

The Arlington Connection

Bonds of Service, an event in support of the National Service Animals Monument, took place at Arlington National Cemetery, Military Women's Memorial, home to The Pledge, a life-sized bronze statue of a female servicemember and her dog, by sculptor Susan Bahary.



"LET THE GENERATIONS KNOW THAT WOMEN IN UNIFORM ALSO GUARANTEED THEIR FREEDOM. THAT OUR RESOLVE WAS JUST AS GREAT AS THE BRAVE MEN WHO STAND AMONG US. AND WITH VICTORY, OUR HEARTS WERE JUST AS FULL AND BEAT JUST AS FAST - THAT THE TEARS FELL JUST AS HARD FOR THOSE WE LEFT BEHIND."

ANNE SOSH BREHM, 1LT, U.S. ARMY NURSE CORPS, WWII

Getting Ready
For 250th

PAGE 2

Honoring Service
Animals of Many Types

PAGE 4

PHOTO CONTRIBUTED
SENIOR LIVING, PAGE 6, 15 ❖ ENTERTAINMENT, PAGE 13 ❖ CLASSIFIED, PAGE 14

March Is Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month

Don't wait: 45 is the recommended age for first colonoscopies for people with average risk.

By EDEN BROWN
THE CONNECTION

After an Arlington man in his 80s died of colon cancer, undiagnosed until his intestines were blocked completely, his widow got his genetic testing done and he tested positive for two variants on the chromosome that can increase susceptibility to colon cancer.

An email went out to his six adult children: get a colonoscopy. They did, except for one. Two (in their thirties) had polyps; three had nothing, and the last of the six children did not get a colonoscopy. He said he was okay because he used a test that measures blood in the stool. And he had no symptoms.

There was always some reason for not doing it — Covid, or insurance issues, or his belief that he was okay because of the non-invasive test results.

Finally, 9 years after his father died of the disease, he got a colonoscopy. Result? Stage 3 colon cancer. He now tells people: “Don't wait.”

March is Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month. MedStar Health recently conducted a national survey to learn what people know about colon health:

- ❖ 77% do not know the correct age for when to get your first colonoscopy (45 is the recommended age for colonoscopies for people with average risk)

- ❖ 75% do not know how often to get a colonoscopy (every 10 years for people with average risk)

- ❖ 47% believe you need a colonoscopy every 5 years

- ❖ Just 13% can identify all symptoms of colorectal cancer

- ❖ 36% of adults who are 45+ have not

had a colonoscopy

- ❖ The most common reason for delaying a colonoscopy is because they have no family history (40%).

Nikiya Asamoah, MD, a board-certified gastroenterologist affiliated with MedStar Washington Hospital Center responded to questions about colonoscopies and colorectal health:

Q.: Arlington Connection (AC): Isn't it correct that you should have a colonoscopy every five years?

A.: Dr. Asamoah: Not necessarily. The frequency of colonoscopy is based on your own risk factors, such as family history of cancers or personal history of inflammatory bowel conditions as well as how many polyps were found on your colonoscopy. Some people require colonoscopy every 1-3 years, while others can go 10 years if they have no risk factors or polyps.

Q.: What is the updated guidance on colonoscopy prep?

A.: Dr. Asamoah: The new guidelines for bowel prep recommend that patients can eat a light meal for breakfast 1 day prior to colonoscopy, which eliminates the long fasting period. Additionally, they suggest that patients should be offered low volume (2L) bowel prep instead of the standard 4L prep.

Q.: Is it the processed food that people eat, the microplastics in our environment, or our more sedentary lifestyle that is causing all this colon cancer?

A.: Dr. Asamoah: Likely all of the above. Many environmental factors and genetics contribute to the risk of colon cancer. It is recommended that people eat a well bal-

anced diet with regular fruits/vegetables, lean proteins and a healthy lifestyle with regular aerobic exercise.

Q.: Is the Cologuard test good enough to detect colon cancer?

A.: Dr. Asamoah: The Cologuard test is a great screening test for colon cancer with a >90% sensitivity for picking up cancer if it is there.

Q.: Is a family history of polyps enough to schedule more frequent colonoscopies?

A.: Dr. Asamoah: No. Your family history often dictates when you should start getting colonoscopies. Future colonoscopies are based on the findings of your own colonoscopy or if you have family history of colon cancer or cancer syndrome.

Q.: People say age 40 is the new age for a first colonoscopy. Is that wrong?

A.: Dr. Asamoah: Yes, it is wrong. 45 is the recommended age for first colonoscopy for individuals that are NOT high risk for colon cancer.

Q.: What is the single most frequent reason people say they delayed getting a colonoscopy?

A.: Dr. Asamoah: Concerns about the bowel prep or concerns about having anesthesia.

Q.: Is colon cancer more frequently diagnosed among African Americans and why is that?

A.: Dr. Asamoah: Yes, it is true that African Americans have a higher incidence of colorectal cancer than most other racial and ethnic groups. There are multiple factors that contribute including health and socioeconomic disparities.

Q.: Any other ethnic group where it is more frequent or less frequent?

A.: Dr. Asamoah: American Indian and Alaskan Native people have the highest incidence while Asian/Pacific Islanders have the lowest incidence according to American Cancer Society 2025 estimates.

Q.: Is it true that just taking fiber gummies won't really give you the right kind of fiber to provide colon health?

A.: Dr. Asamoah: That is true. Fiber gummies often have excess sugar or sweeteners and not a significant amount of fiber. Fruits and green leafy vegetables are the best sources of soluble and insoluble fiber.

March became Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month in the year 2000. In addition to the above guidance, spreading the word about preventing colorectal cancer by asking friends and relatives if they have had their colonoscopy, and following this guidance about alcohol, smoking and symptom awareness will also go a long way to bringing down the alarming rise in colorectal cancer diagnoses.

- ❖ Healthy Habits: Reduce risks by eating a high-fiber diet with fruits/vegetables, limiting red/processed meats, limiting alcohol, and avoiding smoking.

- ❖ Watch for Symptoms: Consult a doctor if you experience persistent changes in bowel habits, blood in stool, unexplained weight loss, or abdominal pain.

- ❖ Wear Blue: Support the Colorectal Cancer Alliance and wear blue to raise awareness.

For more information about colorectal health, see: Colorectal Cancer Alliance <https://colorectalcancer.org/>

Historic Preservation Along Memorial Avenue Corridor

The National Park Service will begin historic preservation work along the Memorial Avenue Corridor on March 19, 2026, with work expected to continue through mid-to late May.

This effort advances President Donald J. Trump's executive order, "Making the District of Columbia Safe and Beautiful," and reflects a broader commitment to preserving the nation's most significant memorial landscapes, according to a National Park Service release. The project ensures these historic resources are protected, restored, and ready to be showcased as the United States approaches its 250th anniversary.

Crews will clean the Boundary Channel Bridge, repair deteriorating mortar, and restore key commemorative features, including the Seabees Memorial, the United Spanish War Veterans Memo-

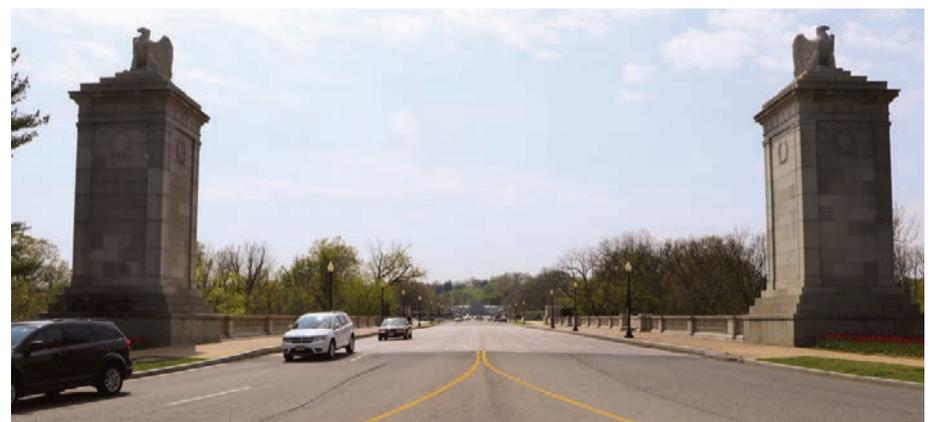
rial, and granite elements along the bridge and at Memorial Circle. Work will also focus on the structural bases supporting the iconic eagle statues.

Traffic and Pedestrian Impacts

The work will affect pedestrian access on the bridge and vehicle traffic under it.

Drivers will encounter lane closures on Washington Boulevard and the southbound George Washington Memorial Parkway under the bridge. Crews will close lanes during off-peak hours, from 9:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m., to reduce commuter impacts, and will close half of the travel lanes at a time so they can work safely. Traffic control and signs will guide drivers through the area. Crews will clean the bridge with hot water, and it may drip or spray onto passing vehicles. No chemicals will be used, and water will not harm paint.

Crews will temporarily reroute pedes-



NPS PHOTO

Cars drive beneath the iconic eagles on the George Washington Memorial Parkway.

trians across Boundary Channel Bridge to crosswalks along Memorial Avenue between the Arlington National Cemetery Metro Station and Memorial Circle.

Drivers and pedestrians should use cau-

tion and follow posted signs and directions from traffic personnel.

For updates on George Washington Memorial Parkway, visit www.nps.gov/gwmp.

Do These Districts Have a Future?

Two locals battle for a possible new Democratic seat in Congress.

BY MERCIA HOBSON
THE CONNECTION

A political thriller is unfolding across Northern Virginia's power corridor, stretching from Arlington through the south-central and eastern parts of Fairfax County, and into the sprawling commuter hubs of the I-95 corridor. It involves a high-stakes constitutional showdown with national implications and congressional districts that might not exist in a month.

Former first lady Dorothy McAuliffe and Del. Dan Helmer, both of Fairfax County, will vie (along with others) for the 7th district Congressional nomination if voters approve the out-of-turn redistricting. Early voting for the April 21 ballot is already underway.

While currently, Fairfax County, Arlington County and the City of Alexandria, rich in Democrats and population, are represented by (parts of) three of Virginia's 11 Congressional Districts, 8, 10 and 11, proposed redistricting would add parts of two more districts, Districts 1 and 7. Spreading out rather than concentrating those votes could change the party balance in the U.S. House of Representatives.

The battleground is the proposed 7th Congressional District; the western part of the district reaches into the deeply red rural Shenandoah Valley and Southside Virginia, the eastern part the Democratic suburbs of Arlington and Fairfax, which hold most of the voting-age population.

In recent elections, many of the Shenandoah Valley and Southside Virginia counties voted for Republican candidates by margins as high as 70% to 80%.

The Gubernatorial Split

The advent of the McAuliffe-Helmer contest has created an unusual rift between former Gov. Ralph Northam and former first lady Pamela Northam. Ralph Northam is featured prominently on Helmer's campaign website under Endorsements. Pamela Northam is said to be backing McAuliffe.

Still, this version of the 7th District exists only if voters approve a constitutional amendment referendum on April 21, 2026. If the referendum fails, these maps vanish — and with them, the current campaigns.

The Candidates

McAuliffe, a McLean resident and former State Department official, is the wife of former Gov. Terry McAuliffe. She launched her campaign last week with a focus on regional



SCREENSHOT VIA WIKIPEDIA
Dorothy McAuliffe (D)



SCREENSHOT VIA DANHELMER.COM
Dan Helmer (D)

Explanation for PROPOSED Constitutional Amendment to Be Voted On at the April 21, 2026 Special Election

BALLOT QUESTION:

Should the Constitution of Virginia be amended to allow the General Assembly to temporarily adopt new congressional districts to restore fairness in the upcoming elections, while ensuring Virginia's standard redistricting process resumes for all future redistricting after the 2030 census?

<https://www.elections.virginia.gov/media/electionadministration/election-law/4-21-2026-Special-Election-Explanation--Text.pdf>

connectivity. "I look forward to traveling this district — from Arlington to Augusta — and sharing a vision for this community," McAuliffe said in her announcement.

Helmer, who lives in Clifton, is an Army veteran and small business leader who currently serves as the vice chair of the House Democratic Caucus. He is leaning into a coalition of local delegates and veterans.

Battle of the Backers

The primary has become a contest of institutional influence versus local legislative ties.

Dorothy McAuliffe boasts the endorsement of Nancy Pelosi, who said, "Dorothy has never backed down from the fights that matter." Other key supporters include State Sen. L. Louise Lucas, former House Speaker Eileen Filler-Corn, and Anne Holton, the wife of Sen. Tim Kaine.

For Dan Helmer, supporters emphasize his effectiveness in Richmond. Del. Vivian Watts noted that Helmer "works on the hard details that matter."

Former GOP Rep. Denver Riggleman,

who now considers himself an independent, called Helmer "exactly the leader Virginia needs in this fight."

Also backing Helmer is Del. Garrett McGuire, who said, "I'm proud to have worked alongside him this session on gun violence prevention measures that will make Virginia safer for everyone."

Yes or No?

On Jan. 16, 2026, the General Assembly passed a proposed constitutional amendment (HJ 4) which would allow the legislature to redraw congressional districts, temporarily, mid-decade, if approved by voters. The amendment stipulated that the off-cycle redistricting could only be adopted if any other state adopted a redistricting outside of the 10 year cycle. It further stipulated that use of the out-of-cycle partisan method would be temporary. The method used would again return to the non-partisan commission led effort following the 2030 census.

The redistricting amendment, sponsored by Del. Rodney Willett (D-58), was moved

forward through the General Assembly by its Democratic majority, with voting along party lines, and was signed by Gov. Abigail Spanberger (D).

The special session and redrawing proposal was in response to the White House calling for heavily Republican states to engage in redistricting to increase the number of GOP seats in the U.S. House of Representatives.

Voter's Timeline

Early in-person voting for the April 21 referendum is already underway and continues through Saturday, April 18. Voters must go to an early voting site in the locality where they are registered.

Fairfax County Locations:

❖ Fairfax County Government Center: Open now (Mon–Fri, 8 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.) [Source: Fairfax County Government].

❖ Satellite Locations (Opening April 11): Burke Centre Library, Mason Governmental Center (Annandale), West Springfield Governmental Center, McLean Governmental Center, and Tysons-Pimmit Regional Library (Falls Church).

❖ Hours for Satellites: Mon–Fri, 1 p.m. – 7 p.m.; Saturdays, 9 a.m. – 5 p.m.

Arlington County Locations:

❖ Courthouse Plaza (2100 Clarendon Blvd): Open now (Mon–Fri, 9 a.m. – 5 p.m.)

❖ Satellite Locations (Opening April 11): Madison Community Center (N. Stafford St.) and Walter Reed Community Center (16th St. S.).

❖ Extended Hours: These sites will stay open until 7 p.m. on Tuesday, April 14, and Thursday, April 16

Key Dates to Remember

Referendum

❖ April 10: Last day to request a mail-in ballot (5 p.m.).

❖ April 18: Final day for early in-person voting.

❖ April 21: Referendum Day – Polls open 6 a.m. to 7 p.m., voters go to assigned precinct. [Source: Virginia Dept. of Elections].

Congress

District Boundaries will depend on whether Yes or No won the referendum.

❖ May 26: Candidate filing deadline for Congressional Districts.

❖ June 18: Early in-person voting begins for the primary.

❖ August 4: Primary Election Day.

BULLETIN BOARD

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

VOLUNTEER DRIVERS NEEDED

Have some extra time to drive a neighbor

to a doctor's appointment? You pick the days, times, and places that are convenient for you. There is NO MINIMUM driving requirement. Not only do you help older adults in need, you also get to meet wonderful folks, often with very interesting backgrounds and stories to tell. The Shepherd's Center of McLean-Arlington-Falls Church

(SCMAFC), is an all-volunteer, non-sectarian, non-profit organization. Its mission is providing free transportation to seniors for medical and dental appointments or run errands to grocery stores and pharmacies. To sign up, visit the website at <https://scmaf.org/volunteer>, or email contact@scmaf.org with questions.

DONATIONS NEEDED

Pet Food Bank. AWLA has established a Pet Food Bank to serve qualifying residents of Arlington County and the City of Falls Church. In consideration of the effect financial obstacles have on a pet owner's

SEE BULLETIN, PAGE 5

Planning for National Service Animals Monument

Approved by
Congress in
2022.

BY ASHLEY SIMPSON
ARLINGTON CONNECTION

There is something uncontroversially unifying in the works, a national monument coming to the D.C. area that will honor all types of service animals of the past, present, and future.

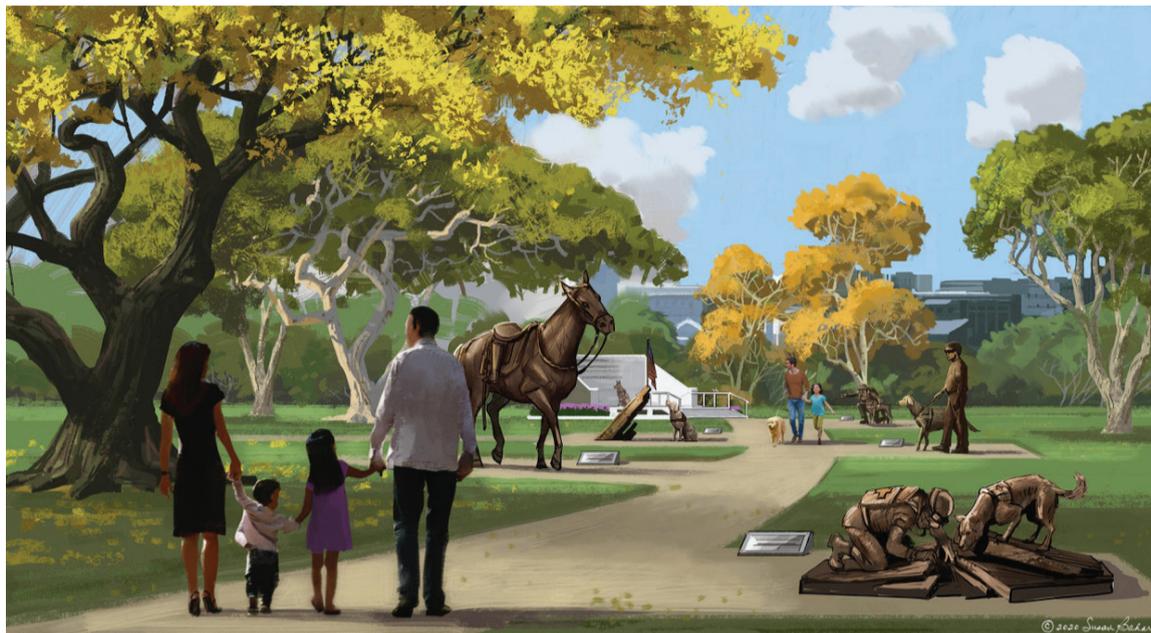
World-renowned sculptor Susan Bahary and the rest of the National Service Animals Monument (NSAM) team, a non-profit organization, have been working for years to bring this powerful tribute to Washington D.C. Groups are still finalizing the monument's precise location and the artistic design and concept. But one thing is for sure: the monument will represent the unbreakable bond between humans and all the animals that have served as part of the U.S. armed services.

"I realized several years ago that we really needed to have national recognition for these service animals and our handlers because they represent our greatest American values," Bahary said. "Those of service, sacrifice, courage, and duty, that's the overarching theme of our monument. It will honor the human-animal bond and what they have been able to do to shape our nation's history, from all the deeds and services and sacrifices since George Washington's horses all the way through the dolphins that help patrol our borders today."

The National Service Animals Monument will also honor the service animals who work stateside to support veterans with PTSD and other challenges.

This week, the NSAM officially invited the public to be part of bringing this monument to life. Along with title sponsor U.S. War Dogs Association, a non-profit organization that supports military dogs (and their handlers) from active duty through retirement, the NSAM hosted the inaugural Bonds of Service event in Arlington, Virginia.

The Bonds of Service event kicked off fundraising and bringing awareness to the coming National Service Animals Monument.



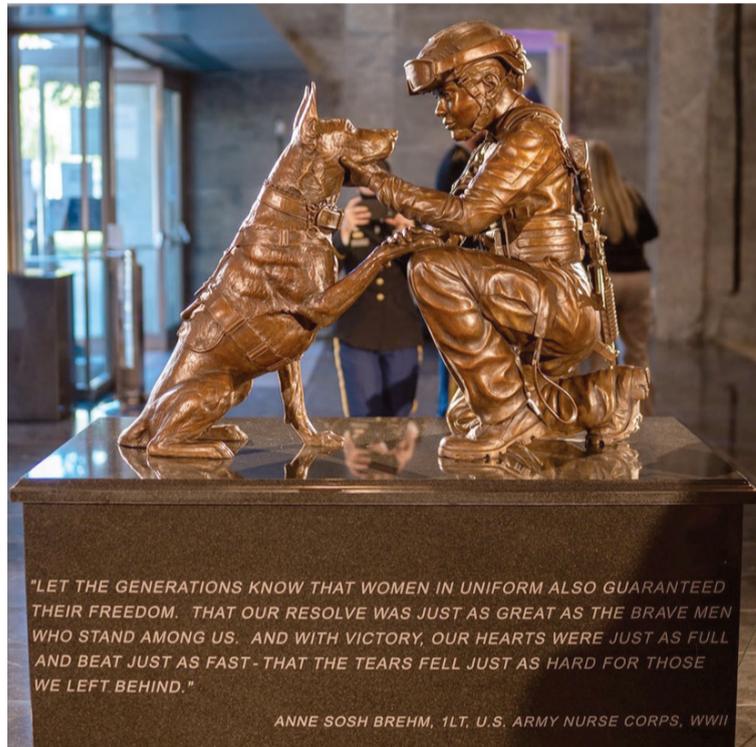
Rendering of National Service Animals Monument.

"This is the first event that NSAM has done in the D.C. area, and I am so excited about it because it will be a microcosm of what our monument represents, bringing people together in the way that the monument will," Bahary said. "It's a labor of love for everyone involved."

Bonds of Service took place at the Military Women's Memorial, home to The Pledge, a life-sized bronze statue of a female servicemember and her dog, which Bahary was commissioned to sculpt in 2020.

The event coincides with National K9 Veterans Day on March 13, so it focused on service dogs. It brought together more than 30 K9 teams, dedicated pairs of dogs and human handlers who have served the U.S. military.

"The goal is to get our key supporters and service animal networks together in one room so everyone can truly hear the vision of what's to come," Chris Willingham, 20-year U.S. Marine Corps veteran and President of U.S. War Dogs, said. Willingham remembers his own late service dog, Lucca, who risked her life to detect explosives and serve hundreds of Marine



The Bonds of Service event took place at Arlington National Cemetery, at the Military Women's Memorial, home to The Pledge, a life-sized bronze statue of a female servicemember and her dog, which sculptor Susan Bahary was commissioned to sculpt in 2020.

people who appreciate the value of what these military animals do for us both overseas and at home.

K9s; it'll be great to get everyone on the same page."

The event opened with a wreath-laying ceremony at The Pledge statue, where 19 participants paid heartfelt tribute to the K9s they served alongside. Following a series of speakers, the reception featured a performance by the Quantico Marine Quintet.

All ticket sales proceeds are going toward the building of the national monument, which Bahary expects to be completed, dedicated, and ready for the public to enjoy within the next five years.

"We are really launching our capital campaign now, so we invite the entire country to join us in any way they can, whether through their time, treasure, talents, or

simply by spreading the word," she said. "We want as many people involved, across the whole country, as possible."

This monument was approved by Congress in 2022 with bipartisan support. Veterans who have had the honor of serving alongside animals see it as long overdue homage.

"When you have the chance to build a monument in our nation's capital to honor these working dogs, you take it," Willingham said. "This aligns perfectly with our mission. These animals do so much for so many, speaking as someone who has served overseas. They are truly special, and seeing them finally get the national recognition and awareness they deserve is something we are incredibly proud to be part of."

Bahary knows just how rewarding this work is, having created not only The Pledge, but also the country's first ever war dog monument, Always Faithful, whose home is at the National War Dog Cemetery at the U.S. Naval Base Guam.

A lifelong animal lover whose dogs were some of her earliest muses, Bahary said Always Faithful was the project that opened her eyes to the untold story of service animals, who don't get pensions, promotions or Purple Hearts.

"With that statue in 1994, I realized the profound bond and bravery of our war dog teams," Bahary said. "They are critical to our nation's history. Honoring them became a calling for me — it is an incredibly worthy cause to raise awareness for the incredible work and sacrifice of all who serve."

This will be a fantastic monument for anyone to visit, for people to learn about the sacrifices that they likely never read about in textbooks. It will also be a powerful reminder of the impenetrable bond between all humans and their animals.

"This monument will be about two things, honor and education," Willingham said. "I'm excited to have D.C. have a place that represents all the thousands of animals who have provided some type of service to this country. I envision somewhere people can walk through and spend time with their loved ones, including their animals, and grow in appreciation for those who have served our nation. A spot that will make you want to go home and hug your dog a little tighter. It'll be a wonderful addition."

To learn more on how to support the monument, visit: <https://nationalserviceanimalsmonument.org/bonds-of-service-national-tribute/>.

WWW.CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM

We need to have "national recognition for these service animals and our handlers because they represent our greatest American values. Those of service, sacrifice, courage, and duty, that's the overarching theme of our monument."

— Sculptor Susan Bahary

Corps missions in the Middle East.

Willingham added, "This event is going to be special because you're bringing in like-minded

I think it's going to be a great launching point to garner support and elevate awareness. We'll be there with several multipurpose

BULLETIN BOARD

FROM PAGE 3

ability to afford pet care, the AWLA Pet Food Bank program's goal is to keep family pets out of shelters. If you are an Arlington County or City of Falls Church resident and are in need of assistance in feeding your pet, follow this link and fill out a pre-registration form. Visit goo.gl/forms/s2FuFdaYWdZm4tPw2.

Donations Needed. Our Lady Queen of Peace Catholic Church, 2700 South 19th St., is seeking to replenish its food pantry. Particularly needed are rice (large bags appreciated, the pantry will rebag), dry beans, canned vegetables, soup, small jars of peanut butter, small jars of jelly, pasta and pasta sauce. Donations are collected during Mass each Sunday. Visit www.ourladyqueenofpeace.org for more.

<cal1>Ongoing

<cal2>Create a Wildlife Sanctuary. The Audubon at Home Wildlife Sanctuary certification program assists homeowners in restoring their home's natural habitat by providing information on sustainable gardening practices. These practices include using native plants, removing invasive species, reducing use of pesticides and fertilizers, and creating space for native flora and fauna. Visit audubonva.org/audubon-at-home-1/ for more.

Naloxone (Narcan) can save the life of someone who is overdosing, if given in time. Anyone who assists a person in need is protected from liability by the Good Samaritan Law. Naloxone (Narcan) is available without a prescription for a fee at all pharmacies. Obtain it for free by attending a REVIVE! training. Contact Emily Siqueland at 703-228-0913 or esiqueland@arlingtonva.us or visit health.arlingtonva.us/opioid-awareness/ for available training sessions. The Chris Atwood Foundation also offers training to the public. Visit www.chrisatwoodfoundation.org/naloxone for details.

Monthly Memory Café. 1-3 p.m. at 7910 Andrus

Road, Suite 6, Alexandria. The Memory Café, a social gathering for individuals living with memory loss and their families, virtually. Registration is free and highly recommended to reserve spots, which are open on a first come first served basis. To reserve a spot, please call 571-210-5551 or email bdesai@seniorhelpers.com. Visit www.dementiacare-connections.com/memory-cafe or www.seniorhelpers.com/arlington-alexandria-va for more.

Aging Matters. 2-3 p.m. Tuesdays on WERA 96.7 LP FM on Arlington's community radio station. Each week host Cheryl Beversdorf interviews individuals with expertise about a broad array of aging related topics affecting the lives of older adults and their loved ones. Visit www.facebook.com/agingmatterswera to listen to programs. <https://www.mixcloud.com/AgingMatters/>

Volunteer Bike Repair Night. First Tuesday of the month, 6-9 p.m. at Phoenix Bikes, Barcroft Park, 4200 S. Four Mile Run Drive. Volunteers gather to refurbish bikes, sort parts or help with essential tasks. No experience necessary.

Public Financial Fraud, Waste and Abuse Hotline. Arlington County public hotline that offers a confidential and secure way to report suspected incidents of financial fraud, waste and abuse. Anyone can submit a complaint to the hotline at 1-866-565-9206 or at arlingtonva.ethicaladvocate.com. The hotline website is available in English and Spanish. Phone calls can be taken in many languages.

Created by the Arlington Initiative to Rethink Energy (AIRE) in partnership with the Arlington Public Library, the nation's First Energy Lending Library made its debut on Earth Day. Meant to resolve energy issues in the Arlington community, efficiency tools can be borrowed, such thermal imaging cameras, energy meters and books play a vital role in achieving a "greener" home. Open Sun-Sat

SEE BULLETIN, PAGE 7

**Your future.
Your care.
Our focus.**

RenalX

Introducing our onsite Hemodialysis Unit, in partnership with Nova Dialysis, providing advanced care and personalized services to meet all of your dialysis needs.

Clinical Capabilities

IV Antibiotics

Vent and Trach Dialysis

Short-Term Dialysis Management



Comprehensive Services Include

- Consultative Visits by On-Staff Nephrologists
- On-Site Cardiology & Pulmonary Rounding
- Health Coaching & Dietary Education
- Routine Medical Management of Co-Morbidities
- RenalX Monthly Support Group
- Dialysis Wing
- Dedicated Transport Aides
- Full Case Management Services
- 24/7 Guest Service



Woodbine
Rehabilitation & Healthcare Center

2729 King St, Alexandria, VA 22302
WoodbineRehab.com / 703.836.8838

www.connectionnewspapers.com/advertising

THE CONNECTION

Alexandria Gazette Packet Mount Vernon Gazette

Turn to the Connection Newspapers digital and print advertising options to reach customers in your community!

- EMAIL BLASTS
- DIGITAL BILLBOARDS
- FRONT PAGE SHOUTOUT
- SOCIAL MEDIA
- SPONSORED CONTENT

Target the right audience.

For Advertising: Call 703.778.9431 or Email sales@connectionnewspapers.com

Public Notice

Updated weight limits on Virginia bridges and culverts

In accord with state and federal law, the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) has imposed new or changed existing weight restrictions and installed new signage indicating the updated weight restrictions on the following bridges and culverts (structures) in Virginia within the last 30 days.

Jurisdiction	Fed Struc Id	Route #	Route Name	Crossing	Posted Date
GILES	8513	770	STEELE ACRES ROAD770	SINKING CREEK	2/24/2026
LOUDOUN	11332	722	LINCOLN ROAD	TRIBUTARY OF CROOKED RUN	2/13/2026
LOUDOUN	11379	831	YELLOW SCHOOLHOUSE	BRANCH OF BEAVERDAM CK	2/13/2026
BUCHANAN	29736	2207	RHONDA LESTER BRANCH ROAD	KNOX CREEK	2/11/2026
BUCHANAN	29785	3310	MOTT BRANCH ROAD	TRACE FORK	2/11/2026
AMHERST	1520	674	ROSE'S MILL ROAD	PINEY RIVER	2/5/2026

The list above is not a comprehensive list of all structures with weight restrictions in the Commonwealth but shows only structures that have new or changed weight restrictions within the last 30 days. The list contains only basic structure identification and location information and the date the new or changed weight restriction and signage became effective.

For a full listing of all bridge and culvert weight restrictions with detailed information about specific structures, including location data and actual weight limits, visit vdot.virginia.gov and navigate to Travel and traffic/For freight operators/Truck restrictions. This page references a posted structures report and a GIS map tool that contain detailed information about restricted structures in Virginia. To receive email notifications regarding new or updated weight restrictions for structures statewide, complete the sign-up form on the web page.

Notices regarding bridges and culverts with new or updated weight restrictions are published monthly by VDOT. For additional information or questions, please contact haulingpermits@vdot.virginia.gov or the Load Rating Program Manager, Manjil Devkota at 804-786-4064.

The Virginia Department of Transportation is committed to ensuring that no person is excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any of its programs or activities on the basis of race, color, or national origin, as protected by Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. If you need further information on VDOT's Title VI Program or special assistance for persons with disabilities or limited English proficiency, please contact the Virginia Department of Transportation's Title VI Program Specialist at 804-786-2730 or corina.herrera@vdot.virginia.gov.

Creativity in Bloom

At The Jefferson, residents find freedom, focus and joy through art and gardening.



Bryna Freyer, a retired art historian, paints a delicate blue rim on a clay vessel during a studio session at The Jefferson.



Wendy Kotler with her painting inspired by nature.



Lynn Barton coordinates seasonal plantings in The Jefferson's community garden.

PHOTOS BY MARILYN CAMPBELL

BY MARILYN CAMPBELL
THE CONNECTION

Carefully and almost meditatively, Bryna Freyer steadies a small clay vessel in one hand and lifts a brush with the other, guiding a thin line of pale blue paint around the rim.

The retired art historian and current resident at The Jefferson, a senior living community, pauses occasionally to study the curve before adding another careful stroke. Nearby, jars of gray, teal, and cream pigments sit open on the table.

"Working with clay in particular is very relaxing," she says. Then she smiles. "With ceramics, I don't obsess about whether mine is good enough anymore. I'm just enjoying it."

Freyer spent much of her career studying museum collections and teaching art history. For years she analyzed great works created by other artists.

Now she is making something of her own.

Around her, residents at The Jefferson gather for a studio session, some sketching still lifes, others mixing watercolor pigments or

shaping clay. The walls display landscapes, flowers and abstract bursts of color, each piece created by someone who lives in the community.

For many residents, creativity here is more than a pastime. It's a way to slow down, concentrate, and lose themselves in the process of making something.

The Quiet Power of Creativity

Wendy Kotler understands that feeling well.

A retired art educator, she worked for public school systems as both a teacher and developer of art curriculum. Kotler still approaches art with the careful eye of someone who spent a career helping students learn to notice the small details all around them, the curve of a leaf, the shift of light across a surface, the subtle changes of color in the sky.

When she paints, she often leans close to the canvas, studying the way light settles on a petal or the subtle shift between shades of purple.

For Kotler, painting often begins with something that others might

overlook. One of her recent paintings was inspired by orange lilies in a bouquet on a table in the home of her sister-in-law.

"When I'm drawing," she explains, "I'm intensely focused on the connection between my eye

"When I'm drawing, I'm focused on the connection between my eye and the subject. Everything else drops away."

— Wendy Kotler

and the subject. Everything else drops away."

In that moment, the outside world recedes, and worries fade.

"If you're anxious or agitated," she says, "once you move into that creative space, it goes away."

Researchers agree. Studies supported by the National Endowment for the Arts suggest that artistic engagement can support cognitive health while reducing depression and anxiety, particularly among older adults.

Kotler traces her own artistic path back to kindergarten.

"We were supposed to draw a person," she recalls. "My teacher leaned over and said, 'Your person has a hand with five fingers. You're really good at this.'"

Encouragement like that, she believes, can shape a life.

"If you talk to people in creative fields," she says, "somewhere along the line someone noticed something and reinforced it."

Creativity Beyond the Studio

At The Jefferson, creativity extends well beyond the art room.

Lynn Barton, chair of the community's garden club, first discovered her love of gardening as a child helping her grandmother in the yard.

Her favorite job was pulling weeds.

"I liked getting rid of the bad things so the good things could grow," Barton says.

Today she helps coordinate plantings around the Jefferson grounds, where residents gather to dig, water, and plan new additions

each season.

"A neighbor once told me the garden is always a work in progress," Barton says. "And that's true."

At The Jefferson, creativity is also woven into daily programming.

Dawn Hamed, activities coordinator for assisted living and memory care, says the key is understanding what residents care about.

"It all starts with building relationships," Hamed says. "We learn what people loved doing before they came here and build activities around those interests."

Sometimes the impact is immediate. Hamed remembers one resident who initially refused to leave his room or attend any activities.

Now he rarely misses one. "He may not follow the instructor exactly," she says. "But he's there doing his own thing. And just being there means he's engaged."

The power of creativity to affect one's mental and emotional wellbeing at any age, appears on studio walls, in garden beds and in the satisfaction of making something by hand.

As Kotler puts it simply: "It's never too late."

Attend Film Festival for Free

NOVA International Film Festival & Music Festival in April.

BY SHIRLEY RUHE
CONNECTION NEWSPAPERS



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

Fernando Mico, NOVA International Film & Music Festival Director

Drama, documentaries, comedy and even a little horror — they've got it all at the Twelfth Annual Northern Virginia International Film & Music Festival Thursday, April 9 and Friday, April 10. It is being held at the LOOK Dine-in Cinemas at the Boro, Tysons. The film screenings will run from approximately 5 p.m.-11 p.m. both nights.

"We look for films that have quality and that magic—you know that 'ah ha' moment," says Fernando Mico, NOVA Festival Director. "Our brand is glamour, elegance and excellence."

Mico says no year is the same. "In the first year for some reason we had a lot of horror film submissions. This year we have the first short film submission from France, and documentaries are up."

There is also a local connection with "909," a music video, which was filmed in part in Arlington, and "The Floaters," a comedy by an Arlingtonian about a struggling musician who takes a last resort job supervising misfits at her childhood Jewish summer camp.

And Fairfax County resident and retired federal government employee Michael J. Volpe has won multiple screenwriting awards for a romantic drama he recently completed.

Mico adds, "Although we have films from across the United States and across Europe, we quickly found that many of the filmmakers have some kind of attachment to the DMV area. A big number identify with the area because they have a connection; they

know somebody or have a relative, and it is a destination area."

Mico is from Alexandria where he has lived all of his life "except for a short stint in LA where I took a grown up job for a few months as a colorist for Marvel Comics, all the big titles you still recognize like Spiderman." He moved back to Alexandria 3 years later and went back to school. "After a few bumps and bruises I learned how films work."

His work in school won "action film of the year" which he says "was kind of a big deal, it came out of nowhere." But he said the action films that work in film festivals aren't necessarily the ones that make it in streaming. As a result he has become a mentor to others; outside of the grind it is called "show" business for a reason.

The Festival schedule is online, and films are free but registration is required. The schedule ranges from "No Other Gods," a music video filmed in Athens; to "The Donut Dollies," a documentary about 627 young women in their blue dresses and smiles who entertained the troops along the front lines in Vietnam; to "Free Syria" which follows a country at a rare moment of possibility with the new freedom juxtaposed against the hardship.

The Black Tie Festival Awards and Red Carpet Show takes place on Saturday, April 11 starting at 5:30 pm at the Boro where the awards will be presented to the winners in each category. "We've changed the format this year from the Oscar style where you show up and have no idea whether you've won." Now, he says, the winners are notified ahead of time so they have more time to think about their remarks and can invite their friends and families to celebrate with them.

The Black Tie Festival Awards and Red Carpet Show takes place on Saturday, April 11 starting at 5:30 pm at the Boro where the awards will be presented to the winners in each category. "We've changed the format this year from the Oscar style where you show up and have no idea whether you've won." Now, he says, the winners are notified ahead of time so they have more time to think about their remarks and can invite their friends and families to celebrate with them.

To register for the screenings: <https://www.novafilmfest.com/>
<https://www.novafilmfest.com/2026-screening-schedule>

BULLETIN BOARD

FROM PAGE 5

10 a.m.-9 p.m. 1015 N. Quincy St. Visit library.arlingtonva.us/locations/central-library or call 703-228-5990.

Arlington Rotary Club Lunches. Thursdays, 12 - 1:30 p.m. Club meetings are at 12:15 to 1:15 on the second and fourth Thursdays of each month. On the 2nd Thursday we meet at a restaurant in Arlington (currently Texas Jacks BBQ). On the 4th Thursday we meet via Zoom (click [HERE](#) to join). Newcomers are welcome to join the Zoom meeting.. Organization comes together for humanitarian services. Listen to guest speakers on various topics of interest. Visit <https://arlingtonrotaryclub.org/>

Job Seeking Help. 5-9 p.m at Columbia Pike Branch Library, 816 S. Walter Reed Drive. Receive job-related help from the staff and volunteers with applications. Free, but requires registration. Visit www.arlingtonva.libcal.com.

Arlington PFLAG Community Group. 7:30-9 p.m. on the second Tuesday of each month, PFLAG promotes the equality and well-being of gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender people and their families. Meets at the Unitarian Universalist Church of Arlington, 4444 Arlington Boulevard. Contact arl.pflag@gmail.com for more or go to www.pflagdc.org

Helmsmen Toastmasters meet Thursdays, 7:30-8:45 a.m. at Pentagon Library and Conference Center. Toastmasters is an international organization that helps everyone speak, think, lead and listen better. Most clubs are meeting online at this time. Contact Carl Sabath carl.e.sabath.civ@mail.mil or 703-695-2804 or Elizabeth Femrite elizabeth.m.femrite.civ@mail.mil or 571-256-8674.

Soil Testing. Virginia Cooperative Extension is offering soil testing services to analyze soil and determine what is needed to condition soil for plantings. The routine soil test is all one normally needs for a fertility evaluation. Pick up soil sampling box at the Virginia Cooperative Ex-

tension Arlington office, 3308 S. Stafford St., 8 a.m.-5 p.m. Monday-Friday. Send filled soil sample box with form and fee to the Virginia Tech Lab for analysis. Fees vary, visit www.soiltest.vt.edu/Files.

Alzheimer's Association Support Group has meetings. They are open to people with Alzheimer's, their caregivers, family members and friends. Free. Call the Alzheimer's Association 24/7 Helpline at 703-359-4440 or 800-272-3900 before attending a group for the first time to verify meeting information, obtain directions or other information about the group. A complete list of all groups in the National Capital Area region can be found at https://www.alz.org/nca/helping_you/support_groups.

Pentagon Legacy Toastmasters meet Tuesdays 5:15-6:30 p.m. in the Pentagon Main Cafeteria/food court, left of

SEE BULLETIN, PAGE 9

A TALK ON CHRISTIAN SCIENCE

Healing with joy: Discovering the power of Love

Divine Love, God, frees us from fear, illness, and polarization. This freedom is given impartially to everyone.

Sunday, March 22
at 3:00 p.m.

The Lyceum
201 S. Washington St
Alexandria, Virginia, 22314

SCAN FOR
MORE INFO



**Sign up for
FREE DIGITAL
SUBSCRIPTION**
to any or all of our 15 papers
WWW.CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM/SUBSCRIBE

1916 Roadster Driving for Women's Equality

Jane Barker on ERA: 'This is long overdue.'

BY GLENDA C. BOOTH
CONNECTION NEWSPAPERS

Are women capable of driving cars? Are women smart enough to vote? These may be outrageous questions in 2026, but in 1916, two bold women faced insults like these.

Alice Snitjer Burke, 39, from California, and Nell Richardson, 25, from Winchester, Virginia, faced ridicule and skepticism for having the nerve to want to vote and for driving a 1916, lemon yellow Saxon roadster convertible, the Golden Flyer, 10,700 miles across 29 states in 26 weeks. Their purpose was to build public support for the 19th amendment to the U.S. Constitution to give women the right to vote. The century-old suffragist movement was stalled.

On March 14, 110 years later, their 21st century "sisters" brought a restored, yellow Golden Flyer II to Lorton's Turning Point Suffragist Memorial to bolster support for broader rights for women, the Equal Rights Amendment.

The 1916 Journey

Burke and Richardson met in New York City and embarked on a mobile expedition in a vehicle that had a top speed of 30 miles per hour.

Some men made snide comments like, "You women are not smart enough to vote;" and "The right to vote will take away your femininity."

Their response: "We have a sewing machine," and indeed, they did, in the car, along with seven prepared speeches, a typewriter, a cooker, water bags, camping gear and a Kodak camera.

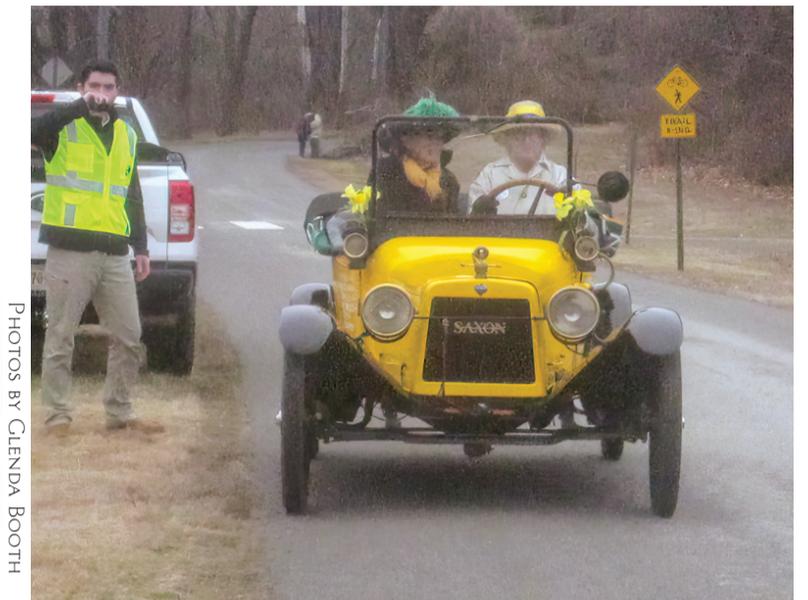
With no national highway system, they rumbled over rough roads and through snow. They got stuck in rivers and mud and got lost in the Arizona desert, ran out water and walked six miles to a well. They were shot at in Texas.

Today's ERA Campaign

At the March 14 event at the Suffragist Memorial, with some locals in suffragists' attire, tour coordinator Mary Ann Gorman explained that the tour today is focused on a petition drive to get the Equal Rights Amendment (ERA) officially recognized as part of the U.S. Constitution. Congress approved



Susan Nourse and Jeryl Schriever took the roadster for a spin. The brick-making kiln is in the background.



The Saxon is a two-seater with a top speed of 30 miles per hour.

PHOTOS BY GLENDA BOOTH



Pat Wirth led the campaign to build the Turning Point Suffragist Memorial.



Map showing the route of the 1916 and 2026 tours.



Jeryl Schriever wrote a book about the 1916 tour.

More Information

The petition, www.Sign4ERA.org
Driving the Vote for Equality,
www.ERANow.org

it in 1972, imposed a deadline, extended the deadline and the required 38 states ratified it, with Virginia being the 38th in 2020.

Two U.S. Department of Justice opinions have questioned its legal status. Advocates are seeking signatures on a petition to Congress requesting support for H.J. Res. 80, to officially recognize that the ERA is a valid amendment to the U.S. Constitution. Quoting Virginia Congresswoman Jennifer McClellan, ERA Now Board member Kathy Bonk, commented, "We're in purgatory right now."

Jeanne Clark stressed, "We need to get this on fire."

The Saxon

The centerpiece of the Lorton gathering was the Golden Flyer II, a restored yellow convertible made by Michigan's Saxon Motor Car Company between 1914 and 1917. A two-seater that has to be cranked up to start, it has a manual transmission, two speeds and reverse, an



In Alabama, instead of giving the drivers a donation, someone gave them a black kitten that then accompanied them.

accelerator in the center of the floor, running boards and a gas tank that holds six gallons. As it sputtered around, gas fumes filled the air.

In 1916, the manufacturer donated the car, but made a deal with the drivers: In each town, they had to write to the local newspaper and praise the local Saxon dealer. The company touted, "Even a woman can drive it."

The owners of the Golden Flyer II, Mainers Jeryl Schriever and her husband, Alex Huppe, own



Susan Nourse, a former Freeport, Maine, police chief, drives the Saxon today.

four Saxons and are on the tour. Schriever authored a book about the 1916 trip, "Driving the Vote for Women: An American Journey for Suffrage."

This year's tour, with Susan Nourse, a former Maine police chief as the driver, started in Manhattan on March 1 and will follow the 1916 route.

The vehicle travels in a yellow trailer between stops.

At the event, Jane Barker said, "This is long overdue." Lynn Garvey-Hodge, depicting suffragist Mrs. Robert Walker, remarked, "Women worked so hard drafting the ERA. It's common sense. It should have passed years ago."

ERA advocates may be agitating, the amendment may be in legal limbo, but to quote country singer Loretta Lynn, "We've come a long way baby."

Annual Water Pipe Flushing

Information on maintenance of tap water pipe network.

Arlington County, the District of Columbia and northeastern Fairfax will adjust their water treatment process to allow for safe, controlled maintenance of the tap water pipe network.

From March 23 through May 4, 2026, the year-round disinfectant chloramine will be temporarily switched to chlorine for most Arlington pipes to clean water mains and free them from any flow issues.

For Arlington pipes located in the Willston Pressure Zone, serviced by Fairfax Water, the disinfectant switch will go from March 23 through May 26.

Water service will continue uninterrupted during the procedure.

Customers may notice a slight change in taste or scent when using the tap; this is to be expected, and the water is still safe to drink thanks to the purification process. County staff will continually monitor chlorine levels to ensure Arlington's water meets all required federal and state standards.

Arlington and neighboring jurisdictions receive water from the Washington Aqueduct, operated by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. The Aqueduct initiates the annual disinfectant swap as a standard water treatment practice.

Safe from Sewage Spill

Arlington County's water remains safe to use and is not impacted by the recent DC Water

sewage spill in the Potomac River. The primary water intake to the Dalecarlia Water Treatment Plant (located near Great Falls) is upstream of the location of the spill and therefore unaffected.

Along with the disinfectant switch, Arlington will conduct a system-wide flushing to enhance year-round water quality. Residents may see open fire hydrants as part of the practice. A map of hydrant flushing locations will be available soon at water.arlingtonva.us.

What to expect between March 23 and May 4

❖ Water from the tap may have a distinct smell and taste of chlorine. This can be minimized by using a tap filter system or letting the

water sit in an open container for an hour or two in the refrigerator, which will allow the chlorine smell and taste to dissipate.

❖ Customers who take special precautions to remove chloramine from tap water during the rest of the year should continue such methods during the temporary switch to chlorine. As always, those with special concerns should consult their health care provider.

❖ Due to the presence of sediment, there is a possibility that discolored water generated from the flushing of fire hydrants may stain clothes being washed in nearby homes. Flushing will take place between 9 a.m.-3 p.m., Monday-Friday. Residents are encouraged to plan ahead regarding doing laun-

dry during this time frame.

The County can provide a special detergent to remove related stains upon request. Call 703-228-5000 for more details.

Arlington's water distribution network is made up of some 500 miles of pipes linked to homes, businesses and schools. The County's drinking water continues to meet or exceed all safety standards established by the federal Environmental Protection Agency and Virginia Department of Health.

For more information on Arlington's water treatment process, visit the County website or call 703-228-5000, Monday-Friday, 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. or the 24-hour line at 703-228-6555.

County Board Advertises Tax Rate Increase

At its Feb. 24 Recessed Meeting, the Arlington County Board voted to advertise a real estate tax rate of \$1.053 per \$100 of assessed value, a 2-cent increase from calendar year 2025. The Board will decide in April, after work sessions and public hearings, whether to adopt this increase.

"Unfortunately, our prediction of an unusually significant budget gap has materialized," said Arlington County Board Chair Matt de Ferranti. "This is a result of federal financial instability and shifts in the economic landscape that have impacted most streams of revenue. As in previous years, we are advertising a tax rate that we intend to bring down as best we can. We did this to ensure we have the flexibility to protect our most vulnerable residents, fund our schools, address housing needs, and maintain core services. Over the coming weeks, through

April 21, we will dig in and work to deliver a budget that balances this year's fiscal realities with critical, essential investments."

If adopted in April, this advertised tax rate is estimated to result in a real estate tax payment increase of \$466 for homeowners, based on the average home value of \$882,900. The average apartment renter would see an increase of \$317, based on an average apartment value of \$373,772 and assuming this increase is directly passed onto the renter by their landlord. By law, the Board can adopt a tax rate no higher than the advertised rate, although it may adopt a lower rate.

FY 2027 County Manager's Proposed Budget

Prior to the Board's advertisement of a real estate tax rate increase, at the Feb. 21 regular County Board meeting, the County Manager proposed a \$1.69 billion budget,

which is a 0.1% percent decrease from the FY 2026 Adopted Budget. This proposal recommended \$10.6 million in funding cuts and a 1.5-cent increase to the real estate tax rate, raising it to \$1.048 per \$100 of assessed value.

Next Steps

The Board will review the manager's proposed budget, with the flexibility of the advertised higher tax rate than originally proposed, through a series of work sessions with the manager and county departments in the coming weeks. The Board will also hold a separate work session for advisory groups and commissions to share their priorities with the Board on Wednesday, April 8.

The work sessions will be held in the County Board Room on the third floor of the Ellen M. Bozman Government Center, 2100 Clarendon Blvd. All work sessions are open

to the public and will be livestreamed on the County website and broadcast on the County's cable channel.

The Board will hold a public hearing on the budget on Tuesday, March 24 and a public hearing on the tax rate on Thursday, March 26. You can sign up online to speak at these hearings five days in advance.

Both hearings will be held in the Board Room and will be livestreamed on the County website. The Board will adopt the FY 2027 Budget at its April Regular Board meeting. The FY 2027 fiscal year begins July 1, 2026.

To view the Manager's complete FY 2027 Budget proposal, visit the County website. www.arlingtonva.us/Government/Programs/Budget-Finance

To submit a comment on the proposed budget, email the Board at countyboard@arlingtonva.us

BULLETIN BOARD

FROM PAGE 7

Dunkin Donuts. Most clubs are meeting online at this time. Toastmasters is an international organization that helps people speak, think, lead and listen better. Call 703-695-2604 www.toastmasters.org.

The Friends of the Planetarium Visit www.friendsoftheplanetarium.org to find up-to-date show times, a schedule of future events, information about Friends of the Planetarium membership, astronomy news and events, the history of the David M. Brown Planetarium, a link to the Friends' store, and more.

The Northern Virginia Regional Park Authority announces that

cyclists and pedestrians will now have access to the W&OD Trail beyond normal daylight hours. The new W&OD Trail hours are from 5 a.m. to 9 p.m., from Shirlington in Arlington County, to the western town limit of Herndon in Fairfax County.

Lifeline Personal Alert System. Virginia Hospital Center Senior Health staff locally manage the personal emergency response system. Help is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Monthly cost starts at \$42. Call 703-558-6859 for more.

Musical Instruments Wanted. Instruments of any type or size — from a piano to a piccolo, in response to school's needs. Donations are tax exempt. Contact Miriam Miller, Opera NOVA for pick up. 703-536-

7557; mcdm1@verizon.net; www.operaguilddnova.org.

Online Salary Negotiation Workshop. AAUW (American Association of University Women) Work Smart is free online for anyone looking to learn how to negotiate a salary increase or promotion. Why is negotiation so important? AAUW's research on the gender pay gap shows that, one year out of college, women are already paid significantly less than men. Visit salary.aauw.org and <https://www.aauw.org/resources/career/boost-your-career/tackle-hurdles-to-salary-negotiation/>

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

RSVP, a volunteer network for seniors

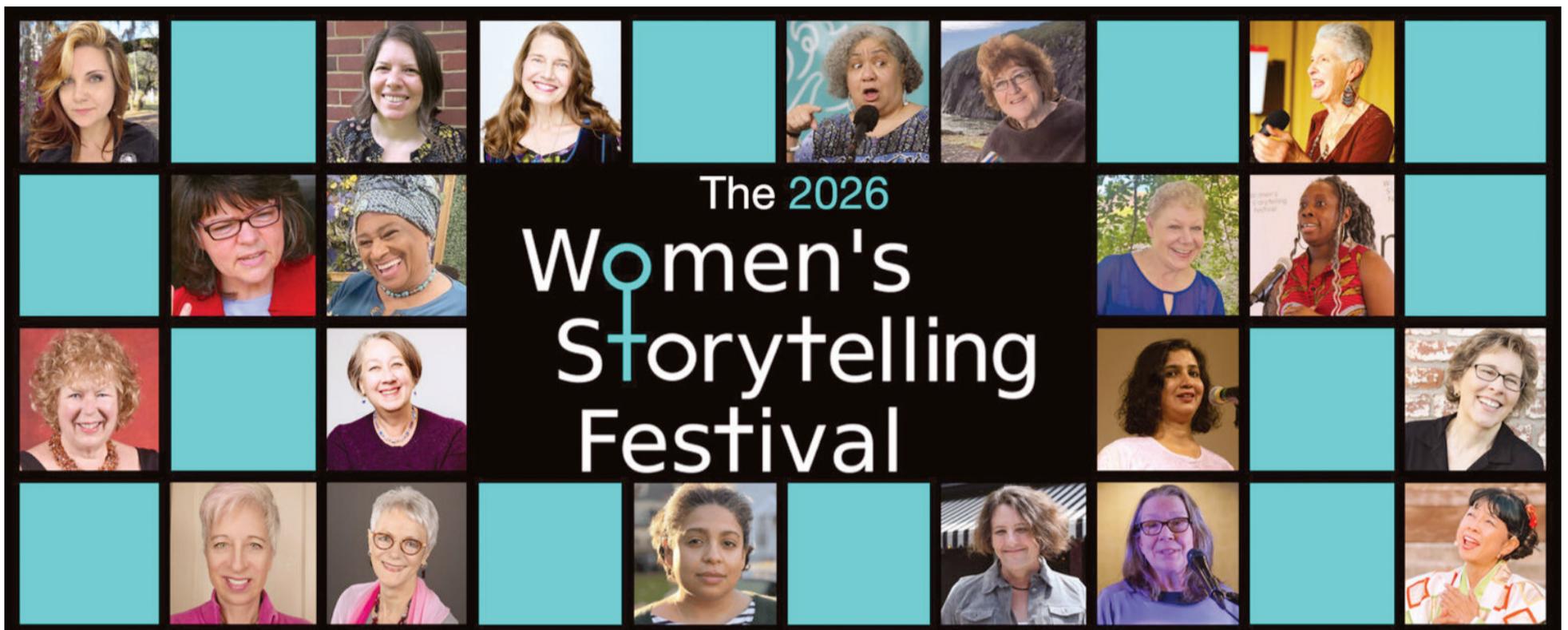
seeking service opportunities in and around Fairfax County, Arlington County and the City of Alexandria, offers an array of opportunities for volunteers 55 and older. RSVP volunteers enjoy flexible schedules, free accident and liability insurance while serving, optional mileage and meal reimbursement and are invited to volunteer group projects and social gatherings. To sign up for an upcoming orientation, email Carly Hubicki at chubicki@volunteerfairfax.org or call RSVP at 703-403-5360. To learn more about RSVP, visit www.rsvpnova.org.

Food Distribution Volunteers. 2:30-5:30 p.m. at Columbia Grove Apartments, 1010 S. Frederick

St. Weekly volunteers are needed every Tuesday to assist with food distribution. Work includes set up, distribution and break down. Sign up at volunteer.leadercenter.org. Volunteer Drivers needed to help senior citizens get to their medical and therapy appointments at the Shepherd's Center of McLean-Arlington-Falls Church. To find out more about the Shepherd's Center and how to volunteer to provide transportation and other services, call the Center at 703-506-2199 or e-mail the Center at info@scmafc.org.

Volunteer Leader for Sensory Gar-

SEE BULLETIN, PAGE 15



Event logo.

Women's Storytelling Festival Returns to Fairfax

Live performers, March 19-22, at the Sherwood Center.

BY BONNIE HOBBS
THE CONNECTION

Hosted by Better Said Than Done, the annual Women's Storytelling Festival returns Friday-Sunday, March 20-22, to Fairfax City. It's the first and only storytelling festival in the country exclusively devoted to women performers.

Stories will be presented live at the Sherwood Community Center, 3740 Blenheim Blvd. in Fairfax. A special, online-only showcase will premiere Thursday, March 19, and the festival will also be live-streamed. And all ticket holders will be able to watch the festival videos for one month after the festival concludes.

Featuring a wide range of storytelling styles, the festival will spotlight 20 performers of spoken-word stories and is intended for mature audiences. In addition, the emcees include two locals, Fairfax Mayor Catherine Read and Del. Holly Seibold (D-12th).

The storytellers will share personal stories, folktales, stories of adventure and magic, plus historical stories – some, marking the United States' 250th anniversary. Performers are coming here from across the nation, from California to Connecticut, Georgia to Ohio –



Jessica Robinson

and even from as far as Ireland – and represent some of today's best-known storytellers.

Among them are authors, content creators, TV stars, podcasters, theater performers and contributors to Risk!, Stories from the Stage, the National Storytelling Festival and the Moth storytelling shows. This festival not only showcases women storytellers – often underrepresented in other national festivals – but also features a variety of stories centering around women's lives and highlighting diverse experiences, cultures and points of view.

Festival founder and producer Jessica Robinson of Fairfax launched Better Said Than Done Inc. in May 2011 to bring the art of storytelling to Northern Virginia, and 2026 is its seventh year hosting this event. "I don't want to say that each year it gets better, because 2020 was fabulous, as was each year since," she said. "But the festival has grown a following of both audience members and storytellers, including this year's lineup."

"Something special happens when storytellers and listeners



Bonnie Gardner

truly connect," continued Robinson. "Because the performers have also had the chance to absorb the previous six years of storytelling, they have a stronger sense of the types of stories that work well with our audience. As a national festival, we've developed a voice of our own."

Some of those voices belong to area residents such as returning storyteller Bonnie Gardner of Vienna. "A festival that centers women's stories, women's perspectives, and women's lived experiences promotes empathy and understanding," she said. "It's a much-needed balm in these fractured times. Listening changes us. When women tell their stories fully, honestly and from their own perspective, audiences leave understanding the world differently."

Besides that, she added, "The sheer diversity of storytelling styles and content you'll find at the festival sets it apart from other performance-based events. Prepare to be surprised, moved and a little awestruck. The storytellers will present their works crafted over months and performed live without scripts. You'll hear from

investigative reporters, business founders, policy experts, immigrants, artists and award-winning storytellers. These history shapers span [the realms of] journalism, entrepreneurship, public service and the arts."

As the U.S. marks 250 years, said Gardner, "This festival asks a simple but powerful question, 'What would our understanding of history look like if we listened to it through women's voices?' For centuries, the nation's story has centered on battlefield victories and political power. But history also unfolds in hospitals, classrooms, communities, churches and factories.

"Mothers give birth to every generation yet rarely hold ownership over how that generation's history is told. In this milestone year, the Women's Storytelling Festival expands that lens through a special showcase that reexamines the United States at 250."

For example, storyteller Denise Page will share her solo show, "Legacy of a Wealthy Slave," about the 2024 discovery by Yale University archivists of her ancestors and their places in history.

"When women tell history, something shifts," explained Robinson. "We begin to see greatness not only in victory, but in resilience. Not only in power, but in empathy. Not only in dominance, but in survival. That shift is tangible. Men often approach storytellers afterward to say, 'I had no idea.' Women leave feeling seen, having finally heard parts of their own lives spoken aloud in a powerful, artful form."

"The festival provides a space where female artists can tell the stories that other venues are frequently too timid to host, and it does so in an atmosphere of celebration and appreciation," said veteran storyteller Jennifer Munro. "It's refreshing to see women take center stage and own it."

"More magic happens in live performance without that fourth wall of theater," added storyteller Kristin Pedemonti. "There's a deep connection between the teller and listener which is palpable and long lasting. When we hear each other's stories, we hear each other's humanity."

◆ ◆ ◆

The Women's Storytelling Festival kicks off Thursday, March 19, at 8 p.m., with its virtual showcase. The in-person and live-streaming performances begin Friday, March 20, at 7 p.m. Ticket prices are \$50 for virtual performances and \$70 for in-person. One-day, in-person passes will be available at the door for \$35/day. People of all gender identities are welcome to attend.

For more information, schedules and to purchase tickets, go to <https://bettersaidthandone.org/womens-festival/>.

*To learn more about the festival's storytellers, visit <https://bettersaidthandone.org/womens-festival/2026-festival-storytellers/>

*For more information about the emcees, go to <https://bettersaidthandone.org/womens-festival/emcees-and-volunteers/>.

– BONNIE GARDNER

CONTRIBUTED TO THIS STORY.

WWW.CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM

Behind the Garden Gates of Old Town

For those drawn to gardens, architecture or simply the pleasure of discovering places normally hidden from view, the day offers a chance to experience Old Town from a perspective few ever see.

BY MARILYN CAMPBELL
THE CONNECTION

Behind Old Town Alexandria's brick walls and wrought-iron gates lie intimate landscapes seldom seen by passersby. For one day this spring, those private worlds will open to the public.

On April 18, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., Virginia's annual Historic Garden Week invites visitors to wander through a collection of Old Town residences and their carefully tended gardens. The Alexandria tour offers a rare glimpse into properties whose architecture, plantings and stories reflect generations of stewardship.

"It's a wonderful event that celebrates the history of Old Town Alexandria," said Kim Davis, member and spokesperson for the Garden Club of Alexandria.

Locally, the tour is presented by volunteers from the Hunting Creek Garden Club and the Garden Club of Alexandria. Their work is part of the broader Historic Garden Week in Virginia, a statewide tradition that has showcased private residences and landscapes throughout the Commonwealth for nearly a century.

This year's Alexandria route highlights five homes clustered in the southeastern section of Old Town, allowing guests to explore the neighborhood comfortably on foot. A leisurely stroll between properties reveals shaded sidewalks, historic architecture and pockets of greenery tucked between centuries-old buildings.

Each residence tells a different chapter of Alexandria's past. One house on South Fairfax Street once belonged to former U.S. Treasury Secretary Henry H. Fowler. When the current owners undertook renovations, they uncovered an unusual relic from Fowler's years in government: bundles of wiring from multiple dedicated telephone lines installed to protect confidential conversations.

"Each one of these homes is very different," Davis said, noting that every property reflects its own distinctive heritage and design.

Visitors may step inside the first floor of each residence, where volunteer docents will be stationed throughout the rooms to answer

questions and share details about architecture, renovations and former occupants.

While interiors offer plenty to admire, the outdoor spaces are equally compelling. Courtyard gardens framed by brick pathways, carefully layered plantings and secluded seating areas demonstrate how homeowners balance historic character with contemporary garden design.

Many of these landscapes remain invisible from the street, hidden behind gates and garden walls that have sheltered them for decades.

"Each home's garden reflects the creativity and care of the homeowners who maintain them," Davis said.

Bringing the tour to life requires months of preparation. Homeowners tend beds, refresh plantings and polish interiors, while volunteers coordinate logistics ranging from docent schedules to floral arrangements.

"The garden club ladies who take on the responsibility for organizing the tours spend the better part of a year pulling things together," Davis said.

Beyond the homes themselves, visitors can enjoy several stops throughout the day. Complimentary refreshments will be offered late morning through early afternoon at Saint Paul's Episcopal Church.

Another highlight is the Spring Marketplace boutique at The Athenaeum, where vendors present a curated assortment of artwork, jewelry, clothing, books and handcrafted goods.

Advance tickets cost \$55 per person and may be purchased online. Admission on the day of the tour is \$65. Children under five may attend free with a paying adult, though all other guests require a full-price ticket.

Refreshments: Complimentary light refreshments available at St. Paul's Episcopal Church 228 S. Pitt Street from 11:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. (the church will also be open for touring)

Facilities: Alexandria Visitors Center, 221 King Street, The Lyceum – Alexandria's History Museum, 201 S. Washington Street, and

The Athenaeum, 201 Prince Street.

Places of Interest:

Carlyle House Historic Park

121 North Fairfax St. Carlyle House will be conducting garden tours on April 18 from 11am-3pm. Garden tours are free, donations appreciated. The house will be open from 10am-4pm and tours run on the half hour. A discounted ticket is available for purchase for \$5 for anyone with a valid Historic Garden Week ticket or wristband on April 18th. The garden was completely restored from funds raised by Historic Garden Week. carlylehouse.org

The Lee-Fendall House Museum & Garden

614 Oronoco St. The Lee-Fendall House was a continuous private home from 1785 through 1969. Built in 1785 by Philip Fendall on land purchased by Revolutionary War General "Light Horse" Harry Lee, the house was home to many members of the prominent Lee family, served as a Civil War hospital from 1863-65, and was the last private residence of labor leader John L. Lewis. Today, the Lee-Fendall House is listed on the National Register of Historic Places and is one of Alexandria's most popular museum destinations. With a valid Historic Garden Week ticket or wristband on April 18, 2026, visitors will have the chance to explore the first and second floors of the house, stroll through the museum's iconic garden, and view the temporary exhibition *Shall Not Be Denied: Alexandria Women and the Fight for the Ballot* all free of charge. leefendallhouse.org

River Farm

7931 East Boulevard Dr. River Farm, headquarters to the American Horticultural Society, aims to be a national showcase for environmentally responsible gardening and horticultural practices. One of George Washington's original five farms, the 25-acre site overlooking the Potomac River features a blend of formal and naturalistic gardens including a four-acre meadow, an orchard, a children's garden, and a teaching garden. HGW visitors will receive free admission, park-



PHOTO COURTESY OF GARDEN CLUB OF ALEXANDRIA

A historic home on South Fairfax Street in Old Town Alexandria will be among the private residences open to visitors during Historic Garden Week in Virginia.

ing and a tour of the manor house between 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. More details at AHSgardening.org

George Washington's Mount Vernon

Eight miles south of Alexandria on the GW Pkwy and situated on the Potomac River lies the home of George and Martha Washington. From the end of the American Revolution in 1783 to his election to the presidency in 1789, Washington replaced outbuildings, reshaped gardens, created new lawns, planted trees and even realigned roads and lanes. With funding from Historic Garden Week, the Garden Club of Virginia has helped to restore Mount Vernon's bowling green, one of the major landscape features on this vast plantation. Free admission to the grounds only with a valid HGW ticket/wristband on April 18, 2026. The Mount Vernon Ladies' Association, owners. mountvernon.org

Green Spring Gardens

4603 Green Spring Rd. This public garden and historic site include Virginia's only Beatrix Farrand garden, which was recently restored by the Garden Club of Virginia. In 1784, gentleman freeholder John Moss built a brick house on several hundred acres of farmland. In 1942, young power couple Michael and Belinda Straight bought the house and 33 acres and engaged Farrand to design a simple garden room behind the house: a spacious lawn enclosed by a boxwood crescent with a stone retaining wall. The GCV restored the stone wall, rejuvenated the boxwoods, and redesigned a more recently-installed perennial bed to reflect Farrand's signature plant choices. In 1970,

the Straights deeded their house and 18 acres to the Fairfax County Park Authority. fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/greenspring

Gunston Hall

15 mi. south of Alexandria, off U.S. Rt. 1 on Rt. 242 This 550-acre National Historic Landmark was the home of George Mason (1725-1792), author of The Virginia Declaration of Rights. The estate consists of a Georgian mansion, c.1755, and reconstructed kitchen, dairy, laundry and schoolhouse. The Potomac River is viewed from the historic boxwood garden. While not a current restoration project of the Garden Club of Virginia, the GCV assisted Gunston Hall with landscaping work from 1949-53. gunstonhall.org

St Paul's Episcopal Church

228 S. Pitt St. St. Paul's Episcopal Church began in 1809 in a small building on South Fairfax Street between Prince and Duke Streets. In 1817, one of the Country's most famous architects, Benjamin Henry Latrobe, was chosen to design the present church. Appointed by President Jefferson in 1803 as surveyor of public buildings in Washington, D.C., Latrobe completed the U.S. Capitol begun by William Thornton, and designed Statuary Hall and the former Supreme Court room. In 1807, he completed the White House, designed both porticos and later restored the building after the War of 1812. An outstanding example of American architecture, inspired by the gothic churches in Europe, the interior of St. Paul's is said to have been modeled after St. James Church, Piccadilly, London. The exterior is said to be modeled after Peterborough Cathedral. stpaulsalexandria.com



Sarah Malaby, marketing director for Chesterbrook Residences, mans the chocolate dipping fountain with rice krispie treats, strawberries and marshmallows at McLean Chocolate Festival. Malaby says, "The rice krispie treats are the most popular for dipping. You know kids love all the sugar they can get."



Luca smells the chocolate beans at the American Heritage colonial America chocolate making demonstration.



The Munch & Match table features a grapefruit sparkling water for six tickets along with a fluffy buddy for for \$5.



Katherine Emerick has taken her time surveying the candy case and finally chosen the mango chocolates from Tysons Creamery.

Chocolate Choices for Everyone At McLean Chocolate Festival



Representatives of American Heritage, a Mars incorporated brand, tell the story of chocolate from the beans through the shelling and melting process and how it became part of our culture. "In early colonial days, people drank the chocolate before the Industrial Revolution where they learned how to make chocolate into bars."



This customer is enjoying her chocolate dipped strawberry while deciding which of the specialty chocolates to choose at Artisan Confections.



14th annual McLean Chocolate Festival on Sunday, March 15 at the McLean Community Center. The festival featured 14 chocolate vendors plus entertainment by the Sunshine Gang Band and Pocket Threes Band.



Ten-year-old Christopher Larson and his six-year-old sister Nicole, have chosen white and dark chocolate bars from Scrummy Gorgeous.

ENTERTAINMENT

CENTERS FOR OPPORTUNITY ARLINGTON

The Centers for Opportunity Arlington is a safe, stigma-free place to spend time for those recovering from homelessness, substance use, and mental illness. It has a donation closet that needs adult clothing and shoes. Some participants at the Center are looking for jobs and need the proper attire. Located at 3219 Columbia Pike, Suite 101, Arlington. Contact Greg, Program Coordinator at 703-567-1346.

VOLUNTEER FOR ARLINGTON'S COMMUNITY AMBASSADOR PROGRAM

Arlington Neighborhood Village, in partnership with Arlington County and Marymount University, has started the Community Ambassador Program (CAP). CAP is a volunteer fueled system that identifies "Ambassadors" connected with civic associations, faith communities, senior centers, apartment buildings, etc. These individuals will be trained to be a reliable source of information about the many opportunities available to older adults in Arlington.

Ambassadors will spread the word about programs and support services, opportunities for social and civic engagement, and educational and enrichment activities for older adults in their own neighborhoods. They are actively recruiting ambassadors to act as a bridge between their community and the Arlington safety net, providing information and soliciting feedback to improve offerings that help older adults remain safe, independent, engaged, and connected to their community.

Contact cap@anvarlington.org if this is something you are interested in or want to learn more. Let's work together to create a supported and connected community for all ages! Receive Support Services: Are you a senior in Arlington? Do you need support services but don't know where to look? Are you looking for fun and enriching activities in Arlington? Email or call 703-509-8057 and they will connect you with an Ambassador.

THE MARJORIE HUGHES FUND FOR CHILDREN

The Marjorie Hughes Fund for Children (MHF), a 501(c)(3) nonprofit serving Arlington Public Schools (APS) students, helps underinsured and uninsured students obtain medical and dental services and other necessary medical care. Established in 1992 to honor the work of public health physician Marjorie F. Hughes, who dedicated her career to public school students in Arlington, MHF is made up of Public Health School Nurses, School Health Aides, APS staff, and community stakeholders. In collaboration with pediatric office staff and dental providers, MHF pays for school entry and sports physical exams, dental treatments, assists with the purchase of medications or medical equipment, and provides transportation via UberHealth rides to doctor and dentist appointments. MHF services are supported entirely by generous donations and grants, and they have helped students throughout Arlington schools, from kindergarten to high school, to be happy, healthy, and ready to learn. To learn more about MHF, its mission, its work, and to make a contribution, visit <https://www.marjoriehughesfund.com/>.

[marjoriehughesfund.com/](https://www.marjoriehughesfund.com/).

YEAR ROUND ON SUNDAYS Farmer's Market. 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.

At Casa Chirilagua Community Center, 4109 Mt. Vernon Ave., Alexandria. Experience fresh foods, native plants, artisan crafts, music and community at Four Mile Run Farmers & Artisans Market in the heart of Arlandria outside the Casa Chirilagua Community Center, every Sunday 9-1 p.m.

FRESHFARM OPEN YEAR-ROUND

FRESHFARM Ballston Market will now operate year-round, providing residents and visitors with continued access to locally grown produce and goods even through the winter months. Located at Welburn Square (901 N Taylor St., Arlington) just steps from the Ballston Metro, the market operates Thursdays from 3-6 p.m. The market features a lineup of 20 regular and rotating farmers and producers, and shoppers can enjoy nearly everything needed for a complete grocery shop, from hearty winter squash and leafy greens to eggs, meats, pantry staples, and prepared foods, while supporting regional farmers and producers year-round. Visit freshfarm.org/markets/ballston.

MARCH 19-28

Avant Bard Opens The Two Gentlemen of Killarney: A Celebration of Immigration. At Gunston Arts Center Theatre Two, Arlington. Adapted from Shakespeare's The Two Gentlemen of Verona, the story follows friends-turned-rivals from Ireland to America during the Great Famine, blending Shakespeare's wit with traditional Irish tunes and delivering a dynamic celebration of love, immigration, and humanity. Run time: 120 minutes including intermission.

The Two Gentlemen of Killarney runs: Thu, March 19, 7:30 pm; Fri, March 20, 7:30 pm; Sat, March 21, 2:00 pm; Sat, March 21, 7:30 pm; Sun, March 22, 2:00 pm; Thu, March 26, 7:30 pm; Fri, March 27, 7:30 pm; Sat, March 28, 2:00 pm; Sat, March 28, 7:30 pm

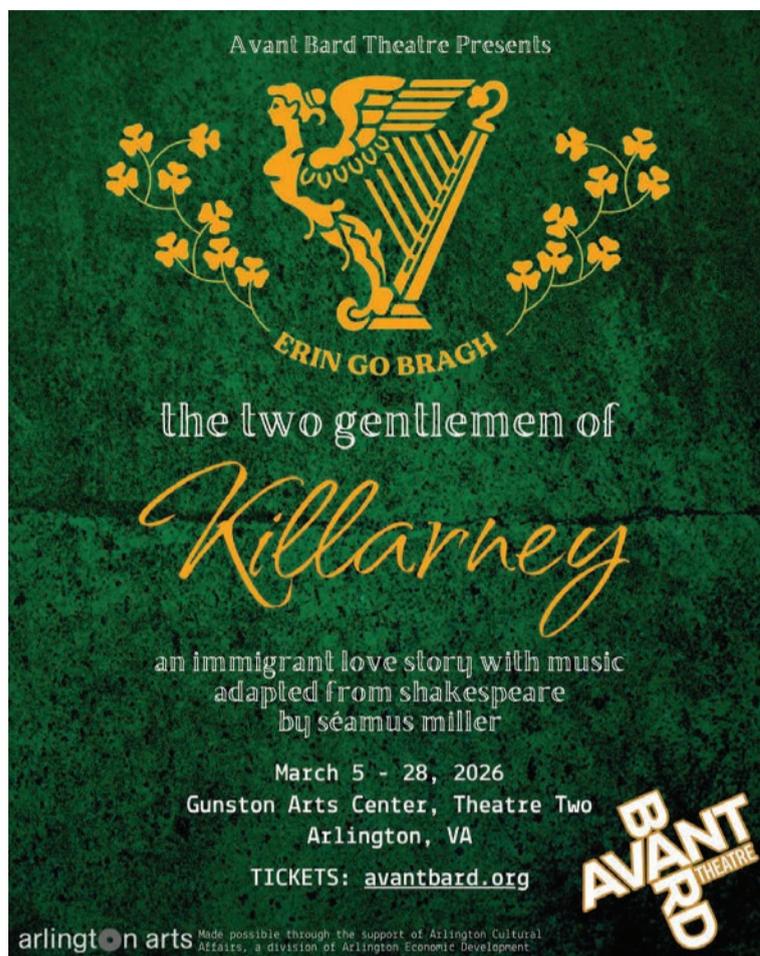
Learn more here: www.avantbard.org.

WEDNESDAY/MARCH 18

FOUA Garden Talk: Principles Of Soil Health. 6:30 p.m. At Arlington Central Library, 1015 N. Quincy Street, Arlington. Get ready for Principles of Soil Health: Learn the basic soil health principles and how a gardener/farmer can utilize these principles to conserve and improve their soil. Learn more about the principles behind potting soil, the components they are made of, and tips for plant care in potting soil. 2026 Garden Talks are sponsored by Friends of Urban Agriculture and Extension Master Gardeners with support from Arlington Public Library. Garden Talks are free, no registration required.

THURSDAY/MARCH 19

Memorializing the Enslaved of Arlington Fundraiser. 7 p.m. At Lyon Park Community Center, 414 N. Fillmore Street, Arlington. Join in an evening of art, poetry, music, and history to support the Stumbling Stone program and ensure the full history of Arlington is told. Performances by poets Holly Karapetkova and Teri Cross Davis,



Avant Bard Theatre Presents
the two gentlemen of Killarney
an immigrant love story with music adapted from shakespeare by seamus miller
March 5 - 28, 2026
Gunston Arts Center, Theatre Two
Arlington, VA
TICKETS: avantbard.org

Avant Bard Opens The Two Gentlemen of Killarney: A Celebration of Immigration March 19-28, 2026 at Gunston Arts Center Theatre Two in Arlington.

learn about project updates and future plans, artwork raffle for a local artist; Emcee: Monique Bryant, Arlington Executive Director of Challenging Racism, Community conversation; small bites and beverages. Visit: <https://arhist.org/mea-fundraiser/>

MARCH 19 TO APRIL 5

Easter Bunny at Fashion Centre at Pentagon City. At 1100 S Hayes St, Arlington. The Easter Bunny arrives on March 19 and will be available through Easter Sunday (April 5), located on the First Level, Nordstrom Court. The Bunny Photo Experience will be open daily, and reservations are strongly encouraged. New this year, hop into the fun at our KIDZ BOP Bunny Dance Parties. Every hour on the hour, kids can dance along with the Bunny to upbeat KIDZ BOP hits and easy-to-follow moves. Fashion Centre at Pentagon City will also host events with the Easter Bunny this season including:

- ❖ Caring Bunny – Caring Bunny is a private event for children with special needs and their families. Special care is taken to ensure a sensory-friendly environment. Reservations are required.
- ❖ Sunday, March 22 from 9:30 - 10:30 a.m.
- ❖ "Fido Meets the Rabbit" Pet Photo Night – Bring your furry friend to pose with the Easter Bunny!
- ❖ Sunday, March 22 from 6 – 7 p.m.

THURSDAY/MARCH 19

Seasonal Walk: Carlin Springs Park. 11 a.m. ANV's seasonal strolls are a good way to enjoy nature in company with neighbors, family, and friends. The next stroll will be on Thursday, March 19, at 11 a.m. at Carlin Springs Park in South Arlington. ANV is taking a brief

vacation from the usual walks at Teddy Roosevelt Island due to expected traffic delays there while the nearby highway bridge is being repaired.

FRIDAY/MARCH 20

Dig a Little Deeper: Houseplants Care Guide. 10:00-11:30 a.m., ONLINE. Ready to take your indoor jungle to the next level? You've got the basics of your houseplant care covered, but what's next? Join Extension Master Gardener Evin Morrison to dig a little deeper into the world of houseplants. We're moving past plant survival and diving into propagation, hard-to-care-for plants, and what to do when your larger plants start to outgrow your space. Whether you're looking to multiply your favorite Monstera or finally conquer a finicky Calathea, this presentation provides the technical "know-how" to help your collection truly thrive. FREE. RSVP online at <https://mgvnv.org/rsvp-for-public-education-classes/> to receive the link to participate.

SATURDAY/MARCH 21

Red Cross Babysitting Class. 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Learn the necessary skills to safely and responsibly care for children and infants at Arlington Mill Community Center. Participants ages 11-17 will learn how to create a babysitting business, keep themselves and others safe, develop leadership skills and more! The class is \$85 and registration can be found here: <https://vaarlingtonweb.myvscloud.com/webtrac/web/iteminfo.html?Module=AR&FMID=330652497>

MONDAY/MARCH 23

BSC March Dinner Meeting. 6:15 p.m. At the Knights of Columbus, 5115 Little Falls Road, Arlington. Featuring speaker Les Carpenter.

He will recap the just-completed Milano-Cortina Olympics, as well as the recent and controversial staff reductions within the Washington Post Sports Department. Les is a veteran American sports journalist known for covering the Olympics, the NFL and the MLB for major publications. Recently an Olympics reporter for The Washington Post, he has also worked for The Guardian, Yahoo! Sports and The Seattle Times as a columnist and reporter.

WEDNESDAY/MARCH 25

Coffee and Conversation: Estate Planning 101. At 10 a.m. This presentation by Christopher T. Leighton, Partner, Hughes & Leighton PLLC, focused on older adults, will provide a clear, practical overview of the basics of estate planning. Participants will learn the purpose and key components of essential documents, including a will, durable power of attorney, advance healthcare directive, revocable living trust, and beneficiary designations. Attendees will leave with a better understanding of how thoughtful estate planning supports independence, dignity, and peace of mind for themselves and their families. You also have the option to dial in by phone to participate without video. For that, dial: 929-205-6099. The meeting ID is 889 4857 7106 and the passcode is 872327.

THURSDAY/MARCH 26

Film and Discussion: Pearls of Peace. 6:30-8 p.m. At Arlington Central Library, Arlington. In partnership with Arlington Central Library, BikeArlington is hosting a screening of Pearls of Peace, a documentary that follows Northern Virginian Lynn Salvo's extraordinary journey as she cycles through breathtaking landscapes, encounters wildlife and human companions, navigates mechanical and physical challenges, and meets inspiring people along the way. With a mission to promote peace while honoring her brother, an Air Force pilot killed in the Vietnam War, Lynn rides 4,330 miles through 12 countries over 95 days, setting a Guinness World Record as the oldest woman (at age 75) to bicycle across Europe from north to south. The documentary will be followed by a Q&A with the film's producer/subject, Lynn Salvo.

FRIDAY/MARCH 27

Keep Kids Learning Call to Action. 7:00-8:30 p.m. At Kenmore Middle School, 200 S. Carlin Springs Road, Arlington. Hundreds of parents and children from afterschool programs across Arlington are joining elected officials to celebrate afterschool programs in Arlington and issue a call for continued and dedicated funding for these vital programs. County and school board officials will join with the Aspire rock band, the REC soccer team winners, and hundreds more to rally for permanent funding for afterschool programs and explore how the community can expand on existing services to serve more children.

Scheduled guests include:
County Board:
Takis Karantonis
JD Spain
Matt de Ferranti (tentative)

School Board Members:
Zuraya Tapia-Hadley
Monique Bryant
Bethany Zecher Sutton
Kathleen Clark

Transform Your Bathroom and Change Your Life.

FREE TOILET + \$1,500 OFF*

For your FREE information kit and our Senior Discounts, Call Today Toll-Free

1-877-591-9950



*Free toilet with purchase and installation of a walk-in tub or walk-in shower only. Offer available while supplies last. No cash value. Must present offer at time of purchase. Cannot be combined with any other offer. Market restrictions may apply. Offer available in select markets only. CSLB 1082165 NSCB 0082999 0083445 13VH11096000

Start the new year clog-free!



Get a FREE full gutter inspection and estimate: **1-877-614-6667**

Claim by: 2/28/2026

15% OFF + 10% LeafFilter**

Discount For Seniors + Military

We install year-round!

Get a FREE full gutter inspection and estimate: **1-877-614-6667 Promo: 285**

**Promotional offer includes 15% off plus an additional 10% off for qualified veterans and/or seniors. One coupon per household. No obligation estimate valid for 1 year. See Representative for full warranty details. AZ ROC344027 AR 366920925 CA1035795 CT HIC0671520 DC 420223000087 FL CBC056678 ID RCE-51604 IA C127230 LA 559544 MD MHIC11225 MA 213292 MI 262300331 262300330 262300328 262300328 262300318 262300173 MN IR810524 MT 266192 NE 50145-24 NV 86990 NJ 13VH13285000 NM 408693 ND 47304 OR 218294 PA PA179843 RI GC-41354 TN 10981 UT 10783658-5501 VT 174.0000871 VA 2705169445 WA LEAFFLH783PG WV WV056912 *The leading consumer reporting agency conducted a 16 month outdoor test of gutter guards in 2010 and recognized LeafFilter as the #1 rated professionally installed gutter guard system in America.

GENERAC

#1 standby generator worldwide.

Get whole-home power, automatically.

Call 844-947-1479 to schedule your free quote today!

*Terms & conditions apply

CLASSIFIED

WWW.CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM

To ADVERTISE IN THIS PAPER, CALL BY MONDAY 11:00 AM 703-778-9411

The Bath or Shower You've Always Wanted
IN AS LITTLE AS A DAY



\$1,500 OFF*

PLUS

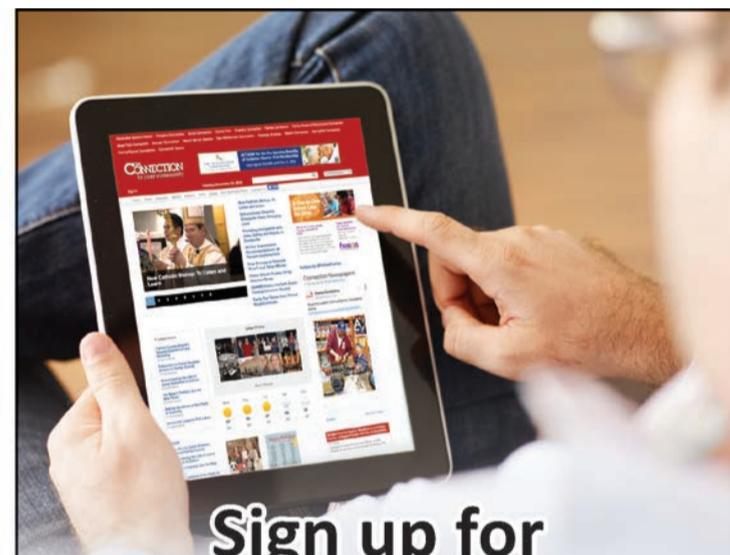
ZERO Interest, ZERO Payments financing for 12 Months**

OFFER EXPIRES 3/30/2026



CALL NOW (844) 945-1631

*Includes labor and product; bathtub, shower or walk-in tub and wall surround. This promotion cannot be combined with any other offer. Other restrictions may apply. This offer expires 3/30/26. Each dealership is independently owned and operated. **Third party financing is available for those customers who qualify/Participating dealers only. See your dealer for details. ©2026 Bath Concepts Industries.



Sign up for

FREE DIGITAL SUBSCRIPTION

to any or all of our 15 papers

WWW.CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM/SUBSCRIBE



Past issues of

THE CONNECTION NEWSPAPERS

back to 2008 are available at

<http://connectionarchives.com/PDF>

The Arlington Connection

www.ConnectionNewspapers.com

Twitter @ArlConnection

An independent, locally owned weekly newspaper delivered to homes and businesses.

Published by Local Media Connection LLC

1606 King Street
Alexandria, Virginia 22314

Free digital edition delivered to your email box. Go to connectionnewspapers.com/subscribe

NEWS DEPARTMENT:
arlington@connectionnewspapers.com

Mary Kimm
Editor and Publisher
mkimm@connectionnewspapers.com

Shirley Ruhe
Contributing Photographer and Writer
slrbc@aol.com

Eden Brown
Contributing Writer
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

Classified & Employment Advertising
703-778-9431

Editor & Publisher
Mary Kimm
mkimm@connectionnewspapers.com
@MaryKimm

Publisher
Jerry Vernon
703-549-0004
jverson@connectionnewspapers.com

Art/Design:
Laurence Foong
Production Manager:
Geovani Flores

CIRCULATION
circulation@connectionnewspapers.com



SENIOR LIVING

Flourishing after 55

Office of 55+ Programs
Department of Parks and Recreation
300 N. Park Dr., Arlington, VA 22203
703-228-4721

55+ Programs are in person at 55+ Centers unless otherwise noted. A 55+ Pass is required to participate (starting at a \$30 annual fee). To join or register, go to registration.arlingtonva.us or call 703-228-4747.

Northern Virginia Senior Olympics (NVSO) looking for volunteers to assist event directors at a variety of events, Sept. 19 – Oct. 10 plus person to write press releases and contact potential Patrons. Experienced volunteer Webmaster also needed. Email Judy Massabny for further details at jmassa@arlingtonva.us.

55+ Ice Skating, Mondays at the MedStar Capitals Iceplex in Ballston Quarter, parking (\$1) on roof level 8, Fee (\$1) includes skate rental, 8:40-9:50 a.m. Pre-registration required at <https://www.medstarcapitaliceplex.com>, register for Senior Public Skate.

Retire well, live well, three-part series starting Monday, March 9, 1 p.m., Aurora Hills 55+ Center. Session 1 covers Social Security, tax planning, early retirement and IRA accounts. Presented by 55+ Center Director Emily Ingram and Wealth Advisor Brian Fyock. Registration #913404-01. Sign up separately for each session. No 55+ Pass needed.

Third Act Dance Ensemble, join this weekly group of folks who love to dance and learn an original piece of choreography, Wednesdays, March 11- May 20, 1:30 p.m., Walter Reed 55+ Center. Be prepared to rehearse then perform. Cost \$99, 11 sessions. Registration # 913802-01.

Bootcamp, total body workout with certified trainer Candice Kaup, Wednesdays March 11 to May 27, 1:30 p.m., Long Bridge Aquatics. All fitness levels welcome. Cost \$66, 12 sessions. Registration # 913100-01.

Digital peace of mind presentation in a two-part series by 55+ volunteer Barbara Fillup. Sign up separately for session 2: Friday, March 20, 1 p.m., manage your digital legacy and explore research tools, registration # 913403-04

Library services, stop by to meet the Cherrydale Library staff, Thursday, March 19, 1 p.m., Langston-Brown 55+ Center. Sign up for an Arlington Public Library card, learn how to access free eBooks and audio books and check out new books for spring reading. Registration # 913400-03.

National Parks for non-hikers, join Park Trip Planner Michelle Zlakowski to learn when and where to travel with activities beyond hiking, Thursday, March 19, 3 p.m., virtual. Registration # 913400-25.

Name That Tune, volunteer Carl Gold will test your memory for songs from the 50s, 60s and 70s and share fun musical facts, Thursday, March 19, 1:30 p.m., Langston-Brown 55+ Center. Registration # 913304-24.

Pride Dance Bingo, a fun game that combines cardio dancing with bingo, created and led by Walter Reed 55+ Center Director Jennifer Weber featuring anthems from LGBTQ+ Icons, Friday, March 20, 11 a.m., Walter Reed. Registration # 913802-02.

NASA's shuttle program presented by George Cecchetti, former Kennedy Space Center employee, Friday, March 20, 10 a.m., Walter Reed 55+ Center, registration # 913400-22 or virtual, registration # 913400-23.

Bayonet basics, led by Arlington Nature Center Historian Blake Lindsey, Friday, March 20, 2 p.m., Fort C.F. Smith Park. Learn actual steps, movements and thrusts used by Civil War

soldiers while working on your health and balance. Registration # 913100-12.

Hello Spring Bingo, win prizes, enjoy light refreshments, bring a guest to learn about the 55+ program. Guest does not need a 55+ Pass nor need to register, Friday, March 20, 1 p.m., Aurora Hills 55+ Center. Registration # 913600-02.

55+ Travel group will attend a performance of "Swan Lake" by Virginia National Ballet at the Hylton Performing Arts Center in Manassas, Friday, March 20. Cost \$68, Arlington resident; \$78, non-resident. Registration # 902603-06.

Forest bathing, relax and engage with nature on a walk led by Nature and Forest Therapy guide Jane Stubbs, Sunday, March 22, 10 a.m., Benjamin Banneker Park, 1680 N. Sycamore Street. Registration # 913106-28.

Yarn Crafters of Aurora Hills 55+ Center make hand-knit and crocheted items for Arlington charity organizations, Monday, March 23, 10 a.m. – 12 p.m. Instruction available and supplies provided. Drop-in.

Chess games, all level of skills, newcomers welcome, Monday, March 23, 9:30 a.m. – 2:30 p.m., Madison Community Center. Drop-in.

Absolute beginner pickleball, your chance to try this sport in a no-judgement-free zone, Monday, March 23, 10 a.m., Walter Reed 55+ Center. Drop-in.

Volleyball games provide fun and exercise, Tuesday, March 24, 3:30 – 5 p.m., Langston-Brown 55+ Center, drop-in; Thursday, March 26, 2 p.m., Lubber Run 55+ Center, drop-in.

Drumming Circle, participants given an opportunity for self-expression, Tuesday, March 24, 2 p.m., Langston-Brown 55+ Center. Drop-in.

Introduction to video games, presented by volunteer Michael Wilner, Wednesday, March 25, 5 p.m., Arlington Mill 55+ Center. Explore basic gaming concepts, discover helpful resources to get started. Registration # 913403-02.

Give line dancing a try, learn the basics from 55+ volunteer Hanni Cordes, Wednesday, March 25, 10:15 a.m., Walter Reed 55+ Center. Drop-in.

Memoir writing group participants reflect on experiences, a special place or time or a life change, Wednesday, March 25, 2 – 4 p.m., Langston-Brown 55+ Center. Registration # 913402-05.

Open Art Studio accommodates artists who work at their own pace in a collaborative space, Wednesday, March 25 and Friday, March 27, 10 a.m. – 12 p.m., Arlington Mill 55+ Center. Drop-in.

Acoustic afternoon, live music featuring classic pop, folk and blues, performed by local musicians PhEd-Up with Friends, Thursday,

March 26, 2 p.m., Langston-Brown 55+ Center. Registration # 913301-04.

Paint along with Community Arts Programmer and recreate artworks on display at area museums, Thursday, March 26, 10 a.m., virtual. Registration # 913303-08.

Crafternoon social group, Friday, March 27, 3 p.m., Lubber Run 55+ Center. Friendly group of experienced yarn crafters who work on knitting, crochet and needlework projects followed by a stroll around the Lubber Run indoor track. Drop-in.

Six pillars of brain health, presented by AARP volunteer Deb Cohen, Ph.D. and former professor at George George Washington and George Mason Universities, Friday, March 27, 1 p.m., Arlington Mill 55+ Center. Learn practical steps and resources to improve brain health. Registration # 913500-04.

Reducing food waste, Monday, March 30, 1 p.m., Aurora Hills 55+ Center. Presented by Aisha Salazar, Virginia Cooperative Extension. Learn actionable strategies, how to save money and support sustainable everyday habits. Registration # 913400-11.

Aurora Hills 55+ Center book club to discuss "Intermezzo" by Sally Rooney, Monday, March 30, 11:30 a.m. Drop-in.

55+ Travel group will participate in a self-guided tour of Arlington National Cemetery using the hop-on, hop-off bus, Monday, March 30. Government issued photo ID required. Lunch on your own in Shirlington. Cost \$35, Arlington resident; \$41, non-resident. includes hop-on, hop-off bus ticket. Registration # 902603-09.

Haiku, a Japanese nature poetry form taught by award-winning writer Rick Black, Tuesday, March 31, 2 p.m., Lubber Run 55+ Center. Registration # 913300-09.

Hearing loss tech to the rescue by Debbie Jones with the Northern Virginia Resource Center for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing Persons who will discuss assistive technologies and Virginia's Technology Assistance Program, Wednesday, April 1, 1 p.m., Aurora Hills 55+ Center. Registration # 913500-02.

Off our Rockers, join the open rehearsal of this grown-up garage band Wednesday, April 1, 10 a.m. – 1 p.m., Madison Community Center. Come sing along, dance or just listen to the playlist of hits from the 50s to the 70s. Drop-in.

Woodcarvers meet to enjoy camaraderie and pursue their craft Thursday, April 2, 1-4 p.m., Langston-Brown 55+ Center. Members of the group are available to provide instruction; some tools are available. Drop-in.

First Friday Social at Arlington Mill 55+ Center, April 3, 1 p.m., kick off the month with good company and great conversation with music and light refreshments. Registration # 913801-05.

Penny for Your Thoughts



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

Not anymore. As of Nov. 12, 2025, the U.S. Mint has stopped printing/making pennies. From that date onward to the present - and future, the American exact-changer cash payer will be on his/her own. No longer will the penny reserve of the rolls of pennies so regularly broken across cash-register draws be in play. According to the Mint, they're just too expensive. The penny costs more to produce than it does to pay. And so, as a direct consequence, I've already seen signs at miscellaneous businesses - who still collect cash, requesting "Exact change" from their in-store customers. In other cash exchanges, I've received a rounded-up nickel to compensate for the pennies printing demise. In summary, pennies don't make sense anymore. Who would have thought?

It's taken over 250 years for Benjamin Franklin's advisory: "A penny saved is a penny earned" to lose its relevance in history. In fact, for those of you who have saved your pennies in a receptacle at home, it may be time to do your patriotic duty and help your fellow consumer as well as your local brick and mortar store by cashing in your pennies. It's not exactly a rainy day. However, for cash customers and commercial establishments, there will not be pennies from heaven anymore - and certainly none from the U.S. Mint. Perhaps that's a non-buying opportunity. Since pennies might be a disappearing commodity, holding on to your pennies now might actually be penny wise and but pound foolish - for once. Their numismatic value might go up once their availability goes down.

Or perhaps pennies will end up in "the trash bin of history" along with the one-dollar coin and the two-dollar bill (the \$500, \$1,000 and \$10,000 denominations are not in circulation for another reason). Gone but not forgotten, they shall be," to invoke Yoda from "Star Wars." Good riddance, others might say, as our economy grows more online than in person, the penny becomes, especially given its upside-down cost to produce relative to its street value, an unnecessary appendage, so to speak.

Speaking of street value/formerly everyday/common uses of the penny, there's no more obvious example of the penny's outdatedness than "Penny candy." Given what you pay for the "Penny candy," these days, its name should be changed to "Quarter candy." It will be particularly difficult to continue calling it "penny candy" when there are no more pennies. It's more a figure of speech now anyway. Moreover, the fewer pennies there are in circulation/customer pockets, the less appealing these "penny" enticements will be. Otherwise, this is the use of a penny that will be dreadful. Misleading customers generally doesn't result to long-term success.

If there is going to be a present/future without pennies, what might the impact be to those who are named "Penny" (one of my neighbors in fact), will she be asked the origin of such a unique/unfamiliar given name? Will she have to change her name to "Nickel" to keep up with the times - and inflation? When an increase is characterized as "Pennies on the dollar," will an explanation be required (as in "What's a penny?")

Will the expression "For two cents I'd punch you right in the nose" disappear from our jargon (mine anyway)?

I certainly don't know the answers to any of these questions; nevertheless, I thought I'd write you my two-cents worth.

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

BULLETIN BOARD

FROM PAGE 9

den. At 2909 S. 16th St. Hours are flexible but must be able to meet during the day at least once per month. Gardening experience preferred, but not required, must be 21. Volunteer.leadercenter.org
AARP Foundation Tax-Aide is seeking volunteers to participate in a free, non-profit program, offered in conjunction with the IRS, that provides tax filing assistance to people of low- and middle-income, with special attention paid to those aged 60-plus. Training will be available in December and January to help taxpayers Feb. 1-April 18, 2017. Visit www.aarp.org/taxaide.

STEM Volunteers Wanted. The American Association for the Advancement of Science needs scientists, engineers, mathematicians, and physicians to assist Arlington's K-12 STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics) teachers during the 2016-17 school year. The details of the collaboration are worked out between the teacher and the volunteer, and may involve giving demonstrations, assisting in lab experiments, lecturing on special topics, assisting with homework, etc. Hours are flexible, and volunteers attend a one-day orientation session. To be considered, send a brief bio with home address to donaldrea@aol.com, or call Don Rea, 703-237-7683.

Raise Your **Expectations**

FOR RETIREMENT

Imagine a retirement community investing in your future as thoughtfully as you have invested in your life. Introducing **Project RISE**, the next phase of growth at Vinson Hall. This transformative expansion will add 126 new independent living residences, expanded community spaces, and modern amenities designed to elevate everyday living. Larger apartments. Inviting gathering places. Outdoor courtyards and walking paths that support wellness and connection.

For nearly 60 years, Vinson Hall has served McLean with distinction as a not-for-profit Life Plan Community. On our beautiful 23-acre campus just minutes from Washington, D.C., we're raising the bar on retirement expectations: maintenance-free living, world-class experiences and security of comprehensive care if you ever need it. We invite you to connect with our team to learn more and begin planning your next chapter.

- ▶ MAJOR EXPANSION UNDERWAY
- ▶ INDEPENDENT LIVING
- ▶ ASSISTED LIVING
- ▶ MEMORY CARE
- ▶ LARGE PARK-LIKE CAMPUS
- ▶ NOT FOR PROFIT
- ▶ LIMITED AVAILABILITY



**READY TO START
PLANNING YOUR FUTURE?**
Demand is high for our expansion and
availability is limited. Scan or call
703-935-1438 to learn more.



**VINSON
HALL**

