

The Arlington Connection

Sheryl Sims, quilt artist; 63 of her quilts will be on display until the end of the year at Woodlawn and Pope-Leighey House.

ENTERTAINMENT, PAGE 5 ♦ CLASSIFIEDS, PAGE 6
PHOTO BY GLENDA BOOTH

Rocking the Vote
PAGE 3

Get Serious about
Your Pet's Teeth
PAGE 4

Stories, History
Told in Quilts
PAGE 8

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Oct. 14
Oct. 22

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Office of 55+ Programs
Department of Parks and Recreation
300 N. Park Dr.,
Arlington, VA 22203

Registration # 911400-12.

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.

U.S. diplomacy at work in the Afghanistan evacuation, Monday, Oct. 16, 1:30 p.m., virtual. Presented by George Sibley, retired foreign service officer. Registration # 911400-17.

Short story reading and discussion of "Hop-Frog" by Edgar Allen Poe, Monday, Oct. 16, 1 p.m., Aurora Hills 55+ Center. Story will be sent ahead of time. Registration # 911402-19 or virtual, registration # 911402-20.

Beginner quilting class, Thursday, Oct. 12, 1:30 p.m., Lubber Run 55+ Center. Learn how to create beautiful, raised images from paper coils. Supplies provided. Cost \$18. Registration # 911310-05.

National Black Poetry Day with local Black poets, Tuesday, Oct. 17, 4:30 p.m., Walter Reed 55+ Center. Be inspired by readings plus a Q&A to follow. Registration # 911400-26.

New, Spanish discussion group led by Ashley Gomez Figueredo, Lubber Run 55+ Center Director, Thursday, Oct. 12, 2 p.m. Participants must have an intermediate knowledge of Spanish. Discuss food, travel, current events and more. Registration # 911650-02.

Interpreting health studies presented by Dr. Margaret Ulfors from the Institute of Brain Health and Dementia, Tuesday, Oct. 17, 1 p.m., Lubber Run 55+ Center. Registration # 911400-30.

Favorite music on vinyl records plus root beer floats, Thursday, Oct. 12, 6 p.m., Lubber Run 55+ Center. Registration # 911801-02. Bring records to share or just come to listen.

Genealogy 101, learn how to research family roots, share information and tools, Tuesday, Oct. 17, 11:30 a.m., Lubber Run 55+ Center. Presented by experienced genealogist Eileen Bogdanoff. Registration # 911402-02.

Movie matinee showing of "Living" (2022) (PG-13), Thursday, Oct. 12, 2 p.m., Walter Reed 55+ Center. Registration # 911804-13.

Acoustic Café at Walter Reed 55+ Center to feature three acts including Brandon Lindley, blue grass player; Two Cities Trio, string prodigies and the Okays, harmonious Americana trio, Tuesday, Oct. 17, 7 p.m. Open to all ages. Registration # 911301-03.

Why get an appraisal of personal property is answered by experienced retired appraiser Jean Jackson, Thursday, Oct. 12, 11 a.m., Langston-Brown 55+ Center.

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NEWS

PHOTOS BY EDEN BROWN/THE CONNECTION



Blue rocks at Northside Social. On Nov. 7, every seat in the House of Delegates and State Senate is on the ballot.



Blue rocks at the Chill Zone. Democrats have a slim majority in the Senate and are three seats short of a majority in the House.



Blue Rocks at Yorktown High. Issues like abortion and clean energy are being decided in the next legislative session.

‘VOTE!’ Say the Little Blue Rocks

Popping up all over Arlington, blue rocks remind Virginians to vote every year, but this election is not like others.

BY EDEN BROWN
ARLINGTON CONNECTION

There are little blue rocks painted with the word “VOTE” popping up all over Arlington. Why? Informed sources say it is because an organization called “We of Action Virginia” also known as “WOFA”, painted over 1,000 of them last week. The group hopes people who might not otherwise vote will see the rocks and make a plan to vote. They see key issues that are important to voters as being unusually vulnerable this election cycle.

Virginia has elections every year but often residents don’t vote if it is not a gubernatorial or presidential election. WOFA hopes to highlight to people that the person affecting your daily life is more likely the State Senator or House Delegate who make up our General Assembly in Richmond. On Nov. 7, every seat in the House of Delegates and State Senate is up for election.

The little blue rocks are also out there to remind people to vote early. Studies have shown voting during the entire voting period (Sept. 22-Nov 7) may increase turnout among particular demographic

groups, particularly working people who can’t always get away to vote. It cuts wait times at the polls, and allows for the correction of errors, particularly if an on-line or mail-in ballot is being used, but also when you show up to cast your vote and find out you had not changed your address when you moved. With early voting, there is time to correct those errors. Same day voting doesn’t usually allow for that.

Many like to physically cast a vote and for those, early voting in person is a way to vote early but in person. You can vote early in person up until Nov. 4th; bring a friend.

This election is particularly consequential as it will determine party control of the currently divided legislature for the final two years of Gov. Glenn Youngkin’s term. Legislation on issues like abortion, banned books, education funding, healthcare, voting rights, gender discrimination, and clean energy can be decided in the next two years.

For more information on how to register, vote, and check your status, see: <https://upvoteva.org> or <https://vote.elections.virginia.gov/VoterInformation> and for more information on WOFA, see: <https://wofava.org>



Blue Rocks at Clarendon. The County Board election is happening in addition to the General Assembly.

Debunking Common Myths about Pet Dental Care

BY ASHLEY SIMPSON
ARLINGTON CONNECTION

In recent years, members of the Northern Virginia veterinary community have observed a positive toothy trend. Pet owners seem to be focusing more today on the oral health of their animals.

“Generally, the number of pet owners seeking out oral care is increasing,” Dr. Natasha Ungerer, co-founder of Clarendon Animal Care and Urgent Animal Care of Arlington, said. “We are fortunate to work in an area where pets really are a part of the family, and as such we see quite good compliance with oral health care.”

Dr. Barron P. Hall, Board Certified Veterinary Dentist and oral surgeon, owner and sole practitioner at the Animal Dental Clinic in Vienna, Va., said he has observed the pattern among pet owners as well as veterinarians. He’s seen a growing awareness of Comprehensive Oral Health Assessment and Treatment (COHAT) among local veterinary practices.

“Seventeen years ago, when I bought this practice, general practicing veterinarians did not understand what COHAT meant,” Dr. Hall said. “Now I would say that 75 percent of the clinics around here use this abbreviation.”

A COHAT is a complete oral exam and plan for treatment of a pet’s oral health issues. In the words of the Animal Dental Clinic’s website, COHAT “includes but is not limited to intraoral radiographs, cone-beam CT Scan of the oral cavity and head, oral exam and evaluation, tooth charting, complete dental cleaning, polishing, fluoride treatment, and any treatment deemed necessary and agreed upon by the owner.”

Although more pet owners and veterinarians are tuned into proper oral health today, Dr. Hall emphasized that “we’ve got a long way to go.” There are many misconceptions that stand in the way of pets getting the medical attention they need to have healthy, pain-free mouths.

In this article, we will discuss some of these myths, and clear up some confusion around them.

Myth # 1: Your pet’s oral care won’t become a problem until he or she is elderly.

A common misconception among pet owners is that pets won’t have periodontal or other tooth-related medical issues until they are elderly.

The reality is that periodontal disease is very common in dogs and cats of all ages. For example, according to Cornell University’s Richard P. Riney Canine Health

Center, “studies show that 80-90% of dogs over the age of three have some component of periodontal disease.”

In her practice, Dr. Ungerer has seen plenty of instances of these kinds of oral problems among young animals – those even younger than three.

“Animals can be as young as a few months old in the case of mal-occlusions, and we often see tartar build-up on adult teeth as young as six to seven months,” Dr. Ungerer said. “In our experience, age is not a particularly strong correlator of dental disease. For example, we could see a two-year-old dog with significant periodontal disease [disease of the gums and tissues surrounding the teeth], and a ten-year-old dog whose mouth is in great shape. And vice versa. Pet owners should definitely be aware that age is not an indicator.”

Dr. Hall said that animals should be evaluated for oral health early on in their lives. Having an oral evaluation at a young age is especially important for certain breeds of dogs – including micro dog breeds and Brachycephalic breeds (dogs and cats with flat-faces).

“It’s not true that oral health is generally good until an animal reaches the end of its life,” Dr. Hall said. “It’s rare, but puppies can develop cancer in the mouth. Genetics play the biggest role in periodontal health. Certain breeds are going to be more prone to oral problems. I beg to see certain breeds of dogs – like brachycephalic and micro breeds – by six months of age to prepare the owner for what they have regarding their puppy’s oral cavity and to educate them that fewer teeth and less crowding will provide for better long term oral health. Humans have created many breeds for fashion, not function, and because of that, these animals are predisposed to many oral problems.”

Myth # 2: A pet will stop eating if he or she has an oral problem.

Many pet owners falsely assume that if their pet is eating regularly, then they must not have any mouth pain. Appetite, however, is simply not an accurate barometer of a pet’s oral pain.

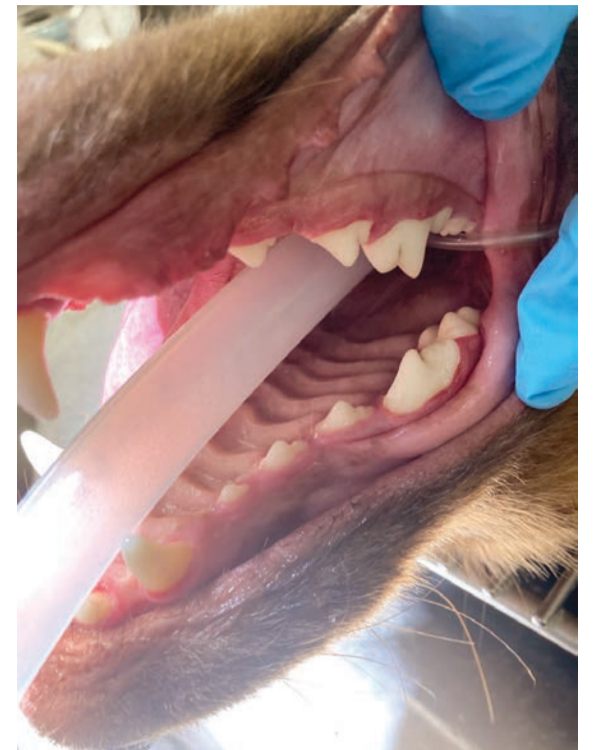
“When an animal has a broken tooth with pulp exposure, it’s going to hurt,” Dr. Hall explained. “Still, a dog or a cat isn’t going to whine or complain. They will very rarely stop eating like a human would. Humans are wimpy.”

Dr. Ungerer also said that she has encountered plenty of scenarios where a pet’s mouth has gone unnoticed.

“What I find interesting is the



Dr. Ungerer and her patient before dental care.



Dr. Ungerer and her patient after dental care

number of cases where we incidentally note dental disease, but the client is not noting any oral concerns in the pet at home,” Dr. Ungerer said. “But then following extraction of infected teeth, the pet owners report back that their pet is feeling so much better following the procedure. We know with certainty that animals feel pain; however, they manifest it differently and often will not give outwards signs of discomfort even with significant dental disease such as fractures, loose teeth, and tooth root abscesses. In many past cases, clients did not even realize their pets’ teeth were bothering them until the problem was addressed, and then they have seen how much better the pet is feeling afterwards.”

Although it’s often impossible to know if your pet is in pain, some signs that they have oral disease include halitosis, facial swelling, sneezing, nasal discharge, face rubbing, and dropping of food when eating.

Myth #3: All veterinarians are comprehensively trained in dentistry.

When Dr. Hall recalled his days at veterinary school, he could not remember any curriculum specific to the oral needs of pets.

“I was never taught anything about pet dentistry in veterinary school [at The Ohio State University College of Veterinary Medicine],” Dr. Hall said. “We had a three-hour lab and I have no recollection of what was done, but I know there was no oral surgery. I never learned to extract teeth. What is scary is, the day I graduated, I was legally allowed to do

anything.”

“It was a sheer accident that I ultimately became a veterinary dentist,” Dr. Hall said. “Back in April 1995 when I was at a practice in southwest Michigan, they sent me to a weekend meeting with the hope that I would do all the dental procedures. I was amazed at everything I learned, like how you were supposed to properly extract teeth and take intraoral images. I learned about all this new technology. Two years later, I participated in a Level Two course where we learned the basics of root canals. I spent two years in a private practice, doing a dentistry and oral surgery residency in Dallas from 2001 to 2003. Then I passed my boards in 2006 to become a Board Certified Veterinary Dentist.”

Traditional veterinarians without board certification will not have this level of experience or expertise with pet oral care. And while Hall said some veterinarians have had more training than others, it would be a mistake not to ask questions before allowing any professional to conduct any procedure on your pet’s teeth or mouth.

“Some veterinarians are much better trained than others, and there are some very excellent veterinarians out there who have done a lot of continuing education,” Dr. Hall said. Still, “a licensed technician can do an extraction of a single rooted tooth in the state of Virginia. Clients need to ask, what the problem is and what the different options are. They also need to ask who is doing the procedure. Even if it’s a veterinarian, they should ask, ‘what training have you had?’”

He added that he is the only one

who performs surgeries at the Animal Dental Clinic.

Dr. Hall also said that many veterinarians will only offer extraction as a solution to a problem with a tooth even when there are other options.

“Pet owners need to be given the option of a root canal for teeth with complicated crown fractures,” Dr. Hall said. “Clients deserve to know the options when it comes to pets living with mouths free of pain.”

That is where a visit to a Board Certified Veterinary Dentist is the best option, he says. After completing the evaluation portion of the COHAT, veterinary dentists like Hall will work with each pet owner to formulate a treatment plan that makes the most sense for both them and their pets.

“I make recommendations to owners, who ultimately make the decisions,” Dr. Hall said. “I then get everything that was agreed on done under one anesthesia.”

Myth #4: Every pet needs all their teeth to eat and have a healthy life.

A typical mature cat will have 30 teeth while an adult dog’s mouth will contain 42 teeth.

According to Dr. Hall, these animals do not need all these teeth – or even any teeth – to live normal lives. On the flip side, it is better for the pet to have fewer teeth – or even no teeth at all – and a healthy, pain-free mouth than to have a mouth that contains problematic teeth.

“Domestic animals really do not need teeth,” Dr. Hall, who himself has a toothless cat and a toothless dog, said. “Believe me, they can

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WWW.CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM

ENTERTAINMENT



The Fall Heritage Festival will be held on Saturday, Oct. 14, 2023 at Fort C.F. Smith in Arlington.

Fall Heritage Festival

1-5 p.m. At Fort C.F. Smith, Arlington. Step back into history and try your hand at some old-time games and crafts, make a corn husk doll, churn butter, dip candles and work the cider press! Bring your old pants and shirt to make a scarecrow - child sizes work best! All family members who attend must register. \$7 per person.

MONTH OF OCTOBER

Urban Agriculture Month Activities.
1-3 p.m. At Arlington Central Library, Arlington. Urban Agriculture Month shines a spotlight on the significant role urban agriculture plays in our regional and local food system. This event will feature discussions on maximizing food production in an urban setting, demonstration sessions, and a reading of a proclamation naming October Urban Agriculture Month in Arlington County. We hope you'll get inspired to garden and get involved!

Program Schedule:
Arlington County Urban Agriculture Month Proclamation
Northern Virginia Conservation Trust & new Plot Against Hunger garden School Gardens
Garden spotlight - Walter Reed Garden
Indoor Farming Update: Headwinds Developing
Announcements

After the program ends, you can visit and chat with partner organizations at educational tables, pick up some free seeds and seedlings, and check out other giveaways and activities. Register for free here. <https://tinyurl.com/4bxwvtbx>

DATES AND TIMES

- 13 Oct. 10:00-11:30 a.m. VCE - Soil Building for Healthier, Happier Gardens (Zoom)
- 13 Oct. 1-3 p.m. VCE Partners of the Americas Caribbean Conservation Conversation
- 15 Oct. - Area 2 Open House
- 17 Oct. 7:30 a.m.-11 a.m. Gleaning at area farms with Plot Against Hunger.
- 20 Oct. 10:00-11:30 a.m. VCE - Succulents and Cacti 101 (Zoom)
- 22 Oct. Ribbon Cutting at new Plot Against Hunger garden with NVCT
- 24 Oct. 7:30 a.m.-11 a.m. Gleaning at area farms with Plot Against Hunger.
- 24 Oct. Causes and Cocktails with Volunteer Arlington
- 25 Oct. Charity night at Sushi Zen
- 27 Oct. 10:00-11:30 a.m. VCE - Science & Mythos: Plant Names & the Science Behind Them (Zoom)
- 31 Oct. 7:30 a.m.-11 a.m. Gleaning at area farms with Plot Against Hunger.

MONTH OF OCTOBER

"The Pluviophile" Exhibit. At Gallery Underground, 2100 Crystal Drive, Crystal City, Arlington. Artist Barry Barnett Keith's art exhibit in honor of his older sister's recent passing. Keith is a graduate of Alexandria City School (T.C. Williams) and a native Alexandrian with a good following in the area. He is an educator and mentor (21 years teaching art and design) in Prince George's County Schools. A reception will be held Oct. 6 from 5-7 p.m.

CHECK OUT THE PLANT CLINICS!

The Arlington Central Library Plant Clinic at 1015 N Quincy St, Arlington operates on Wednesdays from 6:00 - 7:45 pm. The Alexandria Old Town Farmer's Market Plant Clinic at 301 King St, Alexandria operates on Saturdays from 7:00 - 9:30 am. The Arlington Farmers' Market at N 14th and N Courthouse Roads operates on Saturdays from 8:00 - 11:00 am. The Del Ray Farmers' Market Plant Clinic at Oxford & Mt. Vernon Avenues, Alexandria operates on Saturdays from 8:30 - 11:00 am. The Fairlington Farmers' Market Plant Clinic at 3308 S Stafford St, Arlington, operates on Sundays from 9:00 - 11:00 am.

SEPT. 29 TO NOV. 5

"The Tell-Tale Heart." At Synetic Theater, Arlington. Step into the eerie world of Edgar Allan Poe's *The Tell-Tale Heart*, where madness takes hold and the boundaries of sanity blur. In this twisted tale, an eccentric old man and his caretaker embark on a lethal dance that spirals into madness and murder. With dark humor and a haunting atmosphere, Synetic invites you to question: who is the crazy one? Visit www.synetictheater.org for dates and showtimes.

FRIDAY/OCT. 13

Soil Building for Healthier, Happier Gardens. 10:00 - 11:30 a.m. Online. Soil building is the #1 way to help you have the garden of your dreams. Protecting and nurtur-

SEE CALENDAR, PAGE 7

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Legals

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Secoya Inc trading as Zavaletas Mariscos Bar, 77 N Glebe Rd, Arlington, VA 22203-3703. The above establishment is applying to the VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGE CONTROL (ABC) AUTHORITY for a Mixed Beverage Restaurant license to sell or manufacture alcoholic beverages. Ronald Hernandez, President. NOTE: Objections to the issuance of this license must be submitted to ABC no later than 30 days from the publishing date of the first of two required newspaper legal notices. Objections should be registered at www.abc.virginia.gov or (800) 552-3200.

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-Werner Heisenberg

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The Connection to Your Community
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NEWS

Pet Dental Care

FROM PAGE 4

consume the food they need to, dry or canned, without any teeth. You are going to provide them with the food they need, and they will eat because they know they must consume food in order to survive. Based on my 30 years of experience, it's better for pets to have fewer teeth to no teeth than to have a painful mouth."

Myth #5: Clean, white teeth mean good oral health.

You can't judge a book by its cover, and you certainly can't judge what's going on in an animal's mouth based on their pearly whites (or not-so-pearly whites).

"Just because teeth look healthy doesn't mean they are healthy," Dr. Hall said. "Most problems happen at or below the gum line. It's more

SEE PET DENTAL CARE, PAGE 7

The Arlington Connection

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ENTERTAINMENT

FROM PAGE 5

ing soil health should be an annual priority of all gardeners. No matter if you want to grow blue-ribbon vegetables or prize-winning perennials, finding ways to add organic matter to your soil and understanding how to respond to soil test results will pay dividends in healthier, more pest- and disease-resistant landscapes. Kirsten Conrad, Extension Agent for Arlington and the City of Alexandria will provide you with tips and tricks for improving existing garden beds and building new ones. Free. RSVP at <http://mgnv.org/rsvp-for-public-education-classes/> to receive a link to participate.

SATURDAY/OCT. 14

TSS Fall Open House. 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. At The Sycamore School, 1550 Wilson Blvd., Suite 300, Arlington. They welcome prospective students and their families to come and explore the expanded and modern facility in Rosslyn. The knowledgeable staff, along with students and parents, will be on hand to guide you through and answer any questions you may have. Website: <https://thesycamoreschoolva.org/>

Pet Dental Care

FROM PAGE 4

than a quick look to see if a tooth is dirty. It is how the gums are reacting to the microscopic bacteria within the biofilm of the plaque. An animal can have everything looking clean, but the gums are still inflamed due to a hypersensitivity to the bacteria containing biofilm on the plaque.”

He said he’s seen dogs with perfectly clean, white-looking teeth that are dead or have advanced periodontal disease.

Recommendations To Optimize Your Pet’s Oral Health

Just like with humans, dogs and cats who never have issues in their mouth without intervention are in the minority. However, there are actions you can take to keep your pets happy with (or without) their teeth.

First, brushing your pet’s teeth every day is undoubtedly a good preventative measure against oral problems.

“Brushing teeth with a bristled toothbrush will have the most impact on slowing down the buildup of plaque and calculus,” Dr. Hall explained, clarifying that calculus (tartar) cannot be brushed off.

He said he recommended products approved by the Veterinary Oral Health Council. These can be found on the organization’s website, www.VOHC.org.

While brushing teeth is an excellent habit to get into, professionals do acknowledge that in some cases, brushing a pet’s teeth at all – let alone regularly – is impossible.

“Brushing is hard to get in the habit of,” Dr. Ungerer said. “We have wonderful clients in Arlington and many are doing a great job at home care; however, some dogs and especially cats are resistant to brushing. Even in my household, regular brushing is a challenge – and definitely is not happening with my cat.”

Enter professional examinations and cleanings, which all pet owners should pursue for their animals, even if regular brushing does happen, the professionals say.

“The COHAT should be done once a year,” Dr. Hall said. “Every time you get images of an animal’s mouth – full imagery of 30 teeth for cats and 42 for dogs – you have a stop time image. Then you have something to compare to down the line as issues either

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SATURDAY/OCT. 14

Teen Night. 7-10 p.m. At Lubber Run Community Center in Arlington. This is a free and fun event for all middle and high school teens, so join us for sports, games, art projects, and more! Check out critters from the nature centers, eat some snacks, and hang out with friends.

SUNDAY/OCT. 15

Festival Latinoamericano. 1-5 p.m. At Arlington Mill Community Center, Arlington. The festival will include a full array of live music and dance, great local vendors, interactive children’s entertainment, delicious food, and exciting community spirit. Free.

TUESDAYS, OCT. 17, 24, 31

Simpson Park Demonstration Gardens, Tuesdays @ 10. 10:00 - 11:30 a.m., Simpson Demonstration Gardens, 420 E. Monroe Ave, Alexandria. Meet and talk with Extension Master Gardeners in the Simpson Demonstration Gardens to learn the best uses for fallen leaves and other organic garden waste. Free.

arise or progress.”

When professional cleanings are required, they should be performed with the pet under anesthesia.

“Anesthesia-free teeth cleaning is nonsense – completely ineffective,” Dr. Hall said. “Proper cleaning occurs at and below the gum line which cannot adequately be done on an awake animal.”

Dr. Hall said he also encourages you to ask every question you have of your veterinary professionals. As he stated, nothing is life or death regarding teeth, and you are your pet’s advocate.

“People should be informed consumers, so ask questions of your veterinarians and veterinary dentists,” Dr. Hall said. “Don’t ever let a veterinarian tell you that you ‘need to’ do something – let them make recommendations. I never mind people asking questions. I can’t guarantee the outcome of anything I do, and I want people to feel as good as they can in their heads, hearts, and bellies with my recommendations.”

Another tip: know your dog’s genetic makeup because heredity plays the biggest role in periodontal health. Knowing what diseases to which your pet is predisposed can help you identify issues before they become too problematic. Anticipating certain issues will also help you plan and budget for them.

Finally, do not let the cost of procedures stand in your way of pursuing sound oral health for your pet.

Professionals often provide payment plans and other financing options, and oral care is critical. Teeth are windows into the health of the rest of the body.

“Bacteria and inflammation that build-up in the mouth can cause not just significant issues locally, but also can affect other body systems,” Dr. Ungerer said. “Though rare, bacteria can spread elsewhere in the body and cause systemic illness – such as in the heart. Less uncommonly, we can see dental disease affecting respiratory symptoms. As an example, I have a patient whose chronic cough we have been managing for the past year with steroids to suppress inflammation in the lungs. After a dental extraction of several infected teeth, his cough has entirely resolved and he’s off medication.”

For the same reasons you wouldn’t ignore your own dental health, you shouldn’t overlook your pet’s.

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CENTRE VIEW

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.

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Not Funny or Fun



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

Rather, somber, and sad. Today, Sept. 23, I went to the cemetery to visit my parents. It is my deceased father's birthday. Born in 1919, he died in early Dec. 2006. He was a great father and my biggest booster. I miss him terribly, and for you regular readers, he's not totally unfamiliar to you as I often invoke his memory with miscellaneous memories/anecdotes. My mother lies beside him at the cemetery, having died almost exactly two years later to the day in early Dec. as well, in 2008. (As it coincidentally happened, my brother Richard died on the same day as my mother had 14 years before.)

Which brings me to the point/feeling behind this column being written. As of this past Dec. when Richard died, I am now the sole survivor of the immediate family of which I had been a part. With Richard's passing, today's visit was my first to the cemetery without any back-up. Previously, my brother or myself – or both, would make sure our parents were remembered on their birthdays with on-site visits (though we often remember them as we recall a lifetime of memories). But I'm by myself now. There will likely be no other visitors to my parent's gravesite (my brother was cremated) for their lives, as in their friends and family, were either in Massachusetts where they were born, or Florida when they moved south to retire. We moved them to Maryland – while they were still healthy, for them to be closer to us so we'd all be together.

Since neither Richard nor I had children, I really am the last in – and of, a line, extending back who knows how many generations in Russia/the former Baltic States. I only know about my grandparents, and not that much. Records of Jewish births and deaths were hardly respected and protected administratively in the former USSR. With Richard's death, yours truly (our respective wives notwithstanding, as I'm genetically referring here to blood relations) become the go-to-because-everyone-else-is-gone person (immediate family members).

And not that I haven't felt lonely since my brother died, last Dec. 3rd, but in visiting my parents today for the first time since then his passing, I really felt his loss since I am now the last man standing, so to speak. Richard wouldn't be coming by and leaving flowers as he often did, so it was just me – and my thoughts. And as I stood over my parent's graves, wishing my father a Happy Birthday and talking about Richard, his loss became even deeper than I had felt it previously. The reality of it his death hit me harder than it has in months. I'm all that's left.

This feeling, which manifests regularly, especially since my brother and I share so many interests and attitudes; none more than cancer as he had been diagnosed with colon cancer a few months before he died (and yet another subject we had in common; I have thyroid cancer) enveloped me at the gravesite. There I am standing over my parent's graves, talking about my brother having died; and the finality of our family's existence and of my position in it as being the sole survivor of the Louries (or whatever my paternal grandfather's names in the former USSR, was before he immigrated), after hundreds of years and who knows how many generations spanning across however many countries, nearly took my breath away. Heavy duty, man.

To summarize: once I was diagnosed with cancer in 2009 and given a “terminal” diagnosis (stage IV lung cancer), I never thought my brother would predecease me, even though he was almost five years older me. And I had certain feeling of security knowing I would/could always be able to count on my brother, especially since he was my second biggest booster – after my father. And now, having to live the rest of my life without the backstop of all backstops will be extremely challenging, and very unfamiliar. Losing the resource that you count on and rely upon the most, is more than just upsetting the applecart; it's destroying it. It's not exactly how I anticipated living the rest of my life. I'll just have to make the best of a bad situation. My brother wouldn't expect any less. And I certainly have no intention of disappointing him in death any more than I would in life.

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



Her quilt depicting the Woodlawn Quaker Meeting House, site of an anti-slavery colony and some of Sims's ancestors.



The Door of No Return in Senegal where Africans were warehoused, sold into slavery and shipped across the Atlantic.



A quilt portraying the U.S. Supreme Court's Brown v. Board of Education decision.

Her Art Quilts Tell Stories

BY GLENDA C. BOOTH
ARLINGTON CONNECTION

After Sheryl Sims got bored with traditional quilting, she started making story quilts and found her calling. "I paint with fabric. I quilt what is in my heart and mind," she explained at an Oct. 2 opening reception attracting 94 admirers.

Until Dec. 31, Woodlawn and Pope-Leighey House are displaying 63 of her story quilts in a free exhibit titled "Story Quilts, Inspired by Family and Faith." Quilt sizes vary, with many around 20 by 30 inches and each recounts her family history, her faith or an African-American historical event.

She does machine quilting with raw edge appliqué. She often uses colorful fabrics and eschews patterns. Sims enjoys the creativity, what she calls "the no-rules approach." She can make a story quilt in one day.

Stitching her family history evolved from her efforts to join the Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR), an organization that requires one "to prove lineal, bloodline descent from an ancestor who aided in achieving American independence," says the DAR website. The daughter of a military officer, Sims had lived all over the world and knew little about her ancestors beyond her great-grandparents. In six years of research, she traced ten generations, complicated by scant records for the enslaved people in her



Sheryl Sims, quilt artist.

background. She found an ancestor who contributed money to the cause, a White, sixth great-grandfather. "I did not find a patriot of color," she says. She joined the DAR in 2022.

Her Stories

Several quilts portray members of her

family, including her parents. One depicts her second great-grandmother, Chancy Tillman, an enslaved Louisiana woman who was freed and lived to age 100. Another portrays the Hollingsworth family reunion. Valentine Hollingsworth, her maternal great-grandfather, came to America from Ireland with William Penn.

Presentation on Quilts

On Nov. 4 at 4 p.m., Sheryl Sims will make a presentation about her quilts. Visit <http://www.woodlawnpopeleighey.org/upcoming-events>.

Especially poignant are the African-American history quilts, like a scene depicting the 1968 assassination of Reverend Martin Luther King at Memphis, Tennessee's Lorraine Motel. Another shows Rosa Parks on a Montgomery, Alabama bus, titled "Rosa Parks Takes a Seat." In 1955, Parks refused to give up her seat to a White man as the law required.

One quilt portrays the 1954 U.S. Supreme Court decision, Brown v. Board of Education, which found that public school racial segregation was unconstitutional.

Another relates the horrors of Goree Island, Senegal's "Door of No Return." According to the African American Registry, "Goree Island was a slave-holding warehouse, an absolute center for the trade of African men, women and children. Millions of West Africans were taken against their will. Many of these Africans were brought to Goree Island, sold into slavery and held in the holding warehouse on the island until they were shipped across the Atlantic Ocean."

"Hope" greets arriving exhibit visitors, created after former U.S. Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg died in 2020. It recalls the day Sims joined a diverse crowd at the U.S. Supreme Court building and reflects Ginsburg's spirit. "She wouldn't want everyone out here crying. She would want us to maintain hope," Sims believes.

Two quilts highlight local landmarks, the Woodlawn Quaker Meeting House and Alexandria's Christ Church.

"Here at Woodlawn, we are in the midst of a transition as we endeavor to better tell the full history," said Shawn Halifax, Woodlawn's Executive Director. "We are engaging with our community to preserve history at this former site of enslavement, and I cannot think of a more appropriate way to do this than collaborating with Sheryl on this exhibit."

Sims lives in the Manchester Lakes area of Fairfax County and is legal secretary in a Washington, D. C., firm.



The slaying of Reverend Martin Luther King in 1968.



Rosa Parks refusing to give up her seat on a public bus in 1955.