

The Arlington Connection

Winning Medals at 87-1/2

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Charles Toftoy with pickleball mixed doubles partner Elease Brooks on Sept. 19; they won a silver medal. Toftoy already won silver in men's doubles.

St. Ann School Fair Is Back

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Opera Star Conducts Bolivian Mass

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NEWS BRIEFS

Saturday/Oct. 15, 2022

The League of Women Voters of Arlington and Alexandria City and UU the Vote, will hold a voter registration and education event., Saturday, Oct. 15, 2022, 1-3 p.m., Central Library, 1015 North Quincy Street, Arlington, Va. 22201

Speakers include:

- ❖ Judith (Judy) Heumann, internationally recognized disability rights speaker of whom the Washington Post said: "She is considered the mother of disability rights –and she is a 'badass'." (via electronic link.)
- ❖ Brian "Keith" McMullen, retired US Army LTC
- ❖ Taquanda Dixon, Director of Community Support Services, Melwood
- ❖ Tania Griffin, Arlington Elections Office

The latest information on voting rights for people with disabilities, plus information on the Nov. 8 election. Register to vote if need be.

Register for the event at:

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/disability-voter-rights-week-event-tickets-405301827677>

League of Women of Arlington and Alexandria is committed to producing positive change in our communities. Other areas of focus for the LWV-Arlington/Alexandria are voter registration, affordable housing, accessible transportation and environmental quality

'Coffee with a Cop'

Wednesday, Oct. 5 is National Coffee with a Cop Day and the Arlington County Police Department's Community Engagement Division is hosting two events to celebrate. Community members are invited to join officers at these informal events to ask questions, voice concerns, get to know their neighbors, interact with the Community Engagement Division and meet officers from other sections of the department.

The Arlington County Police Department is committed to developing and maintaining strong relationships with those we serve as a vital component to ensuring the public's trust. We work proactively to engage with all who live, work or visit Arlington County and Coffee with a Cop provides an opportunity to build these partnerships, one cup of coffee at a time.

Arlington Coffee with a Cop Day will be celebrated at the following locations and times on Wednesday, Oct. 5:

- ❖ 9:30 a.m. – 11 a.m. at Meda Coffee & Kitchen – 5037 Columbia Pike
- ❖ 1:30 p.m. – 3 p.m. at Sweet Science Coffee – 2507 Franklin Road

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Contact: Judy Massabny, jmassa@arlingtonva.us

55+ Programs are in person at 55+ Centers, unless otherwise noted. A 55+ Pass is required to participate (starting at a \$20 annual fee). To join or register, go to registration.arlingtonva.us or call 703-228-4747.

Library of Virginia's Genealogy Series continues with how to research pension records, Thursday, Sept. 29, 2 p.m., virtual. Registration # 911400-38.

Election 2022: What You Need to Know. Reps from League of Women Voters will provide essential voting information and answer questions, Thursday, Sept 29, 11:30 a.m. Virtual. Registration # 911400-08.

Working at the White House presentation by Sarah Fling, historian with the White House Historical Association, Thursday, Sept. 29, 1:30 p.m., virtual. Registration # 911400-09.

Uber and Lyft, overview by tech expert Nick Englund of several ride sharing apps, Thursday, Sept. 29, 6 p.m., Lubber Run 55+ Center. Registration # 911403-04.

"Name That Tune" fun event with musician Carl Gold, Thursday, Sept. 29, 2 p.m., Langston-Brown 55+ Center. Songs from the fifties to the seventies. Prizes awarded to the winning teams. Registration # 911304-07.

Just Beneath the Surface of three artists' techniques and history, Friday, Sept. 30, 10 a.m., virtual. Presented by community arts programmer Jim Halloran. Registration # 911302-01.

Latin dancing including salsa, bachata, rumba and cha-cha-cha to popular Latin music, Friday, Sept. 30, 11 a.m., Arlington Mill 55+ Center. Partners not required. Drop-in.

55+ "Tour de Friends" bike club members will ride from Vienna to Leesburg, Friday, Sept. 30, 9 a.m. Registration # 911206-04.

Walter Reed 55+ Center's bio-indicator garden's purpose and its connection to the upcoming NASA satellite launch, Friday, Sept. 30, 2 p.m., Walter Reed 55+ Center. Registration # 911400-25.

SEE FLOURISHING, PAGE 6



This pumpkin looks just right.



These kids spring up higher and higher each push up on the bungee cord.



Roasted pig's head is the center of attention at the Philippine table where a plate of lechon, pancit and spring rolls is offered for 12 tickets.

St. Ann's Celebrates 75 Years

Fall fair offers something for all ages and all tastes.

BY SHIRLEY RUHE
ARLINGTON CONNECTION

A child-size train circles the street outside the entrance to the fairgrounds filled with children waving at families with cameras on the sidewalk. The ticket line is long and parking spaces aren't easy to find on 10th Street. The St. Ann School fair is back after three years with a special St. Ann Jubilee Festival celebration. It highlights the 75th anniversary of the parish with a collaboration between the St. Ann Parish and St. Ann School.

Children clutching fistfuls of tickets are deciding where to start. Some head for the cotton candy or snow cones while others head to the indoor games. A face painting table is just along the fence. Screams can be heard from the yard nearby where children

SEE ST. ANN'S, PAGE 4



Beer Garden is doing a brisk business with pitchers of keg beer and grilled brats.



A miniature locomotive provided by Big Country Amusement, chugs filled with waving children around the street outside the fair.

Wrapping Up Senior Olympics

Charles Toftoy is playing Dan Krause in the over 85-year-old category in Northern Virginia Senior Olympics men's singles pickleball. It is 86 degrees outside and those courts are full but "they gave us the choice to play in the inside air conditioning because we're so old," he smiles. "I'm 87-1/2. Can you believe it?"

Toftoy says this could be his last year competing in NVSO. He has been competing for over 30 years and remembers at one time competing in 31 events the same year. Northern Virginia Senior Olympics

celebrates its 40th year with 831 participants across 74 individual events. Events are winding up on Sept. 24 with badminton at Northern Virginia Badminton Club and weight lifting at Crossfit in Lorton. As usual the opening ceremony was held at Thomas Jefferson Community Center followed by track events.

Sunday was cycling and diving followed by Wii bowling, both 8-ball and 9-ball bowling, bocce, horseshoes and a number of games for the mind such as scrabble, Mexican train dominoes, Mah Jongg, cribbage and jigsaw puzzles.



Charles Toftoy plays his first round of Northern Virginia Senior Olympics (NVSO) men's singles pickleball on Sept. 21 at Lubber Run Community Center.

PHOTOS BY SHIRLEY RUHE/THE CONNECTION



Charles Toftoy with pickleball mixed doubles partner Elease Brooks on Sept. 19; they won a silver medal. Toftoy already won silver including men's doubles.

Local Opera Star Conducts Bolivian Mass

BY SHIRLEY RUHE
ARLINGTON CONNECTION

José Sacin raises his right arm to set the rhythm of the piece and with the other hand, “I set the dynamics and the phrasing. And the emotion with my face.” Sacin says this is as much as you can do as a conductor in a silent way because you can’t use words to tell the group what you want.

Sacin has just returned from Bolivia where he was invited by the Networking for the Arts Foundation to conduct a half hour religious mass. Networking for the Arts is a partnership between Bolivia and America which was established to showcase the talent of the Hispanic community with programs in both Bolivia and America.

“I trained a local mixed chorus of about 30 men and women. They had the piece ahead of time, and we had four days to rehearse and perfect the piece. They were very disciplined. You have to pace a rehearsal, focus on different parts of the program but not get too tired. It’s a balance.”

Sacin says this religious piece was part of a program for a public performance at UD-ABOL University in Santa Cruz that also included several dancing groups, “and I sang a couple of pieces with their youth orchestra.”

He says while he was in Bolivia he also held some master classes for young singers in Las Paz and did a bit of mentoring to an assistant conductor. He says he was able to work in a little sightseeing, tennis at the Country Club (which became his passion during Covid) and a lot of eating, yes. “The



José Sacin conducts a group performing Misa at UDABOL University in Santa Cruz, Bolivia.

food was wonderful.”

Sacin is a well-known local opera star who is the Artistic Director for Arlington’s Opera NOVA and is often featured in their programs. He said he was mainly trained as a singer but started observing conductors 20 years ago to see how they work, and studied at George Mason to get the basic standards.

“I started playing guitar at 12 and then had a rock band in Peru during my teenage years. Then he heard the Three Tenors and this began his journey into opera. Now Sacin performs everywhere from the local Opera

NOVA to the Maryland Lyric Opera to the Ludwig Symphony.

But during COVID it was a challenge for artists as their venues shut down for over a year. Sacin says Opera NOVA met the challenge by creating a series of five on-line concerts which began with the holiday concert in December 2020 and was followed by several others focused on seniors, African-American singers and children. Sacin says the concerts are still live on the Opera NOVA website.

Sacin says he is hoping to bring back the

PHOTOS CONTRIBUTED



José Sacin performs with the youth chorus at a program sponsored by Networking for the Arts.

Children’s Opera this year which had to be set aside during Covid. Mariam Miller, Director of Opera NOVA says, “Jose works with teachers and students. We bring them together in a large auditorium and have perfected a way to introduce children to theater.”

She says, “We introduce each instrument in the orchestra at a time and then show the children what it sounds like when they play together. It is interactive so the children participate in the program. Remember the time we said the monkey is missing and the children stood up in the audience and yelled ‘no, there he is.’” She adds, “It gets more educational each time. It’s unique to José, the excitement and flavor he brings.”

St. Ann’s Celebrates 75 Years

FROM PAGE 3

attached to long bungee cords somersault high into the air. Small hands chase rubber ducks in a simulated pond while a teenager tries to decide whether to get his hair sprayed pink or purple.

It is still early so the pizza and chicken and Lebanese places are still setting up in the courtyard but the Biergarten is doing a brisk business with wursts browning on the grill and pitchers filling with beer from a keg on the table.

“We are Catholics you know,” a long time parishioner comments.

Outside the parish hall international tents are set up where members of the parish are offering their home cooked Hispanic and Filipino food. A 40-pound pig, glistening with brown crust from five hours of roasting, sits in the middle of a long buffet table. For 12 tickets you can take home a plate of pork-stuffed spring rolls, a rectangle of sweet rice cake, pancit (noodles with mixed vegetables, spring onions and bits of pork) and lechon.

Oriana MacGregor, Development, Enrollment and Marketing Director of St. Ann School, says a core group of volunteers met for some months out to plan



The pink spray can is almost empty as this teenager is getting a new look.

the event. “It took 40-50 volunteers in shifts from 10 a.m.-8 p.m., all hands on deck to make it happen. It is truly one of a kind

grassroots event.”

St. Ann’s parish held its first lawn fete on an empty lot in 1947 when they were for-

PHOTOS BY SHIRLEY RUHE



Finally captured the duck!

merly recognized as a parish. They held a raffle of a shiny new Plymouth and raised \$4,000 for their building fund (\$90,773 in today’s equivalent.) They tore down that first building in 2003 making the way for today’s building.

‘Is This the Fast I Desire?’

Reflections on Yom Kippur and the Fight for Workers Rights.

BY DAVID BRODER



Next week, my family will join Jews around the world in observing Yom Kippur, the holiest day of the Jewish year. Known as the Day of Atonement, Yom Kippur is a time for prayer, reflection, repentance and fasting.

Every year, we read from the Book of Isaiah, in which God sends the prophet Isaiah to admonish those whose wicked acts undermine their fasting and prayers.

The people ask, “Why, when we fasted, did you not see? When we starved our bodies, did you pay no heed?”

Through Isaiah, God answers:

“Because on your fast day, you see to your business and oppress all your laborers! Because you fast in strife and contention, and you strike with a wicked fist! Your fasting today is not such as to make your voice heard on high.

“Is such the fast I desire, a day for men to starve their bodies? Is it bowing the head like a bullrush and lying in sackcloth and ashes? Do you call that a fast, a day when the Lord is favorable? No, this is the fast I desire: to unlock the fetters of wickedness, and untie the cords of the yoke. To let the oppressed go free, to break off every yoke.”

In selecting this text for Yom Kippur, the rabbis were clearly making two points: our prayers are meaningless if our actions undermine them,

and how we treat workers is central to our faith.

These lessons are as critical today as they were in Isaiah’s time of the 8th century BCE.

In recent years, the pandemic has shone a spotlight on the inequities that have always existed in our economy. Frontline workers – disproportionately Black, Brown, API and immigrant – are called essential but not treated as

essential.

However, in response, essential workers are rising up and demanding better. From Starbucks baristas to Amazon workers to Fairfax County employees, working people are now forming and joining unions in record numbers.

According to data from the National Labor Relations Board, workers across the country have won 80% more union elections in 2022 than the year before, with twice as many workers represented. Meanwhile, here in Virginia, tens of thousands of county and city workers – mental health workers, educators, sanitation workers, and first responders – have won collective bargaining rights for the first time in Fairfax, Arlington, Alexandria, Loudoun and Richmond.

The benefits of unionization are clear. Joining together with your co-workers to bargain a contract is the best way to improve your pay, benefits, and working conditions. While raising standards for all workers, collective bargaining also closes racial and gender pay gaps, ensuring

a more equitable, resilient economy for all. By improving recruitment and retention, collective bargaining enhances the quality of public services. So, it’s no wonder that 71% of Americans support labor unions, according to the latest Gallup poll.

Unfortunately, just as in the Book of Isaiah, we see those who “strike with a wicked fist” against working people. Rather than recognize their workers’ unions and sit down at the bargaining table, massive corporations like Starbucks and Amazon are attacking working people. Here in Virginia, many jurisdictions still refuse to pass union rights for their frontline employees.

Earlier this year, the NLRB accused Starbucks of 29 unfair labor practice charges, including over 200 violations of the National Labor Relations Act. The complaint accuses Starbucks of threatening and intimidating workers, firing workers, closing stores that voted to have a union, reducing workers’ pay, and more.

The lesson of Isaiah, central to the Yom Kippur holiday, is that for our prayers to be heard above, we must take action and live our values here on earth. It’s time for Starbucks, Amazon and all employers to live their supposed values and come to the bargaining table with their workers.

Doing so will mean a more just, more prosperous, and brighter future for us all. As the Book of Isaiah says: “If you banish the yoke from your midst, the menacing hand, and evil speech ... then shall your light shine in the darkness.”

David Broder is the President of SEIU Virginia 512, whose union members are county and city employees, and home care workers, dedicated to building an economy that works for everyone. He lives with his family in Oakton.

Project Community Connect Addresses Inequities

In Health, Education and Economic Opportunity.

BY ROSIE ALLEN-HERRING

On average, in the DMV region, less than half of our households earn above the Federal Poverty Level yet are not eligible for assistance and cannot afford the basic household necessities such as housing, child-care, food, transportation, health care, and even a basic smartphone plan. These three characteristics are causing these households to struggle from paycheck to paycheck, or worse, in the red line of debt with little opportunity to advance beyond it.

Your United Way of the National Capital Area (NCA) identifies these households as ALICE (Asset, Limited, Income Constrained, Employed) populations. They are working households trapped in systemic inequities. For example,

39 percent of households in Virginia cannot afford essentials.

United Way NCA conducts ALICE reports every two years and uses the data to analyze the real cost of living as a way to identify the need for innovative and comprehensive solutions to attain equity for all in the areas of health, education and economic opportunity. For example, our community schools program focuses on meeting ALICE students and families where they are at, focusing on the middle school to college and/or career success pipeline. According to Madelyn Giblin, Site Director, Communities in Schools of NOVA, “United Way NCA is a wonderful partner. They’re constantly looking for ways to support our work through their education pillar and empower the work that we’re doing by connecting us to resources.

Sometimes that means bringing community partners in to support school supply drives or through Project Community Connect.”

Project Community Connect (PCC) is an event that provides equitable access to resources needed by ALICE populations and for those at risk of or experiencing homelessness. At this year’s 8th annual PCC, October 3-8, 2022, United Way NCA and its partners will host three regional pop-up events. Locations include Prince George’s Community College (10/3), Kelly Miller Middle School in Washington DC (10/6), and Francis C. Hammond Middle School in Alexandria, VA (10/8). The events will feature in-person resource fairs offering much-needed services such as medical screenings, including COVID testing/vaccinations; rental and utility assistance; workforce

resources and opportunities; legal services and counseling, clothing and food distribution, and more.

United Way NCA will also be working with its regional partners to deliver more than 4,500 kits of basic needs items throughout the week to community members, including general hygiene, feminine hygiene, healthy snacks and warm clothing kits.

PCC has served more than 1,500 participants, to date. United Way NCA will continue to look for innovation to touch the lives of those in need. We invite you to join us as we advance toward equity for all people across the DMV. We strongly believe that when none are ignored, all will thrive.

For more information on Project Community Connect, please visit <https://unitedwaynca.org/pcc>.

Rosie Allen-Herring is the President and CEO of United Way of the National Capital Area.

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LETTERS

Nonpartisan, Grassroots

The League of Women Voters of Arlington and Alexandria City, is a nonpartisan, grassroots organization working to protect and expand voting rights and ensure everyone is represented in our democracy. We empower voters and defend democracy through advocacy, education, and litigation at the local, state, and national levels.

We are pleased that the Arlington County Board is considering the wider use of Ranked Choice Voting. RCV is a process that allows voters to rank candidates for a particular office in order of preference.

RCV gives voters more choices, prevents spoilers, reduces negative campaigning and the influence of money in politics. Also, when voters are given more choice, voting tends to increase.

Joan Porte

President

LWV Arlington and Alexandria City

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"FLOURISHING AFTER 55"

FROM PAGE 2

OCT. 3
Maintaining personhood in individuals with dementia and caregiver communications strategies, Monday, Oct. 3, 11 a.m., Lubber Run 55+ Center. Presented by Dr. Alison Warren, George Washington University's Brain Health Institute. Registration # 911500-02.

Until Help Arrives Training, necessary skills to respond to life threatening situations and more. Two part class, Monday, Oct. 3, Monday Nov. 7, 10 a.m., Walter Reed 55+ Center. Registration # 911400-07.

Current events discussion about events taking place in local and world news, Monday, 10 a.m., Walter Reed 55+ Center. Registration # 911402-22.

Early morning art activity, paint and draw with community arts programmer Jen Droblyen, Monday, 9 a.m., virtual. Registration # 911303-17.

OCT. 4
Ice Cream Taste Test: Dairy or Non-Dairy, Tuesday, 6:30 p.m., Walter Reed 55+ Center. Registration # 911501-08.

Getting Started with Ancestry.com, Tuesday, 11:30 a.m., Lubber Run 55+ Center. Bring your device and Ancestry.com user name/password to follow along or come to listen. Registration # 911400-43.

Langston-Brown 55+ Center's book club members will discuss "The Sympathizer" by Viet Thanh Nguyen, Tuesday, 1:30 p.m. Drop-in.

Opera Appreciation, hear musical selections of "La Traviata" by Giuseppe Verdi, Wednesday, Oct. 5, 1:30 p.m., Lubber Run 55+ Center. Professional commentary by George Cecchetti. Registration # 911300-05.

OCT. 5
Learn how to use "My Arlington" app, Wednesday, 11 a.m., Walter Reed 55+ Center. Presented by a representative from Dept. of Environmental Services. Registration # 911403-05.

Local travel guru Lowell Nelson shares experiences of traveling in Norway, Wednesday, 1:30 p.m. Aurora Hills 55+ Center. Registration # 911400-27.

Movie matinee, "The Unbearable Weight of Massive Talent" (2022) (R), Wednesday, 1 p.m., Lubber Run 55+ Center. Registration # 911804-01.

OCT. 6
Ballroom Bootcamp, learn basic steps to a different dance each week, Thursday, 2:30 p.m., Lubber Run 55+ Center. Drop-in.

Normal Aging vs. Dementia, warning signs of a memory problem, Thursday, 11 a.m., Langston-Brown 55+ Center. Registration # 911500-03.

How HIPAA affects patients and the medical community by protecting the privacy and security of health data, Thursday, 1:30 p.m. Virtual presentation by Dr. Matthew Hicks, dir., Information Technology and Cyber Security at George Mason University. Registration # 911500-04.

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CALENDAR

THRU SEPTEMBER

Witness the Changing of the Guard. At the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, at Arlington National Cemetery, Arlington. From April-September, the ceremony occurs every 30 minutes, on the hour and half-hour. For more information, visit: <https://arlingtoncemetery.mil/Explore/Changing-of-the-Guard>

WEDNESDAYS, SEPTEMBER 28

Coffee and Conversation with Arlington Neighborhood Village. 10-11 a.m. "Coffee and Conversation" speaker series. Everyone is invited to join the conversation via Zoom. Bring your own coffee, learn interesting things about our community and hear from the speakers listed below. Zoom link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88948577106?pwd=eW0rN1RTTU5ITmJ5NnF2QXZINmdUQT09>

THROUGH-OCT. 1

Group Exhibition. George Mason University's College and Visual and Performing Arts and Mason Exhibitions present Approaching Event Horizons: Projects on Climate Change by Atlantika Collective, a group exhibition of photography, video, sculpture, and performance. Curated by María Alejandra Sáenz, the exhibition will be on view at Mason Exhibitions Arlington located at 3601 Fairfax Drive, Arlington, VA 22201 from August 24- October 1, 2022. Gallery hours are Wednesday through Saturday, 11 a.m.-4 p.m. An event horizon alludes to a boundary in space around a black hole beyond which nothing, including light, can escape. Acknowledging the current climate crisis of our planet, Approaching Event Horizons: Projects on Climate Change by Atlantika Collective resists the idea that the future of planet Earth is reaching a point of no return. The seven artists in this exhibition illustrate the present environmental crisis and inspire actions to help mitigate the critical consequences of climate change.

ENERGY MASTERS CLASS

Energy Masters is recruiting its next class of Energy Masters. Join a unique program to learn new skills that improve energy and water conservation and save money on utility bills. It is climate action that directly impacts our local community. No prior home maintenance or energy knowledge required. Language skills in Spanish, Farsi, Arabic, and Amharic are a plus! Individuals who live in the D.C., Maryland, or Virginia area may apply. Check the website (www.ecoactionarlington.org/energy) to learn how to apply or contact the program coordinator at 510-812-6410 or energy@ecoactionarlington.org for questions. The application deadline is Friday, Sept. 30, 2022.

AUG. 29-SEPT. 30

Gallery Underground. 2100 Crystal Drive, Crystal City Shops, Arlington. Gallery Underground's

Focus Gallery in September presents Enjoy the View, a solo show of oil paintings by local artist Jessica Mickey. Sunsets, clouds, water, and traveling are at the top of Jessica's list of favorite things. And over the past dozen plus years, she has skillfully combined those loves with photorealistic oil painting. Jessica has a knack for capturing moments in time and amazing scenes, sometimes even beyond what a camera could do. In fact, most of her paintings start out as photographs that she then transforms into moody artworks that make you feel as if you could step right into them. While the pandemic halted her travels, it did not stop her from painting and this first ever solo show of hers invites us all on a visual journey of places she's been, wishes to go, or merely finds beautiful. Jessica Mickey's solo show encompasses 40 of her landscape paintings and offers us all a brief moment in time to stop and "enjoy the view."

THURSDAY/SEPT. 29

Forestry and Natural Resources. 7 p.m. Climate change is here and affecting our community. To ensure that future generations of Arlingtonians enjoy the benefits of nature, Arlington County is developing a Forestry and Natural Resources Plan. This plan will be a blueprint for stewarding our natural resources in the coming years. Visit: <https://www.arlingtonva.us/Government/Projects/FNRP/Forestry-and-Natural-Resources-Plan-Virtual-Engagement>

FRIDAY/SEPTEMBER 30

Putting Your Garden to Bed. 10- 11:30 a.m., Online. Did you know that Fall is the ideal time to plant trees, shrubs, and perennials? This class offers easy tips for planting, onsite composting, providing winter habitat and food for wildlife, and end-of-season care of tools and equipment. We'll help you identify opportunities to learn from this year's successes and failures (we all have them) to lay the groundwork for next year. Speakers are Extension Master Gardeners Joan McIntyre, who leads the VCE-MGNV Neighborhood Champions program that supports Extension Master Gardeners as they offer gardening expertise to their neighborhoods, and Molly Newling, who excels at teaching the fine points of pruning, among her many other gardening talents. Free. RSVP at <https://mgmv.org/rsvp-for-public-education-classes/> to receive a link to participate.

TUESDAYS, OCTOBER 4, 11, 18, 25

Simpson Park Demonstration Garden. 10:00 - 11:00 am, Simpson Park Demonstration Garden, 420 E. Monroe Ave., Alexandria. Rake in the good vibes, leave the leaves! Extension Master Gardeners will share ideas to create habitats for pollinators and other insects for a protective overwintering environment. Be a pollinator hero! #Leave the Leaves

"FLOURISHING AFTER 55"

FROM PAGE 6

Life in the Fast Lane, remote control cars, demonstration of high speeds, Thursday, 11 a.m., Walter Reed 55+ Center. Registration # 911400-35.

Library of Virginia's Genealogy Series, learn how to use Virginia Historical Inventory, Thursday, 2 p.m., virtual. Registration # 911400-39.

Oct. 7 Explore drawing, no experience necessary, materials provided, Friday, 1 p.m., Aurora Hills 55+ Center. Registration # 911303-03.

Intro to line dance, basic steps, Friday, 10:15 a.m., Aurora Hills 55+ Center. Drop-in.

Social ballroom dance, spacious dance floor, partners not necessary, Friday, 1:45 p.m., Lubber Run 55+ Center. No instruction provided. Drop-in.

Sugar and Spice Hike, dedicated to Paw Paw and Spicebush plants, Monday, Oct. 10, 11 a.m., Long Branch Nature Center. Led by Naturalist Jaron Winters. Registration # 911106-15.

Pumpkin recipes and demonstration by Master Food Volunteer from Virginia Cooperative Extension, Tuesday, Oct. 11, 11 a.m., Lubber Run 55+ Center. Registration # 911501-04.

How to use financial apps for budgeting and investing, presented by a Virginia Cooperative Extension Master Financial Education volunteer, Tuesday, Oct. 11, 6:30 p.m., Walter Reed 55+ Center. Registration # 911403-06.

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Thank you to the hundreds of supporters who helped to keep all your Connection Newspapers alive throughout Alexandria, Fairfax County, Arlington County and Potomac, Md. along with affiliated websites and digital media. Now we need help again in 2022.

Each local newspaper's mission aspires to provide greater community service, and we do know that our communities are better off if we continue to publish. Last year's financial support from readers and supporters like you bridged the shortfall before Federal PPP funding arrived, and both made our survival possible. We now await a decision for a grant from Rebuild Virginia in early February that we hope will help us in 2022 and beyond. But we need help to survive the first quarter, always a brutal time for cash flow in weekly newspapers. Thank you.

Please, help save these historical papers. All gifts will be used to fund our printed newspapers and websites and to meet obligations to our loyal and patient employees, writers, contractors and suppliers.

The ongoing pandemic continues to crush many newspapers across the country, and our newspapers continue to be at risk. The Northern Virginia area's best read and most trusted source for community news includes the Alexandria Gazette Packet, Mount Vernon Gazette and all Connection Newspapers in the metropolitan region.

The pandemic has hit small businesses hard, which in turn has reduced advertising revenue that keeps these local newspapers alive to provide hyper local news to residents. It feels like no small miracle to be looking forward into 2022.

The pandemic has been a bear, financially and otherwise. Revenue plummeted at the beginning in 2020. Some beloved advertisers have stayed the course supporting us and many more have done what they can. In the fall of 2021 we saw the return of some advertising for events and Grand Openings, but now omicron clouds the horizon in so many ways. Revenue still remains short of expenses despite our greatly curtailed costs.

Connection Newspapers has been offering these local newspapers to residents for over 200 years. Countless residents have grown up with these papers covering significant moments in the lives of family and children, news, community events, school activities, and even pictures of your dogs and cats. Internet news and large national newspapers cannot provide the local connection or historical connection that local papers like Connection Newspapers and the Alexandria Gazette Packet provide. If your child, dog, mother, father, neighborhood, school has been featured, you understand the value of local community newspapers.

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As I Was Saying Last Week



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

I was venting about the difficulty I was having locating a specific Entenmann's cake: the "Marshmallow Devil's Food Iced Cake" for what seems like my lifetime. Whatever timeline actually applies, it minimizes the impossibility I was experiencing finding this staple of my diet. However, let me state for the record before you read and I write any further: I am not undernourished and, I am, generally speaking, able to satisfy my sweet teeth. Nevertheless, there was something definitely missing from my diet. I wouldn't say I was deprived, more that I was chronically disappointed; especially when I would walk by the Entenmann's display at my local Giant, and occasionally at Safeway or some other less conveniently located supermarkets (Aldi's, Magruder's, Food Lion, et cetera). Now that you're reminded of the context and of my perspective/need, let me set the scene as to how this cake (times two) made its way into my house in Maryland on September 10th, 2022. A date that will be long remembered in Burtonsville, Md. (If I was Klingon, we'd sing songs about it.)

My wife, Dina and I were day-tripping to Phoenixville, Pa., approximately 130 miles north, to visit some close friends, Shelley and Fran. It was late afternoon on that Saturday as we sat in their living room after spending an enjoyable day together preparing to say our good-byes when I asked Fran (the husband) quite casually if there was a supermarket nearby. I then mumbled something in Dina's direction about looking for the cake since we were a few hours from home. I was thinking (hoping) that we were far enough away from Maryland that this cake might be available here somewhere. (After all, I'm a Red Sox fan; I know about hope.) When I mentioned cake/my need, Fran perked up and asked what kind of cake I was looking for. Shelley, his wife chimed in that Fran loves sweets. I didn't need to be asked twice: Entenmann's "Marshmallow Devil's Food Iced Cake," I said. To which Fran asked: "Is that a vanilla frosted cake?" Then I perked up. "Yeah," surprised by his familiarity, I again reiterated my desire for this cake. "I saw that cake in my local supermarket last week. It was a 'BOGO,' I almost bought it," Fran recalled. I immediately asked/insisted on directions to that store and/or asked Fran if he would mind driving us/driving ahead with us following him - so there would be zero chance that I'd get lost. (I was too close to take any chances now.) To which Fran responded with the following words which will endear him to me for the rest of my cake-eating life: "Don't bother. I'll just drive down there myself. It's only two miles away and see if they have any left." Incredibly hopeful, and appreciative, I said: "Sure, if you don't mind?" "Don't be silly." He says. "I'll be right back" Fran then happily grabbed his car keys and headed out to his car.

It couldn't have been more than 10 to 15 minutes before Fran came walking back into the living room smiling as he moved closer to where the three of us were still sitting on the living room couch and deposited two Entenmann's "Marshmallow Devil's Food Iced Cakes" on the coffee table right in front of me, almost like magic. (My over-the-top salivation for this cake had convinced Fran to buy one for himself, he offered.) I wasn't totally dumb founded by the cake's appearance; we're only talking about cake here, but I was nearly speechless nonetheless while gushing my gratitude and excitement over his effort, and his awareness even for noticing this cake in the store in the first place. It's not exactly my white whale but locating it has been the bane of my existence as well as a reoccurring void in my dessert selections.

Now I have a resource/outlet, at least, one place I know where I can, for the moment anyway, buy this cake. Unfortunately, its location is a two hours-plus drive from home and as for mailing it, it's an item that I don't think would travel very well, considering its packaging, if you know what I mean? Still, my future (cake wise) looks brighter than it has in years. I am finally going to have my cake and eat it, too; literally and figuratively; thanks to Fran in Pennsylvania, (my new favorite state).

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

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