The central character of the play is a detainee at Guantanamo, but in this piece he is a fictionalized representation of several real detainee stories," she said. "This is not a documentary; it's a play. As a creative team, we've been talking about what that means. Happily for me, the artistic team we've assembled is phenomenal — every one of them — and it has been a great pleasure to learn and create alongside them."

She continued: "As we have been working on this play, I find myself wondering what kind of ancestors will we be to our descendants. What stories about our world will we pass on to those we do not yet know? Who will they be? What will we have given them? I hope this play will ignite questions for audiences, rather than answers. To me, '4,380 Nights' feels like a deeply needed meditation on power, time, and the hope of connection."

Ahmad Kamal plays the role of Malik, an Algerian detainee at Guantanamo Bay, and



PHOTO BY CHRISTOPHER MUELLER

Ahmad Kamal stars in Signature Theatre's production of "4,380 Nights."

El Hadj El Kaim, an Algerian military leader during the 19th century French colonization of Algeria. "What's been so much fun to explore is all the different ways these two characters — although centuries apart — influence each other," he said. "(Playwright Dias) has created a universe where worlds collide, and those collisions allow us to watch characters intertwine and melt into each other. Malik's battles and hardships in Guantanamo have clear connections to the ones El Hadj faces in Algeria, which gives us a great opportunity to observe the power behind storytelling and the grip it has over our paths in life."

He said the piece exposes us to all aspects of humanity — from the deepest hurt to the highest elation. "As a result, the characters travel up and down the entire spectrum of

emotion, sometimes very suddenly," he said. "Working towards understanding the pain and joy — and everything in between — of my characters was a crucial challenge in order to live as authentic a truth as possible. Oh, and having to wear the chains all the time because they would attach to other surfaces/each other."



Signature Theatre is presenting "4,380 Nights" from Jan. 16 to Feb. 18. Show times are Tuesdays through Saturdays at 7:30 and 8 p.m.; Sundays at 2 and 7 p.m. Tickets are \$40-\$75. Specialty Nights are Discussion Nights on Jan. 31, Feb. 7 and 13, 2018; Pride Night on Feb. 2, 2018; and Open Captioning on Feb. 11, 2018 at 2 p.m. Visit www.sigtheatre.org.

CALENDAR

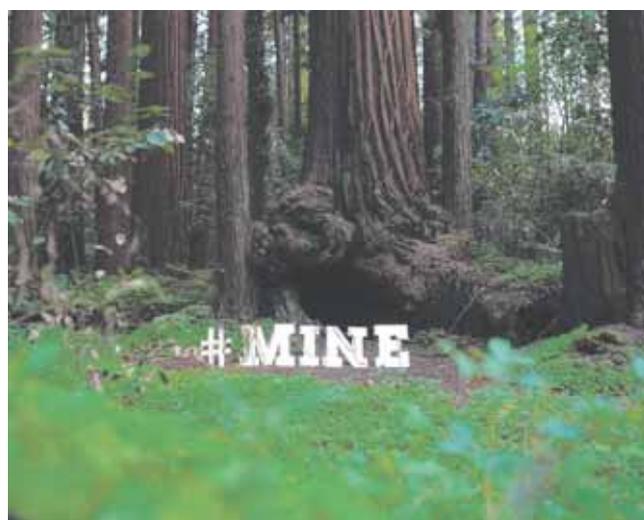
Blvd. Arlington Arts Center presents You, if no one else, featuring 10 contemporary artists and artist collaborations. The title of the exhibition was inspired by poet Tino Villanueva, whose poem of the same name was included in his 1994 collection Chronicle of My Worst Years. Call 703-486-2345 or visit arlingtonartscenter.org.

Forty+ or Minus. 7:30-9 p.m. Saturday, 2-5 p.m. at Theatre on the Run, 3700 S. Four Mile Run Drive. A multi-generational dance performance. \$5-\$22. Visit www.janefranklin.com.

JAN. 20-MARCH 31

You, If No One Else. Wednesday-Sunday, 12-5 p.m. at Arlington Arts Center 3550 Wilson Blvd. Arlington Arts Center presents You, if no one else, featuring 10 contemporary artists and artist collaborations. You, if no one else, looks at the ways in which artists record, reflect, contribute to, rail against, and engage with politics and civic life, bringing dialogue, beauty, and nuance to their involvement in the public sphere. The title of the exhibition was inspired by poet Tino Villanueva, whose poem of the same name was included in his 1994 collection Chronicle of My Worst Years. Visit www.arlingtonartscenter.org or call 703-248-6800.

Michèle Colburn: The More Things Change. Wednesday-Sunday, 12-5 p.m. at Arlington Arts Center, 3550 Wilson Blvd. Michèle Colburn's work explores socio-political themes



related to domestic terrorism, war, and the costs associated with both. A multidisciplinary artist, Colburn makes mixed-media objects with forays into endurance performance on the streets. Her two- and three-dimensional work incorporates gunpowder, spent bullet casings, and vintage surplus military trip wire. Visit www.arlingtonartscenter.org or call 703-248-6800.

SUNDAY/JAN. 21

Singles Brunch and Movie. Noon at Ireland's Four Courts in Arlington, 2051 Wilson Blvd. Fixed price brunch, followed by movie of choice at AMC Courthouse. Cost of \$35 at

door includes brunch, beverage, tip and movie ticket. Advance RSVP required for reserved seats at movies: NewBCarol@verizon.net. Sponsored by New Beginnings, a support group for separated/divorced men and women. Visit newbeginningsusa.org.
Celebrating African-American Opera. 3-5:30 p.m. at Unitarian Universalist Church of Arlington, 4444 Arlington Blvd. The show will be emceed by Charles Williams, a baritone, voice teacher and opera veteran and will trace the careers of earlier African American vocalists who had to overcome huge odds to make their way into the mainstream opera world. Visit operanova.org.

You, If No One Else

Featuring 10 contemporary artists and artist collaborations, "You, if no one else," looks at the ways in which artists record, reflect, contribute to, rail against, and engage with politics and civic life, bringing dialogue, beauty, and nuance to their involvement in the public sphere. The title of the exhibition was inspired by poet Tino Villanueva, whose poem of the same name was included in his 1994 collection "Chronicle of My Worst Years." Runs Jan. 20-March 31. Opening reception Jan. 20, 6-9 p.m. at Arlington Arts Center, 3550 Wilson Blvd., Arlington. Visit arlingtonartscenter.org.

#Mine by
Kim Beck

JAN. 20-27

Complete Dogness on Stage. Various times at Theatre on the Run, 3700 S. Four Mile Run Drive. Jane Franklin Dance presents a show about the antics of a little dog. \$15 Adults/\$10 Children under age 10. Email janefranklindance@gmail.com.

THURSDAY/WEDNESDAY/JAN. 18-24

Charity Fundraiser. Thursday, 1-9 p.m.; Friday, 8 a.m.-4 p.m.; Saturday, 9 a.m.-3 p.m.; Sunday, 11:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m.; Monday, 7 a.m.-4 p.m.; Tuesday, 9 a.m.-6 p.m. and Wednesday, 8 a.m.-1 p.m. at the Overlee Community Pool - Bath

House (Lower Level), 6030 Lee Highway, lower entrance off John Marshall Drive. Purchase fresh citrus, pecans, and maple syrup to support Lions community service projects.

FRIDAY/JAN. 26

Fantastic Voyage Mini-Camp. 9 a.m.-3 p.m. at Theatre on the Run, 3700 S. Four Mile Run Drive. Take a special day trip with Jane Franklin Dance and enjoy a creative journey of movement, theatre and visual art. Whether it's camping, beach-going, high in the mountains or in the ocean deep, you'll have a great day with friends ages 6-10. \$50. Email janefranklindance@gmail.com, call 703-933-1111 or visit www.janefranklin.com/camps.

A Night Out at the Library.

5-7 p.m. at Central Library, 1015 N Quincy St. Stop by after-hours for the library's first Open House and Happy Hour, featuring friendly librarians, fun activities and information about the library. Enjoy music by DC-based Three Man Soul Machine, and libations provided by the Ballston BID. Light appetizers will also be served. RSVP required for this FREE event. Only patrons who have registered in advance of the event will be admitted. You must be 18+ to enter, 21+ to drink. Visit library.arlingtonva.us/locations/central-library/.

SATURDAY/JAN. 27

Winter Tree Identification Hike. 1-2:30 p.m. at Potomac Overlook

ENTERTAINMENT

Nature Center, 2845 Marcey Road. The naturalist will introduce participants to his favorite bud. The Tulip Poplar bud of course. Learn tricks to identifying trees in the winter time using bark, buds, leaf scars, and more. Appropriate for adults or families with children ages 10 and older. Meet at the nature center. \$10 per participant. Visit www.novaparks.com/parks/potomac-overlook-regional-park.

USO Style Swing vs Salsa Ball.

7:30-11:30 p.m. at Fort Myer Officer's Club, 214 Jackson Ave. The evening includes tribute to members in the armed forces; three styles of music; and a dinner buffet. Reliving the time when our fighting soldiers celebrated one last big hurrah before heading off to battle. Black Tie, Semi-Formal, or vintage wear encouraged. Members in the armed forces are encouraged to wear dress uniforms. \$59. Visit thingstodoc.com.

Forty+ or Minus.

7:30-9 p.m. Saturday, 2-5 p.m. at Theatre on the Run, 3700 S. Four Mile Run Drive. A multi-generational dance performance. \$5-\$22. Visit www.janefranklin.com.

Winter Classes Begin.

Arlington Arts Center is currently registering students for winter classes and workshops. Visit at www.arlingtonartscenter.org/education for a full list classes.

MONDAY/JAN. 29

Meet the Speaker. 3-4:30 p.m. at the Arlington County Central Library, 1015 N. Quincy St. Encore Learning will present a lecture by Leon Hartwell who will speak on "Negotiating with a Drunken Serb: Key Lessons from a UN Diplomat." It tells the story of Sergio Vieira de Mello who was a United Nations diplomat and negotiator par excellence. The public is invited. The program is sponsored jointly by Encore Learning and the Arlington Public Library. Call 703-228-2144.

THURSDAY/FEB. 1

Inside Signature with Kathleen Akerley.

1 p.m. at Signature Theatre, 4200 Campbell Ave. Signature newcomer and director of 4,380 Nights, Kathleen Akerley, sits down with Education Director David Zobel to discuss the world premiere play by Annalisa Dias, as well as her career and her work as the Artistic Director of Longacre Lea. Free, no reservation required. Visit www.sigtheatre.org.

FRIDAY/FEB. 2

Groundhog Day Campfire. 6-7 p.m. at Gulf Branch Nature Center, 3608 N. Military Road. Families ages 4 and up. Warm up by the fire and enjoy stories about this legendary prognosticator with his own honorary day. And of course, make s'mores. Call 703-228-3403. \$5. #622858-J. Register at registration.arlingtonva.us.

FRIDAY-SATURDAY/FEB. 2-3

Live Comedy: Dana Gould. Friday, 7:30 p.m.; Saturday, 7 and 9:30 p.m. at the Arlington Cinema and Drafthouse, 2903 Columbia Pike. In addition to stand-up, Dana is a comedy writer, actor, show creator and producer. Gould is also the creator/writer/executive producer of the IFC comedy horror series Stan Against Evil in which he also stars as "Kevin." Visit arlingtondrafhthouse.com for tickets.

SATURDAY/FEB. 3

Singles Dinner and Movie Night. 5 p.m. Dinner at Samuel Beckett's Irish

Gastro Pub in Shirlington, 4150 Campbell Ave., followed by choice of movie at AMC Shirlington 7. Cost of \$35 at door includes dinner, soda, tip and movie ticket. Advance RSVP required for reserved seats at movies: NewBCarol@verizon.net. Sponsored by New Beginnings, a support group for separated/divorced men and women. Visit www.newbeginningsusa.org.

Country-Western Dance.

6 p.m. at Lincolnia Senior Center, 4710 North Chambliss St., Alexandria. The Northern Virginia Country-Western Dance Association offer lessons, 6-7 p.m., with open dancing, 7-9:30 p.m. A DJ provides music. Couples and singles of all ages welcome. Members \$10; non-members \$12; children under 18 accompanied by a paying adult \$5. Smoke-free, alcohol-free. BYO refreshments. Visit www.nvcwda.org.

SUNDAY/FEB. 4

AFAC's 6th Annual Empty Bowls.

11:15 a.m. and 12:45 p.m. at St. Andrew's Episcopal Church, 4000 Lorcom Lane. The Arlington Food Assistance Center's 6th Annual Empty Bowls event is a luncheon fundraiser for AFAC featuring uniquely designed handmade bowls. Each \$35 ticket includes a bowl of your choice to take home, plus soup, bread and dessert. Children 5 and under are free. Visit afac.org/afac-events/empty-bowls-2018/.

MONDAY/FEB. 5

Sigworks: Alabaster by Audrey Cefaly.

7 p.m. at Signature Theatre, 4200 Campbell Ave. A noted photographer sets out to explore the topography of "scars." Her journey lands her in the mysterious realm of an undiscovered folk artist hiding away in a small farmhouse on the outskirts of Alabaster, Alabama. Visit www.sigtheatre.org.

THURSDAY/FEB. 8

Share the Love.

6-9 p.m. at the Hyatt Centric Arlington, 125 Wilson Blvd. Arlington Street People's Assistance Network celebrates 25-plus years. Festivities will include live music, a tasting of Virginia specialties including carving stations as well as craft beers and wine tasting. Valentine's Day raffles and prizes "guarantees 100 percent happiness." To purchase tickets and learn more about A-SPAN visit a-span.org/a-spans-25th-celebration.

FRIDAY/FEB. 9

Music With a View. 6:30 p.m. for hors d'oeuvres and cash bar. Concert begins 7:30 p.m. at The Waterview, 1919 North Lynn St. The Arlington Philharmonic presents a collage concert in a breathtaking setting where the audience will be surrounded by Philharmonic brass, string, and woodwind ensembles. Tickets \$25/person, at squareup.com/store/arlington-philharmonic/. Visit www.arlingtonphilharmonic.org.

SATURDAY/FEB. 10

Romantic Violin For Two. 7:30 p.m. at Unitarian Universalist Church of Arlington, 4444 Arlington Blvd, Arlington. The National Chamber Ensemble continues its 11th season with Romantic Violin For Two – a repertoire of romantic works for Valentine's Day. All concerts are followed by a reception with the artists. \$36 for adults, \$18 for students. Tickets are available online at nationalchamberensemble.org.



Synetic Theater is presenting "The Trial" from Jan. 17 through Feb. 18.

IMAGE CONTRIBUTED

Synetic Theater Prepares 'The Trial'

Story of Kafka's 1914-15 tale of a man struggling after being arrested for an unspecified crime.

BY STEVE HIBBARD
THE CONNECTION

Synetic Theater is presenting "The Trial" from Jan. 17 through Feb. 18. A play with dialogue taken from Franz Kafka's German 1914-15 novel, "The Trial" is about a 30-year-old man who suddenly and without cause or warning is arrested while at work. Two unidentified agents from an unknown agency arrest him for an unspecified crime and he is prosecuted by a remote authority. Synetic Theater explores the struggles of "K" and his encounters with the invisible Law and the untouchable Court. It is recommended for ages 17-plus due to mature content.

Director Paata Tsikurishvili said the story is as relevant now as it was 100 years ago when it was first published. "I was interested in the fact that the novel is really not about a trial at all, at least not in the normal sense; it's not a courtroom drama, but a very dark and absurdist journey into the mind of Kafka himself," he said. "It's his most autobiographical novel and we wanted to bring his creative process to the forefront — the literal translation of the novel's original German title, after all, is 'the process,' a journey. So we wanted to dive into his imagination and show everything through his eyes."

He said, having done a production of Kafka's "Metamorphosis," what always stuck in his mind was the giant insect which the protagonist in that story morphed into. "We're creating something of a 'Kafka World' this time around, and the idea of that world being a kind of insect hive — ruthless, structured, totally unfeeling — for me, this was the perfect metaphor for the mindless bureaucracy Josef K (afka) finds himself in," he said.

He said he was looking for a challenge with this play. "To do something very dark and cerebral, but something that's also very much in keeping with our aesthetic — something laced with a lot of dark humor, but in the end is very moving and emotionally charged. I wanted to stretch our muscles and do with language what we do with physicality and visuals — to experiment with certain kinds of 'verbal acrobatics,' while maintaining that unique visual quality that audiences have come to expect from us," he said.

Shun-Nan Chu plays the role of Josef K, who is the everyman of the story. "Either he can be viewed as Kafka himself or as an iteration of any number of

artists who were persecuted and censored," he said. "The storyline is not uncommon, but to take the story to such an abstract and universal level is new, at least, to me."

He continued: "Josef K is a man who is thrown into a system that operates on rules and procedures that he does not know and that no one can explain to him. He wakes up in what you or I might view as a practical joke, due to the absurdity of the circumstances. He does not take it seriously until it is too late and somehow he has managed to incriminate himself further. In searching for answers from family, friends and court officials, K gains insight into the law and how much control he has or has lost in his destiny," he said.

Tori Bertocci plays the role of Anna, a friend of Josef K who brings a bit of human connection into his life and the play as a whole. "She takes the time to listen to him, enjoys his company, and worries about his future. She believes in him," she said.

She continued: "Anna represents the type of friend I think is important for us all to have. She reminds me that even in times of chaos, when all hope seems lost, we must stand our ground and practice what we preach."

She said she didn't find Kafka's view on women to be a positive one and the original story was clearly dominated by the male point of view. "For our adaptation, I wanted to make Anna more than a tool for the main character. My hope is that I have made my Anna someone the audience can relate to and understand," she said.

Lee Liebeskind is playing the role of Karl, who is K's uncle trying to help him through his troubles. "He is also a fly, a bit buzzy and annoying, but needed in the world," he said.

He said the challenge was splitting focus on the piece. "I am both an actor and assistant director for the first time on this. So it was challenging balancing the overarching view of assisting Paata's vision with my own personal character work. It has been fun and challenging and I have learned a ton so far," he said.

◆ ◆ ◆

Synetic Theater is presenting "The Trial" from Jan. 17 through Feb. 18. Show times are Wednesdays through Saturdays at 8 p.m.; Sundays at 2 p.m. Tickets are \$20-\$60. The venue is located at 1800 South Bell St., Arlington. Visit www.synetictheater.org.

ARLINGTON CONNECTION ◆ JANUARY 17-23, 2018 ◆ 9

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Obituary

DEATH NOTICE

Margaret Ann McMurray of Arlington, Virginia, passed away peacefully on December 31, 2017. She was 90 years old. Beloved wife of the late Houston Moore McMurray, she is survived by her daughter, Mary Clare McMurray, of Leesburg, Virginia. A visitation will be held on Sunday, February 4th at 1:30pm at Murphy's Funeral Home at 4510 Wilson Boulevard in Arlington. A funeral and burial at Arlington National Cemetery to occur at a later date.

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NEWS



It's Official

The grand opening event for Club Pilates Pentagon City was held on Saturday, Jan. 13. Located at 1101 S. Joyce St., Ste. B14, Club Pilates Pentagon City had been offering select classes for the past six weeks during its soft opening. True to Joseph Pilates' original Reformer-based Contrology Method, Club Pilates enhances the 50-minute group practice by incorporating 11 different pieces of equipment in addition to the traditional Reformer, including the EXO Chair, Bosu Ball, Triggerpoint, TRX, Barre and more. The Arlington location is owned by D.C.-native and entrepreneur Michael Grams, who plans to open two additional Club Pilates locations in the area in 2018. Visit www.clubpilates.com/location/pentagoncity/.

"FLOURISHING AFTER 55"

"Flourishing After 55" from Arlington Office of Senior Adult Programs.

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: National Geographic Museum, D.C., Monday, Jan. 22, \$14; State Department Diplomatic Reception rooms tour, Tuesday, Jan. 23, \$6; Jane Austen Tea Party at historic Green Spring, Thursday, Jan. 25, Alexandria, \$46; Washington National Opera Costume Studio tour, D.C., Friday, Jan. 26, \$18. American Ballet Theatre open rehearsal, The Kennedy Center, Tuesday, Jan. 30, \$27; Museum of the Bible, D.C., Friday, Feb. 2, \$19. Call Arlington County 55+ Travel, 703-228-4748. Registration required.

NEW PROGRAMS:

Guide to funeral planning, Monday, Jan. 22, 1 p.m., Lee. Register, 703-228-0555.

Tasty recipes with five ingredients, Monday, Jan. 22, 11 a.m., Langston-Brown. Register, 703-228-6300.

Yoga, Tai Chi and Zumba classes begin week of Monday, Jan. 22. Call for details and costs, 703-228-4771.

Holocaust survivor Leonard Gordon tells his story, Tuesday, Jan. 23, 11:30 a.m., Lee. Register, 703-228-0555.

Ways to save money on travel, Tuesday, Jan. 23, 1 p.m., Arlington Mill. Register, 703-228-7369.

Overview on guardianship, Tuesday, Jan. 23, 10 a.m., Walter Reed. Register, 703-228-0955.

Avoid dangerous scams, Tuesday, Jan. 23, 11 a.m., Langston-Brown. Register, 703-228-6300.

A look at facts about landfills, overuse of plastics, Wednesday, Jan. 24, 1:30 p.m., Aurora Hills. Register, 703-228-0555.

Eating right on a budget, cost efficient recipes, Wednesday, Jan. 24, 11 a.m., Arlington Mill. Register, 703-228-7369.

Introduction to Podcasts, Thursday, Jan. 25, 1 p.m., Langston-Brown. Register, 703-228-6300.

Free blood pressure check, Thursday, Jan. 25, 11 a.m., Arlington Mill. First come, first served, Details, 703-228-7369.

Latest research on brain health, Thursday, Jan. 25, 10 a.m., Walter Reed. Register, 703-228-0955.

Pre-exercise tips, Friday, Jan. 26, 10 a.m., Walter Reed. Register, 703-228-0955.

Lower the risk and fear of falling, Friday, Jan. 26, 12:30 p.m., Walter Reed. Register, 703-228-0955.

Ballroom Dance, Friday, Jan. 26, 1 p.m., Arlington Mill. Details, 703-228-0555.

Lee Walkers to travel to Pali-sades area, D.C., Friday, Jan. 26, 10 a.m., \$3. Register, 703-228-0555.

Eight ball pool tournament, Monday, Jan. 29, 10 a.m., Walter Reed. Details, 703-228-0955.

Just Playin' Country musicians, Monday, Jan. 29, 1 p.m., Lee. Details, 703-228-0555.

Prepare for pickleball, Tuesday, Jan. 30, 11 a.m., Langston-Brown. Register, 703-228-6300.

Art swap at Arlington Mill, Wednesday, Jan. 31, 6 p.m. – 8 p.m. Details, 703-228-7369.

Hearing loss information and screenings, Wednesday, Jan. 31, 10 a.m., Walter Reed. Call for appointment, 703-228-0955.

Partner dance lessons, Wednesdays, 2-2:45 p.m., beginner, Lee. Register, 703-228-0555.

Announcements

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LETTER

Protect EPA

To the Editor:

I am writing to you from Arlington's Eighth Congressional District about the impending crisis in environmental protections for the Chesapeake Bay watershed and our other natural resources in Virginia.

Congress should put protecting water quality, and the safety and health of communities across Virginia, at the top its list of budget priorities for FY2018.

Chief among these is ensuring the Environmental Protection Agency has the resources it needs to, well, protect the environment. That's not currently the case. EPA Administrator Scott Pruitt is eroding the agency from the inside, making it easier for industry to get around the environmental oversight necessary to keep our water resources drinkable, swimmable, and fishable.

The Trump White House has jettisoned any pretense of environmental stewardship, having proposed cutting EPA funding by up to \$2.4 billion. Even the House of Representatives would slash it by half-a-billion dollars, threatening the vital Clean Water State Revolving Fund and the Chesapeake Bay Restoration Program.

Without a strong federal partner across the multi-state Bay watershed, we could destroy much of what we've done to bring this estuary — and the waterways that flow into it — back from the brink. This isn't what Virginians sent their representatives to Washington to do. No one votes for polluted water.

I expect our Congressional delegation to do the right thing by fully funding federal water quality programs and give EPA the tools it needs to do its job.

Angela Renee Dickey
Arlington

COMMENTARY

Favola

FROM PAGE 4

Education Committee unanimously. This will reduce the opportunity cost of becoming a teacher, a factor that weighs heavily on prospective teachers who have incurred a large school debt, yet they have the desire to enter an important but low-paying profession.

Children & Families: Kinship Care Bill — My bill (SB 44) provides support payments to relatives who are willing to offer kin in foster care a permanent home. It passed out of the Rehab and Social Services Committee but was referred to Finance. More than 75 percent of the cost of this kingship program, called "Fostering Futures" is born by the Federal Government. I really hope the money committees can find the \$45,000 to start this program.

On a lighter note, my bill to help small business that bake alcohol infused confectionery products obtain an ABC license, so they may continue to grow their businesses, passed out of committee, as well.

Your emails and support are crucial to the legislative process. It is an honor to represent you and to fight for our values.

The state senator represents parts of Arlington, Fairfax, and Loudoun.

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Seasons Gratings



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

As a baby-boomer, I've transitioned from black and white television to color to "H.D" - and of course now to "Smart Television," and within that evolution, so too has the variety, content and number of channels— and the "demand" that we consumers can make — from home, transitioned as well. And I don't suppose much of it could have happened without advertising and the revenue it has generated. Promoted by people, places and things. From sports heroes to celebrities to news makers to cartoon characters to puppets and on to anthropomorphic agents/avatars and other creative mouthpieces.

I grew up watching television — without a remote, not listening to the radio. I remember seeing "Mr. Clean," "The Jolly Green Giant," "Mr. Magoo," "Speedy" — from Alka Seltzer — among other iconic creatures of the creative, all of whom sent so many messages to so many consumers, ripe for the plucking. A brand new medium had arrived: television, and its audience was extra large and extra eager.

And even though these spokes-things were not exactly speaking from the heart (what heart?), they were speaking/symbolizing with conviction — and repetition. The impressions made on impressionable future consumers were incalculable. It launched a generation. Not the "Greatest Generation," mind you, but a generation nonetheless, prepped and ready to make its mark: in the drug store, the convenience store, the supermarket, the box store and now the on-line store. We are not merely what we buy, we are what and how we are advertised to.

Previously I had written a column about how I loathe the computer-generated characters which have been utilized on television in an attempt to capture consumers' interest. As soon as they appear on television, I switch rather than fight. For me, it's an immediate turn off, literally and figuratively. I am not listening to inanimate objects/creations tell an "animate" (yours truly) object what to do. And though I understand the humanity behind the message, as far as I'm concerned, the delivery system does not compute (an old-fashioned usage). Artificial spokes-things are not worth the computer screens they're drawn on.

What has brought this rant on is a new element in the artificially-intelligent world in which many of us are subjected: holiday greetings from a computer. Mass emails sent by manufacturers from whom as a consumer we've emailed, inquired, bought, sold, etc., wishing me a "happy, healthy, prosperous holiday/New Year," yada, yada, yada; click/delete. As fast as I can. Are you kidding me? It's not bad enough that as consumers we are regularly watching/listening to fake spokes-things on television, I am now being directly interacted with through my personal emails too. No. That's where I draw the line/terminate my attention span.

However well-conceived, I am not getting involved with what is in effect, a thing. Pre-programmed messages of this kind are the unkindest cut of all; "Et tu, Brute?" If you/your company can only treat me like a number — and not as a person, don't treat me at all. Don't think for a nanosecond that a holiday missive to a massive holiday audience carries any substantial weight. It doesn't. It provides the exact opposite: a greater wait until I respond. It's akin to be weightless in outer space. It's for bemusement. It serves no functional purpose. And though I can certainly appreciate how getting into thousands/millions of personal email accounts with one keystroke has an appeal, you risk squandering a previously hard-earned resource: goodwill.

You want me as a customer? Don't email me feelings. Email me facts and figures. You really want me as a customer? Then speak to me, really. Save your greetings; and not for next year either.

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

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