

The Arlington Connection

Joyce Rena Bumbray-Graves, a 63-year-old home care worker, speaks during the "Sick of It! Fix Health Care Now" national campaign launch in Arlington, Va., Wednesday, July 17.

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A Little Help
to Get Home
to Romania

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In Search of
Health Care Solutions

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Primary Election Aug. 4

BY SHIRLEY RUHE
ARLINGTON CONNECTION

It's Aug. 1, the last day for early voting for the Arlington primary election. At Langston-Brown Community Center, one of the early voting locations, they report 98 voters at 12:30 pm. Penni O'Hearn, the Election Official says, "It's not as many as a general election but that's to be expected."

Two poll greeters have picked a place in the shade to sit outside the front door at Langston-Brown on the last day for early voting.

Jack Kinkaid supports Don Beyer for reelection to Congress and Matt de Ferranti for reelection to the Arlington County Board. Kinkaid says he supports Don Beyer because he has seniority in Congress "and Beyer supports the same policies I do such as affordable housing and schools." Kinkaid supports de Ferranti because de Ferranti has been on the Board for 8 years, and "he knows what he is doing."

Sarah Dinkelman is supporting Michael Christian Duffin for Congress "because he is a DOGE Federal worker and I feel like the current incumbent didn't do enough to support Federal workers."

The primary ballot includes a choice for Congress, the Senate and for the Arlington County Board. Only offices with more than one candidate are on the primary ballot.

Arlington has an open primary which

means a voter does not register by political party. Any registered voter is eligible to vote in any primary election. If both parties hold their primary on the same day, a voter must choose which party ballot they wish to vote.

Voting for County Board is by the ranked choice voting style. This means voters rank candidates in order of preference up to three choices. Arlington implemented this style of voting on a pilot basis in the June 2023 primary election. It has been approved for the 2026 and 2027 County Board general elections.

Democratic Primary: County Board

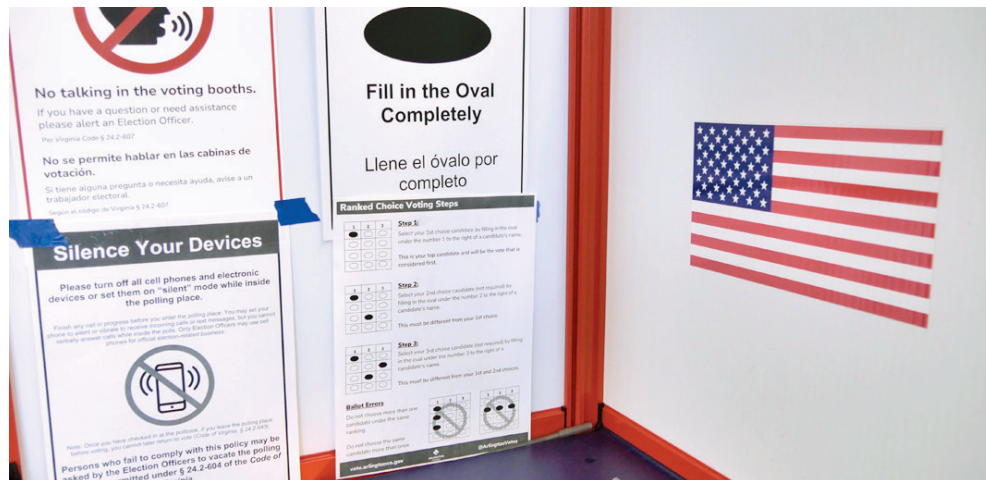
James A. DeVita
Matthew D. "Matt" de Ferranti
Julie Farnam

U.S. House of Representatives (8th District)

Mo Seifeldein
Michael Christian Duffin
Donald S. Beyer Jr.
Adam M. Dunigan
Lorena Thorne Bruner

Republican Primary U.S. Senate

Bert Mizusawa
Kim Arl
David E. Williams



Arlington primary election is Aug. 4. Voting booth at Langston Brown Community Center.



Two poll greeters outside Langston-Brown Community Center on Aug. 1. Sarah Dinkelman supports Michael Christian Duffin for Congress; Jack Kinkaid supports Don Beyer for reelection to Congress

Federal Election Monitors Draw Senate Backlash in Virginia Primary, Aug 4.

A look inside one quiet Fairfax County precinct.

BY MERCIA HOBSON
THE CONNECTION

Fairfax County and Prince William County are the two jurisdictions in Virginia designated for federal election monitors during the Aug. 4 dual Democratic and Republican congressional primary elections.

A sample ballot displayed at Precinct 320 (Herndon No. 2) in Fairfax County shows candidates competing in the Republican primary for the U.S. Senate on Tuesday, Aug. 4. The Senate primary is the only race on the local ballot because both the Democratic and Republican primaries for Virginia's 11th Congressional District were canceled after incumbent Democratic Rep. James Walkinshaw

and Republican challenger Arthur Purves ran uncontested for their respective party nominations.

The deployment of federal election monitors is part of an ongoing 15-jurisdiction primary-season initiative that spans multiple election days throughout July, August and September across six states under the Justice Department's Civil Rights Division to observe local voting procedures. It is a program critics and some lawmakers point out focuses almost exclusively on Democratic-leaning localities, representing 65% to 75% of all monitored sites.

The monitoring effort arrives amid heightened scrutiny from federal lawmakers. On Aug. 3, 10 Democratic U.S. senators representing six states — including Virginia Senators Mark Warner and Tim Kaine, alongside colleagues Alex Padilla (Calif.), Richard J. Durbin (Ill.), Jeanne Shaheen (N.H.), Margaret Wood Hassan (N.H.), Amy Klobuchar (Minn.), Tina Smith (Minn.), Elissa Slotkin

(Mich.), and Gary C. Peters (Mich.) — sent a formal letter to Acting Attorney General Todd Blanche and Assistant Attorney General Harmeet Dhillon urging the Department to ensure monitors operate within strict legal boundaries.

According to Scott Fujita, the chief election official at Precinct 320 (Herndon No. 2) located at the Herndon Community Center, if federal election monitors arrive, he was told that they must present a "formal letter of introduction," be strictly nonpolitical, and be treated like standard poll watchers bound by the same precinct rules.

Ninety minutes after the polls opened, Fujita said no federal election monitors had arrived, and a total of three voters had cast their ballots that morning.

"In this case, they're not representing a party," Fujita noted, comparing federal observers to traditional poll watchers. Standard poll watchers are almost always affiliated with a specific political party or candidate, sent by local Demo-

cratic or Republican committees or by specific primary candidates. They carry a formal letter signed by their party chairman or candidate authorizing them to sit inside the precinct.

"Federal election monitors have been present at election sites on Election Day for decades and play a critical role in assessing if state and local elections are administered in compliance with federal civil and voting rights laws, including the laws that guarantee equal access to the polls, language assistance, and disability accommodations," the senators wrote in their letter to Blanche and Dhillon.

The senators emphasized that American elections have consistently proven secure under leaders of both major parties. But they cautioned that the observer program "must not be used to undermine that fact," writing that monitors "must carry out their responsibilities in a manner that respects and upholds voters' rights, complies with the applicable legal

requirements, and does not interfere with state and local election officials' administration of the voting process."

The senators requested a "staff briefing and responses" to 12 questions. Key questions focused on the program's legal authority and objectives, the criteria used to select jurisdictions for monitoring alongside related internal documentation, and procedures for recruiting, vetting, training, and supervising monitors.

Additional inquiries targeted qualifications and eligibility requirements, specifically whether political appointees are permitted to serve, as well as safeguards to prevent voter intimidation, interference, or partisan activity. Finally, the senators sought documentation of any policy or training changes implemented since Jan. 20, 2025, and established procedures for documenting observations and investigating complaints regarding monitor conduct.

So Many Ways to Enjoy the Arlington County Fair

Plan ahead to play to your strengths.

BY SHIRLEY RUHE
ARLINGTON CONNECTION

The Arlington County Fair is just days away beginning on Aug. 12 and running until Aug. 16. You can participate in the Fair in a number of different ways—as an attendee, volunteer, entertainer, vendor or competitor.

Of course you can attend the Fair and load up on your yearly favorite corn dog with a sticky pink lemonade or the impossible deep fried Oreos, or your favorite once a year funnel cakes with a selection of international food available from falafel to a grape leaf platter. Or all of them.

You can bring along the children for a spin on the ferris wheel or the heart stopping instant plunge from the Super Shot. This year Cole Shows Amusement is offering a Fun-Tagg app which is a new digital ticketing system to load credits for the rides before you go to make it easier to pack in as many as your wallet can stand. One credit equals \$1 equals 1 credit; 24 credits equals \$20 with a scale going to 125 credits for \$100. Each ride takes 4-8 credits with height requirements for some of the rides. Presale tickets can be purchased at a discounted price online by Aug. 12 at 5 pm.

You could also volunteer to work a four-hour shift at one of the many vendor sites such as indoor entertainment or vendor set-up or breakdown and outdoor logistics. It is necessary to fill out a Volunteer Interest Form and to attend a volunteer orientation to receive a specific assignment. Students required to volunteer for school or a specific organization may get a letter confirming their hours to meet their requirement. Court ordered volunteers are accepted on a case by case basis. More details about volunteering can be found on the website.

And if you have been waiting to enter grandma's famous peach pie recipe or your own version of garlic dill pickles in one of the many categories in the competitions, now's the time to give it a try. A competitive exhibits guide is available on the website listing the categories from baked goods to honey, jams and jellies, muffins, art needlework, crafts and fine arts, landscape and nature photography, herbs, baskets, flowers and educational exhibits. The registration form is on the website, and the last day to register is Aug. 10. Each entry must have an email address.

All items except baked goods must be delivered Wednesday, Aug. 12 from 4-8 pm in order to leave time for judging. Baked goods should be delivered the morning of Thursday, Aug. 13 from 7:30 a.m. - 9 a.m. No submissions will be accepted after 9 am. Items submitted must have been produced solely by the person who enters, and more than one entry may be submitted in the same category.

The individual departments may have specific rules for those entering in a particular area.



Arlington County Fair rides from 2023.

FILE PHOTOS BY SHIRLEY RUHE



ular area.

An awards ceremony honoring Department Grand Champions and Grand Reserve Champions will be held at the indoor Stage on Sunday, Aug. 16 at 1 p.m.

If you like to compete with a group of other food lovers you can sign up for the pizza eat-a-slice at 12 p.m. followed by the burrito eating contest at 1 p.m. and ending with the pie eating championship at 1:30 p.m. ... or

if you have a teenager in the family or a cast iron stomach and a fun loving nature, sign up for all three.

Plan Ahead

There are so many things to do and see with free entertainment scattered through the days and nights that it's best to make a plan ahead of time so your six-year-old doesn't discover too late that she's missed Drew Blue Shoes. On the other side of the equation, the Fair is looking for dancers, singers, and musicians to showcase local talent by performing at the fair.

Since parking is limited at the Thomas Jefferson Community Center site to ADA permits only, they have advised those who want to keep life simple to park at the Ballston Mall Parking Garage (627 N Glebe Rd.) and take the free shuttle to the fairgrounds. There are plenty of bike racks for those who want to use this method of transportation, and the Art 41 bus stops on the corner just down the street with the Metrobus A70 and Metrobus A12-stopping at 2nd Street S. There is a designated ride share zone along S. Old Glebe Rd. and the corner of 2nd St. S for a two-minute only passenger pick up or drop off.

The Fair first took place in 1977 and had no midway or rides but was focused on 4-H and community garden exhibits, educational displays and games for kids. Today the fair has grown to include live entertainment, over 100 vendors, Kid's Court activities, carnival rides, a Night Market for local artisans to sell their handcrafted goods, and an astonishing selection of fair food.

Admission to the fair and entertainment are free.

The Fair is located at Thomas Jefferson Community Center at 3501 Second Street South.

WWW.CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM

NEWS

Ion Chilom Returns Home to Romania

With a little help from a friend.

BY SHIRLEY RUHE
ARLINGTON CONNECTION

Mark Mooney said it was just an accident that he met Ion Chilom, an unhoused 71-year-old Romanian. Chilom was reading the daily paper at the Arlington Central Library, and a friend introduced them.

Now with Mooney's help, Chilom is counting down the six days until he returns home to Romania on Aug. 4. "I am counting the days because my family wants to see me back." Chilom hasn't been back to Romania since he arrived in the U.S. in 1981. He says his attempt to return in 1989 was cut short by a revolution in his home country.

Mooney explains, "I had seen Ion around the Ballston area for a while. Around the same time I had been spending a lot of time in the library using their resources since my computer was broken and I was waiting for it to be repaired. I ran into a friend of mine who introduced me to Ion. I didn't think too much about it at the time."

But Mooney spent the next several months gradually getting to know Chilom's story — first a few conversations around the Ballston area, then bringing Chilom leftover food. "Then I began seeking Ion out. As the weeks went by I learned in his broken English that Ion had an interesting past and was only recently unhoused when the man who he had been caring for died. It left him with no income.

"Ion had been in the Romanian Army and an electrician back in Romania but couldn't transfer his credentials to America. Chilom told me he came to America in 1981 and swam the Danube River twice to escape Communism and have a better life. He helped five others escape as well."

Things fell apart for Chilom recently after he lost his income from the man he cared for, and some of his benefits got suspended. Since he had no email in place or phone, he couldn't be reached for proof of life checks by state and Federal agencies. Mooney says it's a little complicated but he lost some benefits, and the state started taking money from one of his benefits to pay for another, and in July he got \$40.

Chilom spent the winter in the Homeless Services Center by the Courthouse but he told Mooney, "I won't make another winter there." Mooney says, "It's tough even with resources. He's so damn independent. And Chilom told me you get a blend of every sort of person in the shelter that you have to deal with."

Mooney says as he got to know Chilom he found himself impressed by how clean Chilom kept himself under his circumstances and how organized he was with all of his documents. "It made all of this much easier. Chilom broke his leg and has a significant limp but goes everywhere I do. He is a tough son of a gun. He is a man of integrity, and I admire him.

"Then in mid-June, it just hit me. He's got to go home. It just came to me." So Mooney set up a Go Fund Me account and reached out



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

Ion Chilom (left) wearing backpack provided by Eva Myers and the new white shirt purchased with funds from the Go Fund Me effort initiated by Mark Mooney

to Romanian organizations and journalists, and the global news supported the story. He raised \$6,200 to buy Chilom some essentials and send him back to Romania. "It came together quicker than I had imagined. They were amazingly efficient."

Chilom says, "I love Romania and I love America but it's time to go home. God bless you all for helping me."

Mooney says they have paid for the flight and a few essentials and Chilom needs a watch and some basics to go home. "We put him in a Comfort Inn for 10 days and then moved him to a room until he leaves."

Chilom has a nephew back in Romania who will meet him at the airport and he will stay there in Budapest for a couple of weeks, then move back to his hometown of Cetățu on the other side of the country.

Mooney says, "He has been saying 'if,' and I say 'when.' This is real. I have already booked the flight, and we are counting the days. I see him every day to be sure he stays on track. For a tough guy, he is emotional. He thanks God every time."

Stormwater Utility Fee Structure for Each Property Type			
Equivalent Residential Unit (ERU) = 2,400 sq. Impervious Area (IA)			
Single-Family Attached	Single-Family Detached	Multi-Family	Non-Residential
 (Townhomes and Duplexes) Each property charged 0.6 ERU	 • Tier 1 (≤ 1600 SF): 0.6 ERU • Tier 2 (>1600 – ≤ 3600 SF): 1 ERU • Tier 3 (> 3600 – ≤ 4800 SF): 1.7 ERU • Cap (> 4800 SF): Per ERU, like Non-residential	 Flat fee of 0.18 ERU per dwelling unit	 Charged based on the impervious area of each property, per ERU

Stormwater Utility Fee Rate

The Arlington County Board adopted the Calendar Year (CY) 2026 Stormwater Utility rate at \$268 per ERU. First-half CY 2026 installments were due June 15. Second-half installments are due on Oct. 5.

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Styrofoam Food Containers Now Banned

Restaurants choosing alternatives for carry out containers.

BY GLENDA C. BOOTH
THE CONNECTION

As of July 1, Virginia's retail food vendors, like restaurants, can no longer use polystyrene containers for customers' prepared food.

Polystyrene, also known as EPS or expanded polystyrene, is more commonly known by its trademark name, Styrofoam. It is a polymer that is converted into foam form and often used for carryout food and beverages. Most of the products, like cups, plates and takeout boxes, are used only once.

The state ban applies to vendors serving prepared food, including restaurants, cafeterias, food trucks, catering companies, grocery stores, schools and government agencies, any entity "that regularly provides food as part of its services," according to the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ).

In the Mount Vernon area, Jimmy Nicopoulos at Primo's Family Restaurant in the Belle View Shopping Center says he'll use plastic and paper. He noted that Styrofoam does not work anyway for tomato sauces. "My goal is for people to get their food home safely." Big Boy Biscuits at the weekly Wednesday Mount Vernon Farmers Market uses compostable paper containers.

Sherwood Gourmet Deli will wrap their quesadillas in tinfoil.

Caroline Ross, River Bend Bistro owner in the Hollin Hall Shopping Center, already uses paper. "I hate Styrofoam," she said recently.

The Problem

In Clean Virginia Waterways' 2024 coastal cleanup, people collected over 1,600 foam food containers, 2,600 foam plates and cups and around 2,500 pieces of foam packaging.

Litter Free Virginia reports that polystyrene does not naturally biodegrade and can leach chemicals into the air and water. It often breaks down into small pieces which can be ingested by animals or humans. Birds and fish, for example, mistake it for food. Little is recycled and in fact, it is difficult to recycle.

"It takes at least 500 years to break down and less than one percent is recycled," says a DEQ flyer. "It is made from styrene, a possible carcinogen. Chronic exposure to high levels of styrene can cause liver and nerve tissue damage."

Industry View

Speaking for the Virginia restaurant industry, Gary Cohen, Executive Vice President of Government Affairs and Franchising, Glory Days Grill, said, "The reason I am against this new law is that it greatly impacts the cost of our carryout containers at a time when restaurants are struggling to survive the rising cost of food, labor, gasoline surcharges, tariffs, credit card fees and out of



Caroline Ross, River Bend Bistro owner in the Hollin Hall Shopping Center, already stopped using Styrofoam. "I hate Styrofoam."



Some food containers are made of plant-based, recyclable materials.

control taxes as well.

"Restaurants have always been a low profit business, and since COVID, profitability has become much worse. According to a recent study by the National Restaurant Association, 42 percent of all restaurants were unprofitable last year. My estimate is that this change in the law will add approximately \$32,000 in paper costs for each of our restaurants per year, based on our new pricing, which is more than triple the cost of Styrofoam. We operate 14 restaurants in Virginia, so annualized our cost impact will \$450,000 per year which is simply unsustainable." He says that other countries recycle Styrofoam. "I thought Virginia could as well."

DEQ's website says that localities may grant vendors an exemption for up to one



PHOTOS BY GLENDA BOOTH

Many food vendors have traditionally used carryout containers like this.



The city of Alexandria posted this sign around town.



Styrofoam breaks down into small pieces that can be ingested by wildlife.

year and people can file complaints for possible violations with their locality.

As for alternatives, DEQ lists reusable containers, recycled paper, plant fibers such as bamboo and wheat straw, foil, metal and recyclable plastic.

Information

<https://www.cleanvirginiawaterways.org/foam-phase-out>

<https://www.deq.virginia.gov/land-waste/waste-management/litter-prevention/foam-free-resources>

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Drowning Is Silent. Prevention Is Not.

Drowning prevention starts before a child ever enters the water.

BY MARILYN CAMPBELL
THE CONNECTION

The radio crackles before the ambulance reaches the emergency department.

A child has been pulled from the water.

Within moments, the room begins to transform. Nurses gather equipment. A respiratory therapist prepares oxygen. Blood tubes are laid out.

An emergency physician reviews the information coming from paramedics: a child, water, CPR already in progress.

Everyone knows their role.

What they don't know is whether the next few minutes will end with a child going home or a family leaving the hospital forever changed.

For Dr. Miriam Fischer, an emergency physician with MedStar Health, these are the moments she wishes families never experience.

"I wish I'd put a life jacket on them."

"I wish I hadn't looked away."

"I wish I'd put up barriers."

Those are the words she hears from parents after a drowning.

"When parents feel like they could have done something differently to prevent this, it's very, very sad," said Fischer who previously worked in the Emergency Department at Inova Fairfax Hospital. "You never want a parent to have that regret."

According to the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), drowning is the leading cause of death for children ages 1 to 4, and the second leading cause of unintentional injury death for children ages 5 to 14 in the United

States.

Yet Fischer says one of the greatest dangers is that many parents misunderstand what drowning looks like.

"People envision somebody flopping their arms and screaming for help," she said. "That's not how it usually happens."

Instead, drowning is often silent.

"It can take under 30 seconds."

That misconception can be deadly.

Fischer said vacations can also create a false sense of security. At backyard pools, neighborhood gatherings and family vacations, adults often assume someone else is watching.

"Vacation mode can be wonderful, but also dangerous because everybody's trying to relax," she said. "If parents are sitting on the beach reading a book, having a drink and not watching, that's when we get into trouble."

"You really need to designate a person assigned to watch each child at every moment" Fischer said.

Swimming skills can reduce risk, but they do not eliminate it.

"Kids get tired," she said. "Even strong swimmers can drown."

Fischer said life jackets are one of the simplest and most effective ways to prevent tragedies on the water.

"I wear one when we go boating because I don't want to have to swim all the way ashore if we go overboard," she said. "I also want to set an example for my kids. It is easy to get caught up in currents or not realize how far it is to swim back to shore. There's no shame in putting on a life jacket if you're worried. You can wear one and still have fun."

Before Your Family Gets in the Water

- ❖ Designate one adult as the water watcher
- ❖ Put phones away during water supervision
- ❖ Pack properly fitted Coast Guard approved life jackets
- ❖ Know where emergency equipment is located
- ❖ Learn CPR
- ❖ Check pool barriers and gates
- ❖ Identify whether a beach has lifeguards

Virginia law requires one properly fitted, U.S. Coast Guard-approved life jacket for every person aboard a boat, kayak, canoe, paddleboard or personal watercraft.

Prevention, Fischer says, is built one small decision at a time. And when a child does struggle in the water, what happens before the ambulance arrives can change everything.

"The one thing I'd want to stress about drowning is that immediate CPR makes a huge impact and really saves lives," Fischer said.

For Arlington CPR instructor Damian Cook, one of the biggest barriers is not ability. It is fear.

"People worry they're going to do something wrong," Cook said. "But the worst

thing you can do is nothing."

In CPR classes, parents and caregivers practice compressions and learn how to respond during the moments when waiting is not an option.

Those skills matter because drowning is not always the end of the story.

"If you see a child struggling in the water, pull them out and start CPR," Fischer said. "You can save their life."

Inside the emergency department, Fischer and her team are prepared for the moments after prevention has failed.

Outside the hospital, Fischer said she hopes her work begins long before an ambulance is ever needed.

"My goal as an ER doctor is to make sure parents never have to experience this."

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://scmafc.org/volunteer>, or email contact@scmafc.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

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.

ONGOING

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.

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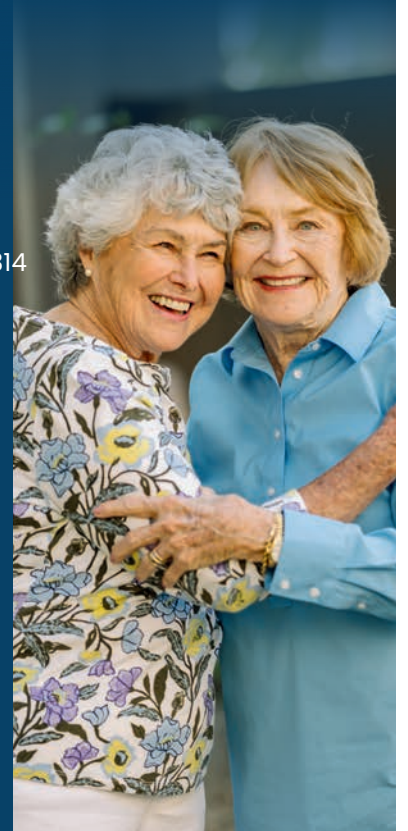
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News

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/>.

YEAR ROUND ON SUNDAYS

Farmer's Market. 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. At Casa



DMV Girls Hockey Weekend will be held Sept. 12-13, 2026 in Arlington.

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.

SUMMER EVENTS ON COLUMBIA PIKE

The Columbia Pike Partnership invites residents to enjoy a variety of community events throughout July and August, including outdoor movies, networking opportunities, and educational lunch programs that celebrate the people, businesses, and culture of Columbia Pike.

August 6 – Paws on the Pike Happy Hour Celtic House

Animal lovers are invited to network with neighbors while meeting adoptable dogs and learning about local pet resources. The event will feature adoptable pups and community partners supporting animal welfare. RSVP on the Columbia Pike Partnership website. Free cocktails for first 20 attendees.

August 26 – Lunch Club at MoMoGoGo

Featuring the artist behind the new Goodwill mural. Enjoy lunch and conversation while learning about the creative process, inspiration, and community impact of one of Columbia

Pike's newest public art installations. RSVP on the Columbia Pike Partnership website.

SATURDAY/AUG. 8

Comedy Karaoke Trivia Funtime Show. 7:30 p.m. At Highline RxR, 2010 Crystal Drive, Arlington. Bring a team or fly solo and win prizes by dropping knowledge in a trivia competition, then duking it out in a karaoke battle! Hosted by Christian Hunt, this amazing experience features comedy from the DC area's finest comics. The headliner for August's show is the hilarious Dom Grayer. Visit capitalcityshowcase.com.

AUG. 12-16

Arlington County Fair Celebrates 50 Years!

The Arlington County Fair returns to Thomas Jefferson Community Center Aug. 12-16 as it celebrates 50 years of community, tradition and unforgettable summer memories. Enjoy rides, games, entertainment and food for all ages. Have a favorite Fair memory or photo? Help celebrate this milestone by sharing your story.

FRIDAY/AUG. 21

Spotted Lanternflies are Here. What To Do Now. 10-11 a.m. Online. Virtual Classroom Series with Extension Master Gardeners. Have you been seeing increasing numbers of black and white polka dotted insects, or red and black and white polka dotted insects in your yard of late? These could likely be the invasive spotted lanternfly, which have been showing up in Arlington and the City of Alexandria. If you have any Tree of Heaven in your area, you may also see large numbers of these insects on their favorite invasive host plant. You may wonder what damage these invasive pests are causing, and what you can do about them. Join the Extension Master Gardeners and Arlington's Natural Resource team members to learn more about the life cycle of the spotted lanternfly, and the best ways to get rid of them while not harming our native pollinators and wildlife. You will also learn about their favorite host

plant, the invasive Tree of Heaven, and best practices you can use to get rid of them on private property, or how to properly report them in public areas.

FRIDAY/AUG. 28

Grass Roots. 10:00-11:30 a.m., ONLINE.

Grass Roots: Turf Structure, Smart Care, and Low-Growing Alternatives. Grass - it all looks the same, until it doesn't. "Grass Roots" takes you from the ground up, exploring what turf really is, how it grows, and why it behaves differently from yard to yard. Cool-season or warm-season, fine-bladed or tall and tough, clumping or creeping: this session unpacks the details behind every patch, and how smarter care starts with picking the right species for your spot. We'll spotlight the latest, improved grass varieties that handle wear, pests, and weather better than ever. And for those tricky spaces where grass just won't win, or where you want a change, we'll introduce resilient, low-growing alternatives worth planting. Join Extension Master Gardener Henry Staples to dig in and discover how a little know-how leads to a healthier, better-looking landscape.

SEPT. 12-13

DMV Girls Hockey Weekend. Registration is now open for the first-ever DMV Girls Hockey Weekend (previously DMV Girls Try Hockey for Free Day), taking place at 18 rinks across Maryland and Virginia on Sept. 12-13. DMV Girls Hockey Weekend is a joint effort between the Washington Capitals, Monumental Sports & Entertainment (MSE) Foundation, the Potomac Valley Amateur Hockey Association (PVAHA) and various youth hockey organizations throughout the region to introduce girls ages 4-9 to hockey at no cost. Participating clubs in Virginia include: Ashburn Ice House (Ashburn, VA), Caps Academy at MedStar Capitals Iceplex (Arlington, VA), Hampton Roads Warriors/Hampton Roads Youth Hockey Association at Iceland of Hampton Roads (Virginia Beach, VA), NoVA Ice Dogs at Mount Vernon RECenter (Alexandria, VA), Potomac Lady Patriots at Prince William Ice Center (Woodbridge, VA), Reston Raiders at SkateQuest (Reston, VA), Richmond Generals at Richmond Ice Zone (Chesterfield, VA), Roanoke Lady Dawgs at Lancerlot Sports Complex (Vinton, VA) and STJ Hockey Club at The St. James (Springfield, VA). Visit capsyouthhockey.com.

SEPT. 26-27

Ninth AVAST Tour. At various art studios in Arlington. Visitors can view the art of 60 creative individuals who represent a wide range of styles and media. In addition to painting, drawing, photography, and sculpture, artists in the Arlington area are known for printmaking, photography, papercutting, letterpress, and jewelry. The Tour will publish a guide and map with the names, locations and opening hours of participating artists. Printed copies will be available at community centers, arts venues, and libraries by early September. Those interested can also plan their route online: www.arlingtonartstudiotour.org/. Studios in South Arlington will be open Sat., Sept. 26 (11 a.m. – 5 p.m.), and studios in North Arlington will be open Sun., Sept. 27 (11 a.m. – 5 p.m.). Visit [https://www.arlingtonartstudiotour.org/](http://www.arlingtonartstudiotour.org/) for more information.

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 \$31 annual fee). To join or register, go to registration.

arlingtonva.us or call 703-228-4747.

Pickleball for all ages, come give it a try, Mondays and Fridays, 12:30 p.m., Tuesdays and Thursdays, 12:30 p.m., Walter Reed 55+ Center. Drop-in.

Mah Jongg games, American style, Mondays, Thursdays, Saturdays, 12 - 4 p.m., Walter Reed 55+ Center, drop-in; Mondays and Fridays, 10

a.m.– 12 p.m., Aurora Hills 55+ Center, drop-in; Tuesdays, 1:30 p.m., Langston-Brown 55+ Center, drop-in; Tuesdays and Thursdays, 2 - 4 p.m., Arlington Mill 55+ Center, drop-in. Beginners welcome.

Mexican Train dominoes, Mondays, 9:30 a.m., Walter Reed 55+ Center; Wednesdays, 2 p.m., Arlington Mill 55+ Center; Sundays, 1:30 p.m., Walter Reed 55+ Center. All are drop-in.

Musician of the Month, 55+ staff select an artist to highlight and share their story and listen to some of their memorable recordings. August's selection is Selena, Tuesday, Aug. 4, 1 p.m., Lubber Run 55+ Center. Registration # 914400-37.

Langston-Brown 55+ Center's book club will discuss "The Names" by Florence Knapp, Tuesday, Aug. 4, 1 p.m. Drop-in.

GenAI smartphone skills, hands-on workshop led by 55+ volunteer Linda Sholl at Arlington Mill 55+ Center. Bring a fully charged phone, computers provided: Arlington Mill 55+ Center, Android session, Tuesday, Aug. 4, 1:30 p.m., registration # 914403-08 and iPhone session, Thursday, Aug. 6,

‘Sick of It! Fix Health Care Now’

A caregiver’s story urges lawmakers to protect health care access and lower out-of-pocket costs.

BY MERCIA HOBSON
THE CONNECTION

“I work so hard to keep people with disabilities alive, and I can’t afford insurance to ensure that I can stay healthy and capable to continue to take care of them,” said Joyce Rena Bumbray-Graves, a 63-year-old home care worker, during the July 17 launch of the “Sick of It! Fix Health Care Now” campaign at Arlington Central Library.

Having survived three pulmonary embolisms, Bumbray-Graves had to stop using a prescribed dry-powder inhaler costing more than \$300 a month without insurance. She has also gone without \$700 to \$900 spinal injections needed to manage chronic back pain.

Bumbray-Graves was joined at the launch by U.S. Rep. Don Beyer, D-Va., Sen. Barbara Favola, D-Arlington, chairwoman of the Virginia Senate Education and Health Committee; Arlington County Board Chair Matt de Ferranti; SEIU Virginia State Council Executive Director David Broder; and local community advocates.

“They can remind people that they passed a bill that strips health care from millions of Americans and raises costs for millions more. All because they decided it was better to fund tax giveaways for billionaires,” Beyer said. “I’m proud to join the Sick of It campaign and I call on my Republican colleagues in Congress to prioritize health care affordability, not tax giveaways for the ultra wealthy.”

Beyer noted that 100,000 Virginians have lost health care coverage in the Affordable Care Act marketplace to date, while federal policy threatens coverage for 550,000 more enrolled in Virginia’s Medicaid program. “That’s almost a tenth of Virginia’s population,” Beyer said. “Many of these people are among the sickest, poorest and most vulnerable people in our communities.”

Organized by Protect Our Care, the nationwide movement highlights patient, provider and family narratives to pressure Congress to safeguard coverage and lower costs. Recent federal budget cuts exceeding \$1 trillion, coupled with the expiration of ACA premium subsidies, have put severe financial strain on patients, safety-net clinics, and regional health systems.

Bumbray-Graves’ experience reflects a growing “grace period” cliff. After a 90-day grace period for elevated premiums ends,

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Joyce Rena Bumbray-Graves speaks during the “Sick of It! Fix Health Care Now” national campaign launch in Arlington, Va., Wednesday, July 17.



Virginia Sen. Barbara Favola, D-Arlington, at the “Sick of It! Fix Health Care Now” held at Arlington Central Library on July 17.



SEIU Virginia State Council Executive Director David Broder speaks at the “Sick of It! Fix Health Care Now” event in Arlington, Va., Wednesday, July 17.

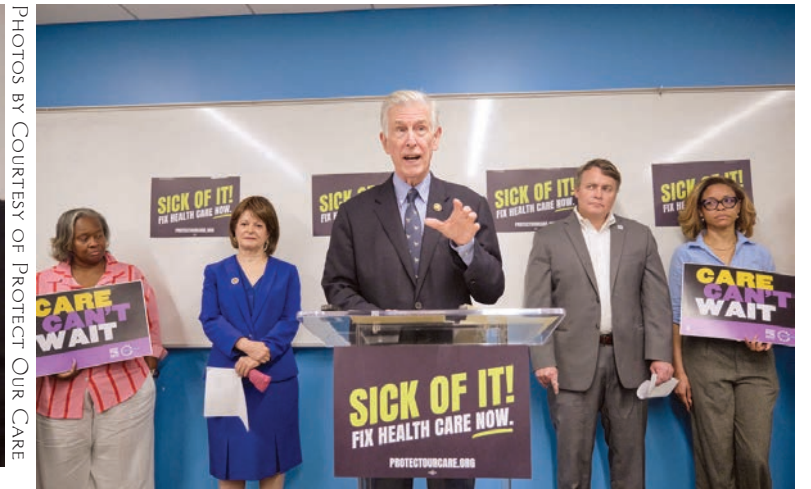
disenrollments spike. To maintain coverage, many buyers downsize to Bronze plans with deductibles reaching up to \$10,000. While Virginia ranks high overall for coverage, Northern Virginia’s middle-income earners and gig workers rely heavily on ACA tax credits.

De Ferranti noted that roughly 26,000 Arlington residents rely on Medicaid. County budgets have allocated funds to support safety nets like the Arlington Free Clinic, but de Ferranti warned local governments cannot fully replace fed-

eral shortfalls.

Favola explained that while the Virginia state legislature created an emergency Medicaid fund to mitigate the negative financial impact of recent federal health care policy changes, the fund has limited capacity. State-level efforts are insufficient to fully offset federal Medicaid cuts and the loss of enhanced premium tax credits, which she noted will leave at least 400,000 Virginians without insurance.

Broder said SEIU union members will share personal stories,



U.S. Rep. Don Beyer, D-Va., speaks at the “Sick of It! Fix Health Care Now” campaign launch at Arlington Central Library.



U.S. Rep. Don Beyer, D-Va., Virginia state Sen. Barbara Favola, D-Arlington, Arlington County Board Chair Matt de Ferranti, SEIU Virginia State Council Executive Director David Broder, and supporters pose together at the “Sick of It! Fix Health Care Now” event at Arlington Central Library in Arlington, Va., Wednesday, July 17



Arlington County Board Chair Matt de Ferranti speaks at the “Sick of It! Fix Health Care Now” campaign event at Arlington Central Library in Arlington, Va., Wednesday, July 17.

educate neighbors, and drive a grassroots movement. “That starts by restoring every single dollar that was cut last year,” Broder said. “And it starts with holding every single elected official who voted for those cuts accountable.”

What’s Next?

Rep. Beyer reiterated his commitment to reversing federal spending reductions during the campaign launch.

“We can’t sugarcoat this,” Beyer said. “People are going to die be-

cause of the Republicans’ ‘Big Ugly Bill,’ and my highest priority is reversing these disastrous cuts.”

Advocates are targeting key political pressure points, starting on Capitol Hill.

In the absence of federal action, Virginia can build on its existing state-level toolkit. The General Assembly can expand state-funded premium subsidies — similar to programs in California and Massachusetts — and continue leveraging its state reinsurance program to curb baseline rate increases.

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SENIOR LIVING

FROM PAGE 8

1:30 p.m., registration # 914403-09.

Scrabble games, Wednesday, Aug. 5, 1 p.m., Lubber Run 55+ Center. Practice for Northern Virginia Senior Olympics in September. Coaching available for new players. Drop-in.

Opera appreciation group will hear and discuss part one of “Semiramide” by Italian composer Giachino Rossini, Wednesday, Aug. 5, 1:30 p.m., Lubber Run 55+ Center. Professional commentary by George Cecchetti. Registration # 914300-05

History discussion group led by Dwight Rodgers of Encore Learning focuses on cultural, economic, artistic and political history, Thursday, Aug. 6, 1 p.m., virtual. Discussion topics emailed to participants prior to each meeting. Registration # 914402-06.

Urban en plein air painting, volunteer artist George Ziobro will guide participants through this unique painting experience in a three part series, Thursdays, Aug. 6, 13 and 20, Langston-Brown 55+ Center. Bring your own painting materials. Experience is helpful, however beginners are welcome. Registration # 914303-06.

Open jam session, bring your favorite acoustic instrument and join volunteers for a relaxed jam featuring folk, country, classic rock, bluegrass, oldies and the blues, Thursday, Aug. 6, 6:30 p.m., Lubber Run 55+ Center. All skill levels welcome. Drop-in.

Crafternoon social group, experienced yarn crafters meet every Friday for an afternoon of sipping tea and working on craft projects followed by a stroll around the indoor track, Friday, Aug. 7, 3 p.m., Lubber Run 55+ Center. Drop-in.

First Friday of the Month Social, relaxed social gathering, tropical escape with fruit beverages plus a Pass the Coconut game, Friday, Aug. 7, 1 p.m., Arlington Mill 55+ Center, Registration # 914801-02.

Social ballroom dance, spacious dance floor, all will have a chance to dance, Friday, Aug. 7, 1:30 p.m., Lubber Run 55+ Center. No instruction, partners not needed. Drop-in,

Tea and a movie, screening of “The Hundred-Foot Journey” “(2014) (PG), Friday, Aug. 7, 12:30 p.m., Aurora Hills 55+ Center. Registration # 914804-06.

Line dance practice, partners not needed, watch as the leader gives a quick demonstration and then dance along, Monday, Aug. 10, 10 a.m., Thursday, Aug. 13, 1 p.m., Arlington Mill 55+ Center; Wednesday, Aug. 12, 11:30 a.m., Walter Reed 55+ Center; Friday, Aug. 14, 11:05 a.m., Aurora Hills 55+ Center. All are drop-in.

Scale down, weight loss support group, private weigh-ins, interesting programs, Monday, Aug. 10, 1:30 p.m., Langston-Brown 55+ Center. Drop-in.

Budgeting made simple, financial learning workshop with Tanise Bing, financial counselor with Arlington Community Federal Credit Union, Monday, Aug. 10, 1 p.m., Aurora Hills 55+ Center. Registration # 914400-06.

Who gets Grandma’s pie plate? Learn how to plan inheritances of family heirlooms while avoiding conflict from Virginia Cooperative Extension Master Financial Education Volunteers, Monday, Aug. 10, 11:30 a.m., Walter Reed 55+ Center. Registration # 914404-06.

Karaoke, sing your heart out to your favorite tunes, cheer on fellow participants, Tuesday, Aug. 11, 2 p.m., Lubber Run 55+ Center. Registration # 914304-16.

Genealogy 101, learn how to use primary sources and DNA services to explore your family’s roots, Tuesday, Aug. 11, 11:30 a.m., Lubber Run 55+ Center. Led by experienced genealogist Eileen Bogdanoff. Registration# 914402-03.

Murder Mystery Dinner Night, Wednesday, Aug. 12, 5:30 p.m., Arlington Mill 55+ Center. Uncover clues and reveal secrets in an interactive game. Bring your own dinner, non-alcoholic beverages and dessert provided. Registration # 914801-05.

The Angler’s Corner, discussion group for those who have a passion for everything fishing, Wednesday, Aug. 12, 11 a.m., Lubber Run 55+ Center. Drop-in.

Piano Lounge and Sing-Along, featuring hot fun in the summertime songs with pianist Valerie Welsh, Wednesday, Aug. 12, 1 p.m., Aurora Hills 55+ Center. Registration # 914304-21.

55+ Travel group will visit the Udvar-Hazy Air and Space Museum in Chantilly, Wednesday, Aug. 12. Enjoy a captivating journey through aviation history. Cost \$12, Arlington resident; \$14, non-resident. Registration # 902608-01.

History discussion group led by Dwight Rodgers from Encore Learning, Thursday, Aug. 13, 1 p.m., virtual. Discussion topics emailed to participants prior to meeting. Registration # 914402-07.

Retirement readiness, join Brian Fyock with Evermay Wealth Management for a presentation on financial considerations for retirement, Thursday, Aug. 13, 6 p.m., Lubber Run 55+ Center. Registration # 914404-07.

Bike to the Fair, meet 55+ Center Director Jennifer Weber at Walter Reed with your bike and helmet for a leisurely bike ride to the Arlington County Fair, Friday, Aug. 14, 5 p.m. Registration # 914206-08.

Sweet sounds and scoops, ice cream social and live music by PhEd-Up with Judy McVerry, Friday, Aug. 14, 1 p.m., Aurora Hills 55+ Center. An afternoon of great flavors, good company and fantastic tunes. Registration # 914899-07.

Let’s go over the 55+ Guide with 55+ staff members, Friday, Aug. 14, 1 p.m., Lubber Run 55+ Center.

Learn about updates followed by Q&A. Registration # 914400-01.

Northern Virginia Senior Olympics (NVSO) looking for volunteers to assist event directors at a variety of events, Sept. 9 – Oct. 4 plus a person to write press releases and contact potential Patrons. Experienced volunteer Webmaster also needed. Email Judy Massabny for further details at jmassa@arlingtonva.us. The dates for 2026 are Sept. 9 – Oct. 4. The official opening is Saturday, Sept. 19 at the Thomas Jefferson Community Center in Arlington. The registration fee remains the same at \$20 which covers an unlimited number of events. Registration is online only at www.nvso.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.medstarcapitalsiceplex.com>, register for Senior Public Skate.

55+ (senior adults) weight room hours, Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays at Langston-Brown Community Center, 11 a.m. – 2 p.m.; Tuesdays and Thursdays, 8 a.m. – 11 a.m., Madison Community Center. For more information, call 703-228-4771. A 55+ Gold Pass is required.

Line dance practice led by volunteers, open to intermediate level dancers, Mondays, 10 a.m. and Thursdays, 1 p.m., Arlington Mill 55+ Center. Drop-in.

Walk Fit, a free, weekly walking program hosted by VHC Health offers a 45-minute walk on the indoor track at Lubber Run 55+ Center plus a 15-minute guided stretch, Thursdays, 8:30 - 9:30 a.m. Open to all ages; no 55 + Pass required. Drop-in.

Thrifting Tips and Tricks, learn about sustainable shopping and buying second hand, Monday, Aug. 17, 1 p.m., Walter Reed 55+ Center. Led by 55+ Center Director Jennifer Weber. Registration # 914400-07.

Yarn Crafters of Aurora Hills 55+ Center invite crafters for conversation while making hand-knit and crocheted items for Arlington charities, Monday, Aug. 17, 10 a.m. – 12 p.m. Instruction available, supplies provided. Drop-in.

Tai Chi practice with experienced volunteers, Monday, Aug. 17, 2 p.m., Aurora Hills 55+ Center; Tuesday, Aug. 18, 1 p.m., and Friday, Aug. 21, 1 p.m., Walter Reed 55+ Center. No instruction provided. All are drop-in.

Arlington Mill 55+ Center book club to discuss “The Book Club for Troublesome Women” by Marie Bostwick, Tuesday, Aug. 18, 1 p.m. Drop-in.

Finding local news online, volunteer Linda Sholl will provide step-by-step guidance on how to find and use these resources, Tuesday, Aug. 18, 10:30 a.m., Langston-Brown 55+ Center. Registration # 914403-10.

Introduction to ukulele, no experience needed, Tuesday, Aug. 18, 4 p.m. registration # 914304-06; intermediate ukulele, intro to ukulele required as a prerequisite, 4:30 p.m., Walter Reed 55+ Center, registration # 914304-12. Taught by Sandy O’Shea, both at Walter Reed. Limited ukuleles available,

Piano Lounge and Sing-Along with Valerie Welsh, Tuesday, Aug. 18, 2:30 p.m., Lubber Run 55+ Center. Fun in the Summertime songs, lyrics provided. Registration # 914304-22.

Phase 10 Game Night, classic card game, beginners welcome, Tuesday, Aug. 18, 5:30 p.m., Walter Reed 55+ Center. Led by 55+ Center Director Jennifer Weber. Registration # 914600-10.

Opera appreciation group will discuss and listen to Part 2 of “Semiramide” by Gioachino Rossini, Wednesday, Aug. 19, 1:30 p.m., Lubber Run 55+ Center. Professional commentary by George Cecchetti. Registration # 914300-06.

Cardmaking workshop, tools provided, Thursday, Aug. 20, 1 – 4 p.m., Langston-Brown 55+ Center. Drop-in.

Walk Fit, a free weekly walking program hosted by VHC Health, Thursday, Aug. 20, 8:30 a.m., Lubber Run 55+ Center. 45-minute walk on the indoor track, 15-minute stretch to promote balance. Drop-in.

Level Up 55+ Gaming Club, join 55+ friends for a fun mix of video games, Friday, Aug. 21, 11 a.m.-2 p.m., Arlington Mill 55+ Center. Registration # 914600-06.

Summer Bingo with a purpose, bring a donation of cereal or snack bars for the Arlington Food Assistance Center, Friday, Aug. 21, 1:30 p.m., Langston-Brown 55+ Center. Afternoon of Bingo fun with prizes. Registration # 914600-16.

Matinee movie, “The Boys in the Boat” (2023) (PG-13), Friday, Aug. 21, 12:30 p.m., Aurora Hills 55+ Center. Registration # 914804-10.

55+ Travel group will indulge in a charming tea experience at The Tea Cart in Berryville, Saturday, Aug. 22. Cost \$99, Arlington resident; \$114, non-resident. Registration # 902608-04.

“Two Over-70s, Please?”



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

That’s all I had to say - or do, to buy the discounted-for-seniors’ tickets at a horse show in Pa. my wife Dina and I recently attended: \$10 per person instead of the \$25-per-person regular price, a 60-percent savings. I was so happy and surprised at such a healthy discount given so readily that it wasn’t until the Monday after this Friday event that it hit me. The ticket-sellers never even asked Dina or I for a “valid” driver’s license to confirm our eligibility for the discount. It was like an inverted version of having to show one’s driver’s license to prove you’re over 21 - when you’re way over aged 21 - and thus be allowed to purchase alcohol. I always joke that if anybody “cards” me thinking I’m not over aged 21, than I sure must look like hell for someone who isn’t. Referring back to this “over-70” ticket price; if my age was not questioned then I must be a convincing age 70, appearance wise - which I don’t think I am any more than I thought I could possibly look to be under aged 21 at the liquor store. Was my horse-show age taken for granted? How disappointing. And to tell you the truth, a bit of a surprise which is possibly the reason behind my motivation in addressing this subject. Previously, at the liquor store, I wasn’t the least bit flattered by the clerk’s request. I thought it was ridiculous. In each case though, age/appearance mattered. At the liquor store, apparently; I didn’t look old enough while at the horse show, apparently, I did look old enough.

Trying to consider an alternate reason - from the establishment’s perspective, given that horse shows might attract an older clientele: good public relations. Would it be well-received if the over-70s are having to show proof of age to buy a ticket rather than it just be presumed? I can just see it now: an elderly (obviously over aged 70) man comes “crutching” up to the ticket booth and after requesting his over-70 ticket/ rate, is asked to show his driver’s license to prove his age. He then manages to balance himself/ almost falls as he reaches around to a back pocket to grab his wallet and then pick through the wallet with his fingers to find and then extract his driver’s license. Or the elderly woman in a wheelchair who rolls up to purchase her over-70 ticket and is likewise asked for her proof of age. She then reaches around uncomfortably to the back of her wheelchair and grabs for her purse. She then brings it upfront, opens it and finds her driver’s license and hands it over thinking this request was unnecessary at best and humiliating at worst. (What? The show is expecting a bunch of over 65s-under-70s trying to buy a discounted ticket for which they’re not age-eligible? I don’t think so. Unlike the under-21s trying to buy alcohol, the non-over-70s who manage to buy the over-70s discounted tickets are unlikely to be stopped on the fairgrounds for being impaired.)

Irrrespective of the show’s actual policy or my imaginary take, I’m writing about this because this is the first time where my current way-over-aged 21 was an issue of sorts but not one that required proof of age. Usually, I’ve been asked for proof. Actually, it was the speed of my ticket purchase. Not for a moment was my age-specific request doubted. Either it’s the show’s policy to treat seniors respectfully or I’m a convincing-looking over 70 (I mean I am nearly aged 72 so I could look the part?)

Having thought about this experience a bit more since then, this ‘over-70’ ticket purchase has made me think (and as my late brother would say; invoking Moe of The Three Stooges;” Every time you think you weaken the nation.” Perhaps I should let it go? I’m more concerned/ agitated by all the drivers who insist on backing into parking spaces anyway. There’s no discount for doing so. I don’t get any it more than I get how anybody - could possibly think I’m not over age 21. As far as being over aged 70; apparently, I’m not getting any younger so I might as well learn to live with it.

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

Region Has Serious Drought, Rainfall Deficit

Officials urge saving water.

BY GLENDA C. BOOTH
CONNECTION NEWSPAPERS

Virginia's Drought Monitoring Task Force updated the state's drought status on July 31: "The recent rain has prevented drought conditions from worsening, although severe drought continues in many parts of Virginia."

A drought warning advisory continues for Northern Virginia which includes Arlington, Fairfax, Fauquier, Loudoun, and Prince William counties and the cities of Alexandria, Fairfax, Falls Church, Manassas and Manassas Park.

The Washington, D.C. region is on track to have its driest year in the last 20 years, officials say.

In its assessments, the Virginia task force uses four classifications, with the most severe being "emergency": normal, watch, warning and emergency. Officials factor in current and predicted precipitation, streamflow, groundwater levels, reservoir levels, soil moisture, reported agriculture and water supply impacts and the current U.S. Drought Monitor map.

Rainfall Shortfall

The state's Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) on July 31 cautioned, "Longer-term precipitation continues to show severe and expansive deficits, with the 180-day Standardized Precipitation Index

"Longer-term precipitation continues to show severe and expansive deficits."

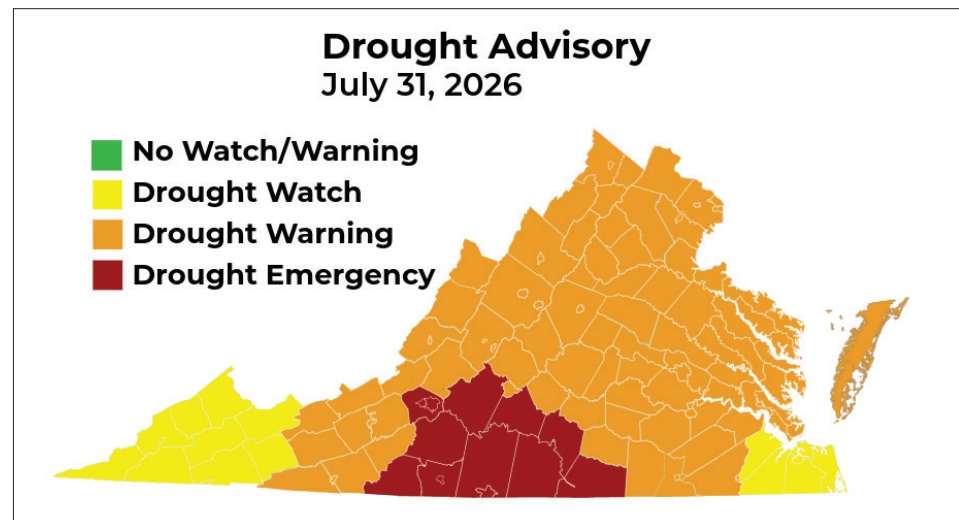
— Virginia DEQ

blend observation showing large areas of severe and extreme dryness throughout central and southcentral Virginia. Except for the Richmond area where normal year-to-date precipitation amounts are present, the rest of the Commonwealth is experiencing deficits ranging from 5.3 inches in Norfolk to 9.4 inches in Danville."

Weedon Cloe, DEQ Office of Water Supply manager, said, "The Northern Virginia drought evaluation region has received approximately 81 percent of the precipitation that would be typical for the water year, which began on October 1.

"Despite the recent rain, streamflows in the region are still well below normal. Groundwater has continued to decline. Of the five groundwater monitoring wells in Northern Virginia, four have water levels below the 10th percentile and the well in Prince William is at its lowest level recorded since 2002.

"We will need sustained, above average precipitation over the coming weeks and



VIRGINIA DEQ

This map shows the current drought advisories as established by the Drought Monitoring Task Force.



This stream in Great Falls National Park in Fairfax County was dry on Sunday morning, Aug. 1.

months for groundwater in the region to recharge."

As for drinking water supplies, "Fairfax Water continues to have adequate supply to meet current customer demand, and our systems are operating normally," emailed Susan Miller, Manager of Public Affairs. "We encourage customers to continue practicing wise water use, but overall water availability remains stable." Around 2.2 million people

in Northern Virginia depend on Fairfax Water for their drinking water.

According to the U.S. Drought Monitor's July 21 reading, Alexandria is in moderate drought, the second mildest of five categories.

Virginia American Water, which supplies water to Alexandria, asks residential customers to voluntarily reduce nonessential water use.

Toilets Can Save Water

"Design improvements have allowed toilets to use 1.28 gallons per flush or less while still providing equal or superior performance. Toilets are by far the main source of water use in the home, accounting for nearly 30 percent of an average home's indoor water consumption. Older, inefficient toilets that use as much as six gallons per flush also happen to be a major source of wasted water in many homes."

— U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

More Calls for Conservation

Governor Abigail Spanberger asks Virginians to voluntarily conserve water use. On June 18, she said, "a significant lack of precipitation has resulted in Virginia recording its driest period since 1941. Precipitation totals are approximately eight inches below average across much of the Commonwealth."

If drought conditions continue, the Governor can declare a drought emergency and by executive order implement mandatory water use restrictions for certain users and industries.

Tips for Conserving Water

The following suggestions for saving water are from multiple sources, including Fairfax Water.

- ❖ Reduce or stop lawn and garden watering.
- ❖ Only water between dusk and dawn to reduce evaporation.
- ❖ Plant drought-tolerant plants and reduce grass.
- ❖ Use mulch and leave the leaves.
- ❖ Turn off ornamental fountains.
- ❖ Limit filling of swimming pools.
- ❖ Do not hose sidewalks and driveways.
- ❖ Use a commercial car wash that recycles water.
- ❖ Reduce shower length.
- ❖ Turn off water while brushing teeth.
- ❖ Wash full loads of dishes and clothes.
- ❖ Keep a container of water in the refrigerator to avoid running water for a drink. Use one glass throughout a day.
- ❖ Do not run water to thaw food.
- ❖ Use a bowl of water to clean and prepare vegetables, instead of letting the faucet run.
- ❖ Compost instead of using a garbage disposal.
- ❖ Fix leaks.

Information

Virginia DEQ, <https://www.deq.virginia.gov/water/water-quantity/drought>

U.S. Drought Monitor, <https://drought-monitor.unl.edu/>

Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments, drought information: www.mwco.org/environment/planning-areas/water-resources/drinking-water-and-drought-monitoring/current-drought-conditions/

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