



The Arlington Connection

The skull with pinprink luminescent green eyes is riding horseback on Ohio Street warning, “ha Ha HA don’t even try to get away.”

Opposition Grows
to The Arch

PAGE 3

Halloween
Scaries Around
Arlington

PAGE 4

PHOTO BY SHIRLEY RUHE/THE CONNECTION ENTERTAINMENT, PAGE 9 ♦ CLASSIFIEDS, PAGE 10



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Local Opposition Grows to Proposed Trump Arch

Legislation in U.S. House to stop the arch; lawsuit filed by Arlington Board.

BY SHIRLEY RUHE
ARLINGTON CONNECTION

Rep. Don Beyer is leading congressional efforts to block construction of Trump's proposed arch. Beyer's Northern Virginia district includes the Arlington National Cemetery where his parents, grandparents, and sister are buried. He is the author of the Arlington National Cemetery Viewshed Protection Act, which would prohibit and bar funds from construction of the arch.

He said Trump's proposed vanity arch avoids the required environmental impact statement and relies on illegal manipulations of funding without congressional authorization.

Beyer introduced H.R. 9047 on May 29th which says:

(1) IN GENERAL. Notwithstanding Any other provision of law, the establishment or construction of a triumphal arch within Lady Bird Johnson Park is prohibited, without regard to the source of funds for such establishment of construction.

(2) PROHIBITION FUNDS. No Federal funds may be made available for the establishment or construction of a triumphal arch within Lady Bird Johnson Park.

The bill has been referred to Committee in the House of Representatives but no further action has been taken.

When the bill was introduced Beyer said, "Arlington National Cemetery is sacred ground, the resting place for some of our nation's greatest heroes. It is unthinkable that we would desecrate this hallowed space to build a monument to Donald Trump's ego. "Trump's vanity project would waste taxpayer money, brazenly violate existing law, and become yet another vehicle for his corruption. The Administration has also given no consideration to potential harmful effect on the region including impacts on air safety and traffic on major roadways."



NATIONAL CAPITAL PLANNING COMMISSION

A rendering of the proposed arch just outside Arlington Cemetery.

At the time he wrote to Federal officials requesting copies of traffic studies and any other documentation available regarding plans that the Department of the Interior and National Park Service have undertaken with respect to transportation impacts from President Trump's arch proposal. He urged in the strongest possible terms if no such studies or documentation exist, the potential traffic impacts arising from this project

"The Arlington County Board has filed this lawsuit because our community has the most to lose from this egregious and unlawful proposed project."

— Matt de Ferranti, Arlington County Board Chair

be immediately addressed.

Beyer's concerns about the project's impact on traffic in the region have not yet been addressed. He says the arch has been a consistent source of anger and concern to his constituents, who vociferously oppose the project.

Opposition has been growing from the union of airline officials as well as protestors,

including a number of veterans, in early October who cited the scale, the cost, the gaudiness and lack of Congressional approval.

On Oct. 8 the Arlington County Board brought a suit in Federal court asking for a preliminary injunction to prevent any demolition or construction unless an environmental impact statement is completed. They argued that administration officials bypassed a key review process required by Federal law in their push to begin work on the structure.

Arlington County Board Chair Matt de Ferranti, says, "The Arlington County Board has filed this lawsuit because our community has the most to lose from this egregious and unlawful proposed project. We have diligently and in good faith engaged in the review process, pointing out severe, unique, and wide-ranging negative impacts to the county and our residents. Despite these concerns and that process not being complete, it was recently, unilaterally, announced that the project will move forward anyway — entirely disregarding protocol and months of work. Enough is enough. We will do all we can to hold this adminis-

tration accountable and to protect and serve the best interests of our community."

The 250-foot arch would technically be built on an island in the Potomac River which is officially part of D.C. but is very close to Arlington with a population of 240,000 as well as the Pentagon and several Federal agencies.

Beyer said, "The Administration's pursuit of Donald Trump's deeply disrespectful arch has broken the law repeatedly, and now people from many backgrounds are banding together to fight it. I applaud Arlington County's legal challenge, which rightly confronts the Administration's illegal attempts to bypass legally required processes to assess the project's impacts on the local community. Trump wants to avoid these assessments because everyone knows what an honest study would say: this arch is a costly boondoggle that would increase traffic and decrease air safety for the local community. The latter point has also been echoed by workers on the planes that fly in and out of DCA, and the safety concerns would be multiplied many times over if the structure were used as a base for military drones. The bottom line is that Trump's arch is morally repugnant, and as his pursuit of it gets more corrupt the opposition will continue to grow."

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. Partic-

SEE BULLETIN, PAGE 5

Flying, Crawling, Growling Critters Decorate Arlington Yards



The skull with pinpink luminescent green eyes is riding horseback on Ohio Street warning “ha Ha HA don’t even try to get away.”



This flying creature sits in a yard on Ohio Street along with a “Proud to be a Patriot Yorktown Football” sign.



This oversized skeleton greets the neighbors on Little Falls Road.



A pleasant fall scene breaks the scary atmosphere elsewhere in the neighborhood on S. Columbus Street.



These spiders are caught in a web stretching to the roof on 40th Street.



These ghosts catch a breeze and wave through the trees on Rock Spring Road.



These cheerful signs on N Columbus Street.

PHOTOS BY
SHIRLEY RUHE
ARLINGTON CONNECTION

Now **THIS** is what you
call a watchdog.



BULLETIN BOARD

FROM PAGE 3

ularly 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.

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 Siqveland at 703-228-0913 or esiqveland@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/nalox-one 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.dementiacareconnections.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 10 a.m.-9 p.m. 1015 N. Quincy St. Visit 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/>

SEE BULLETIN, PAGE 9

ALEXANDRIA FILM FESTIVAL NOV 13-15, 2026

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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
NELSON	12503	628	RHUE HOLLOW ROAD	BRANCH REEDS CREEK	9/24/2026
BUCKINGHAM	4032	601	MANTEO ROAD	SYCAMORE CREEK	9/22/2026
SCOTT	16849	689E	LUNDSFORD MILL ROAD	BRANCH	9/16/2026
BUCHANAN	3825	600E	HURRICANE CK ROAD	HURRICANE CREEK	9/14/2026
SCOTT	16850	689E	LUNSFORD MILL ROAD	STREAM	9/14/2026
FLOYD	7501	221N	FLOYD HWY S 221	BR OF DOBBINS CREEK	9/11/2026
BEDFORD	2832	699E	BORE AUGER ROAD/699	BR OF BORE AUGER CREEK	9/11/2026
BEDFORD	2816	691E	SHEPERDS ST ROAD 691	WOLF CREEK	9/10/2026
CARROLL	4779	881N	CROSS CREEK ROAD 881	L REED ISLAND CREEK #1	9/9/2026
CAMPBELL	4203	604E	RED OAK SCHOOL ROAD	SOUTH FORK FALLING RIVER	9/8/2026
BUCHANAN	29782	3304	MALLARD ROAD	BIG LICK BRANCH	9/3/2026
BUCHANAN	29789	4080	LOCKHART BRIDGE ROAD	WAR FORK	9/3/2026
FLOYD	7631	785N	BURKS FORK ROAD/785	BURKS FORK	9/17/2026
SUFFOLK	22113	616	ROUNDTREE CRESCENT	CYPRESS SWAMP	9/3/2026

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.

International Repair Day Celebrated in Vienna

Americans are learning how to fix, not trash, household items.

BY EDEN BROWN
THE CONNECTION

While many Arlingtonians were busy throwing things out at the E-CARE event on Saturday, others drove out to The International Repair Day held in Vienna to see if their old (or new) item could be fixed instead. That is the principle of the repair movement, which started outside the U.S. but is gradually taking hold in the U.S.

The movement in Northern Virginia can thank Ari Nicholas, who began the repair day program two years ago, roughly, and looked around at a room full of volunteers and customers.

Ari is trying to spread the word: Repair keeps things out of the landfill. Repair events bring people together to share resources and build community. Nicholas advocates, "Repair takes power away from corporations and puts it back in the hands of the people. International Repair Day is an opportunity to highlight when our right to repair our own things isn't available, and what a better future might look like."

The volunteers who come and help out with fixing things get their own satisfaction from doing something for their community. Doug Smith said he found it nourishing for the soul.

"The longterm goal is to use Repair Day and Repair Café to advocate for Right to Repair in the region and state, but that's still kind of a Big Idea that hasn't crystallized for most people," Nicholas said. The opportunity for legislation remains possible in the coming year, and following the General Assembly on this issue is a way to support repair.

To follow such efforts, see: <https://www.vpm.org/general-assembly/2026-02-17/right-to-repair-diy-digital-devices-farm-equipment-glass-franklin-repair-cafe-rva/>

And the learn more about International Repair Day, see: <https://repairday.org/#about>



Doug Smith works on a vacuum cleaner holder that broke. After trying multiple hardware fixes, he finally told his customer Audrey Hu (all repairs are free) that some good old fashioned duct tape would be the best way to keep the item in good working order.



Mary Peters asked Frank Losche to help her with a broken wooden box. He put on two hinges and it was good to go. Losche grew up in East Germany, and there weren't a lot of stores with new items on sale, so fixing old items was just something people learned to do.



Anna Nyman lives in Burke and used her sewing abilities on this particular day to mend a hole in a sweater, stop another piece of fabric from fraying, and other simple tasks that most people don't know how to do anymore.



Doug Smith enjoys showing other "fixers" what he knows; passing down knowledge is one of the things that "nourishes his soul."

WWW.CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM

Throw Away Expired or Unnecessary Prescription Drugs

BY SHIRLEY RUHE
ARLINGTON CONNECTION

Arlington is participating in the Drug Enforcement Administration's (DEA) fall National Prescription Drug Take Back Day on Saturday, Oct. 24, 2026. This effort highlights the importance of routinely focusing on your unused, unwanted or expired drugs and disposing them at a safe site.

It's easy to check the medicine cabinet, bedside drawers and the other usual spots. But community members have reported they are often surprised at the bottles that have rolled under the bed, are stored in their car's glove compartment and forgotten or have been "borrowed" by teenagers wanting to explore a high with their friends.

While this day serves as a reminder, the public can safely dispose of prescription medications

24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year with no questions asked at the following locations:

❖ Fire Station #2
4805 Wilson Blvd.

❖ Fire Station #5
1750 S. Hayes Street

❖ Fire Station #9
1900 South Walter Reed Drive

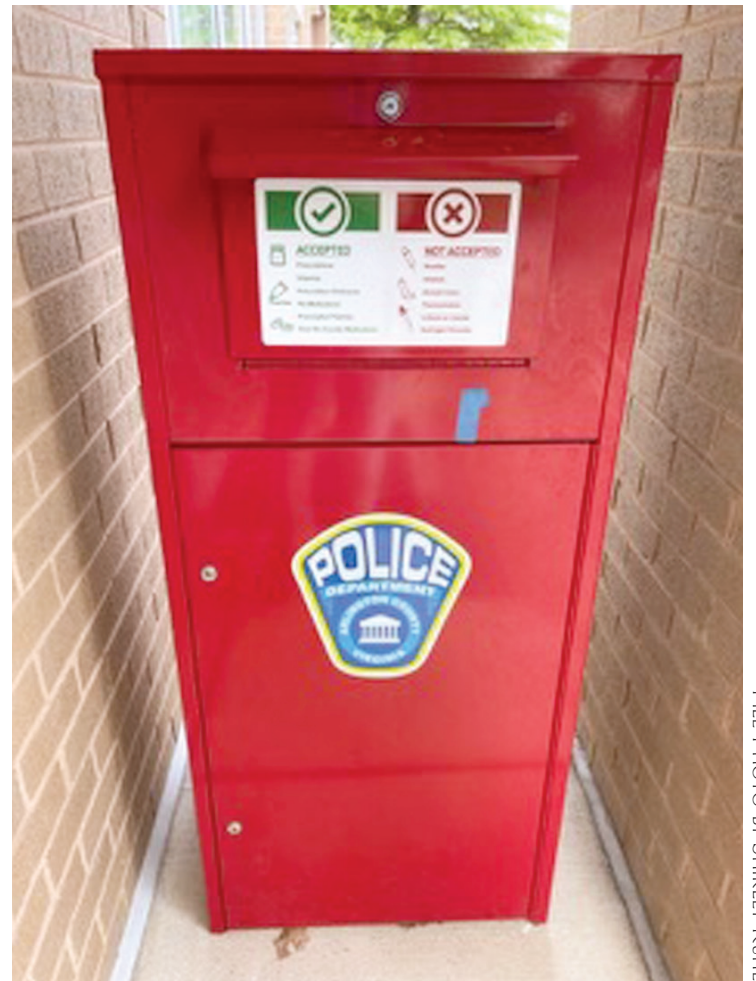
❖ Arlington County Police Department
2000 block of 14th Street N

Items accepted include: vitamins, over-the-counter drugs, prescription drugs, ointments and patches, and pet medications. Items not accepted include: needles, inhalers, thermometers, lotions or liquids, aerosol cans and hydrogen peroxide.

National Drug Prescription Take-Back Day is a partnership with the

Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) and is held all across the United States on the same day. ACPD used to man sites across Arlington County to accept the drugs which ACPD bundled up in large plastic bags and delivered to the DEA at the end of the day where they were weighed and incinerated. Now ACPD offers permanent sites which are available round the clock.

Permanent prescription disposal site at Fire Station number 2 on Wilson Boulevard. ACPD now offers 24-hour safe disposal of prescription medications at four permanent disposal sites located around Arlington. This has replaced past in-person collection at designated sites on National Prescription Take-Back Day.



FILE PHOTO BY SHIRLEY RUHE

Local Author Launches Newest Book

Everything she believed about her grandmother was wrong.

BY MERCIA HOBSON
THE CONNECTION

The Connection interviewed local author Caroline Crocker on Oct. 13, regarding the launch of her most recent book, *"The Truth Was Different: One Woman's Journey Through Occupied Holland."* Crocker has written two other books, *"Brave Face"* (2022) and *"Unforgivable"* (2024), focusing on her mother's survival during the Hunger Winter and her father's wartime childhood, respectively.

Fairfax author Caroline Crocker, a former professor at George Mason University and Northern Virginia Community College, will launch her third nonfiction book, *"The Truth Was Different: One Woman's Journey Through Occupied Holland,"* on Nov. 21. Scheduled for publication Nov. 16, the 424-page work draws on letters, family documents and personal accounts to examine the choices of Crocker's paternal



COURTESY IMAGES VIA LAUNCH FLYER
Author I. Caroline Crocker.

grandmother, Rita, during the Nazi occupation of the Netherlands from 1940 to 1945. The book completes a trilogy following her previous works, *"Brave Face"* and *"Unforgivable."*

Catalyst and Investigation

Crocker began investigating Rita's life after readers of her second book, *"Unforgivable: Through a Child's Eyes,"* repeatedly asked, "What in the world was wrong with his mother?" The question made Crocker wonder if there was more to Rita's story. "She can't just be horrible," Crocker recalled thinking.

Crocker obtained Rita's out-of-print autobiography, written in Dutch, and worked through it using her own Dutch-reading skills and Google Translate. She also ex-

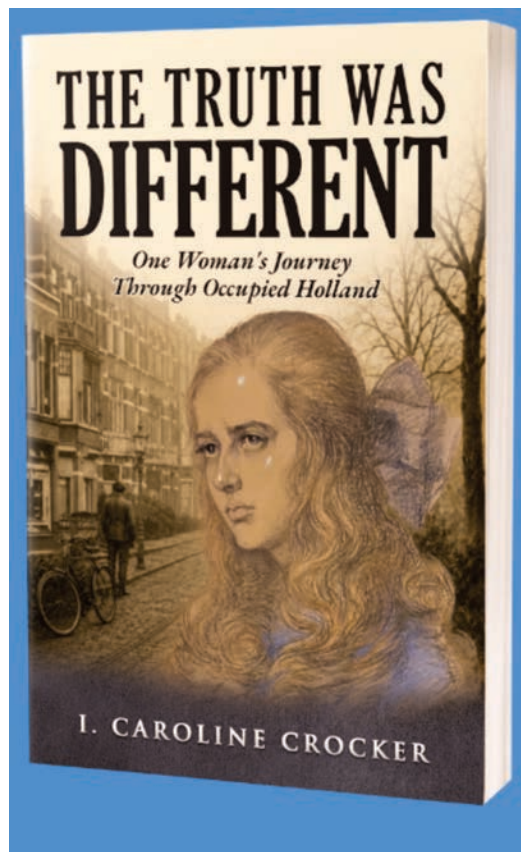
amined Rita's other books, which were presented as fiction. When she encountered an incident described repeatedly and in detail, Crocker said, "I know this is not fiction. This incident really happened." She came to see the books as clues to Rita's life: "She changed all the names. She changed all the places. She changed the relationships."

Scientific Methodology

"I found I was using the skills that I used as a scientist," said Crocker, who has also led a nonprofit and a technology startup. Her research included wartime letters and family records obtained with help from a Dutch genealogist.

"Rita didn't think she was a nasty piece of work," said Crocker. "She thought she was a reasonable human being, and then I went to investigate that, and so I looked at all the papers that are out there, which is what scientists do — they look at what has already been done."

Crocker then sought feedback on the manuscript from a physician, psychologist, rabbi and bishop — an approach she compared with scientific peer review. The book underwent extensive revision: "I've only rewritten this thing five or six times," Crocker said laughing.



Book cover of the author's newest release, pending publication on Nov. 16.

Impacts of Trauma

Impacts of Trauma

Crocker said Rita's wartime trauma affected her emotional relationship with her sons, with ef-

fects that carried into later generations.

"Something I have become very aware of is that trauma can be inherited. ... My grandmother experienced unbelievable trauma during the war, and the result was that she shut down emotionally, and she did not show any emotion whatsoever to her sons. Oh, guess what? Then her sons developed attachment disorder, and that affected their children."

She urges readers to preserve family stories, saying, "These things do get lost, and they are important."

But her broader message is, "You can't judge people unless you know their history, unless you've lived their life. ... So be gentle with people."

Book Launch

The public book launch is scheduled for 2 p.m. Nov. 21 at 10520 Main St. in Fairfax. Crocker plans to discuss how and why she wrote the book, read an excerpt and answer audience questions. Signed copies will be available alongside her two earlier World War II books. She plans to display enlarged reproductions of historical photographs and documents.

THE CONNECTION NEWSPAPERS 2026 VOTER GUIDE

BY MERCIA HOBSON
THE CONNECTION

The 2026 Voter Guide is designed to help prepare readers for the Nov. 3 general election and early voting.

Our questions for federal candidates focused on key local concerns, to address priorities of the community members they seek to serve.

All participating candidates responded to identical questionnaires with set word limits — 500 words total for congressional candidates. Entries appear unedited in the official sequence set by state election officials; we note candidates who did not respond before

publication in their respective sections.

Connection QUESTIONS asked of all Congressional Candidates:

Q1 Housing & Zoning: Under Department of Housing and Urban Development guidelines, housing is considered affordable when costs do not exceed 30 percent of income for families earning up to 80 percent of Area Median Income — including extremely low-income households earning at or below 30 percent of Area Median Income. Given that Virginia's Dillon Rule restricts localities' authority over local revenue and zoning mandates, how will you leverage federal housing grants, housing choice vouchers,

Act, a landmark package of legislation. It has key provisions to boost the housing supply while lowering costs, protect veterans and renters, and prevent housing in rural areas from being bought

up by corporate investors. Additionally, I have introduced and supported a range of bipartisan bills to spur new housing construction and redevelopment, including the Neighborhood Homes Investment Act, Affordable Housing Credit Improvement Act, New Markets Tax Credit Extension Act, and the Historic Tax Credit Growth and Opportunity Act. I was also the lead author of the Low-Income First Time Homebuyers (LIFT) Act, which would help qualified first-generation homebuyers build equity in their homes by offering a 20-year mortgage with monthly payments comparable to a traditional 30-year loan, and the Yes in God's Backyard (YIGBY) Act, which would help faith-based organizations and institutions of higher education unlock the promise of their existing land holdings by transforming underused property into much-needed affordable housing.



COURTESY PHOTO

Sen. Mark R. Warner (D)

federal tax credits, or federal land transfers to expand affordable housing in our district?

Q2 Transit & Infrastructure: Northern Virginia relies heavily on federal partnerships to fund critical transportation networks. What specific federal infrastructure funding bills, transit grants for Metro, or United States Department of Transportation initiatives like Safe Streets and Roads for All will you champion to relieve traffic congestion and protect vulnerable road users?

Q3 Federal Workforce & Economy: Northern Virginia's economy relies heavily on tens of thousands of federal civil servants and contractors, whose spending sustains

Q2 Transit & Infrastructure: I was proud to be a key negotiator of the landmark Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL), which delivered transformative investments to communities across Virginia. The Bipartisan Infrastructure Law has delivered hundreds of millions of dollars for public transit across Virginia, including passenger rail, ferry service, and buses. I have also been a consistent and strong advocate for robust Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority funding. As we work on a full-year of government funding and renewal of BIL, I will continue to fight for Virginia to get our fair share of funding that supports our vital public transit systems.

Q3 Federal Workforce & Economy: Federal workers in Virginia and across the country are the backbone of services Americans depend on. As the Trump administration continues to target federal workers and use them as political bargaining chips, it is critical to defend the job security, pay, and benefits of our dedicated civil service. I have fought against the administration's attacks on federal workers, from trying to access their sensitive data to attempting to weaken longstanding civil service protections. My Federal Worker Credit Protection Act is legislation to protect federal workers' credit histories during a government shutdown. I have also introduced legislation to keep fed-

local small businesses and the regional job market. How will you protect federal workforce jobs and government contracting, and what strategies will you pursue to support Northern Virginia workers and industries impacted by economic shifts?

Q4 Energy Grid & Utility Rates: Following Governor Spanberger's intervention before the State Corporation Commission regarding the proposed Dominion Energy-NextEra merger, and federal concerns over data center energy load and rising utility bills: What federal legislation or regulatory oversight will you pursue to protect Northern Virginia households from rising energy costs while supporting grid reliability?

eral wages competitive, prohibit RIFs during a shutdown, and preserve collective bargaining for federal workers.

Q4 Energy Grid & Utility Rates: As I travel around the Commonwealth, I listen to Virginians and I take what they say seriously. Virginians are already being crushed by rising energy costs and they shouldn't have to foot the bill for the data centers in their neighborhood. These companies should have to pay their own electric bills. I've introduced legislation to require greater transparency about energy and water use and other impacts, make data centers pay for the grid upgrades they require instead of passing those costs on to residents, and condition valuable tax benefits on meeting strong efficiency standards.

Candidates for United States Senate, Statewide

Member, United States Senate — Statewide

The Gazette Packet, Mount Vernon Gazette and Connection Newspapers invited candidates on the ballot for Virginia's statewide U.S. Senate race — Democratic incumbent Mark Warner and Republican challenger Bert Mizusawa — to participate in our 2026 Voter Guide. (Mizusawa did not reply.) We asked candidates about issues facing our region, including housing affordability, transit infrastructure, federal job protections and regional utility regulation.. Candidates appear in the official ballot order set by state election officials.

CANDIDATE RESPONSES

Mark R. Warner (Democrat)

Q1 Housing & Zoning: There is a housing crisis in this country and we're millions of homes short. I am proud to have co-authored the bipartisan ROAD to Housing

Candidates for United States House of Representatives, District 8

BY MERCIA HOBSON
THE CONNECTION

Member, U.S. House — District 8

The Connection Newspapers invited candidates on the ballot for Virginia's 8th Congressional District race — Democratic incumbent Donald S. Beyer Jr., Republican challenger Tony A. Sabio, Libertarian challenger Shelly M. Arnoldi, and Independent challenger Tim S. Sharman — to participate in our 2026 Voter Guide. We created a questionnaire and asked candidates about issues facing our region, including

housing affordability, transit infrastructure, federal job protections, and regional utility regulation. We capped responses at 500 words total and truncated anything beyond that limit. Candidates appear in the official ballot order set by state election officials.

CANDIDATE RESPONSES

DONALD S. BEYER, JR.
(DEMOCRAT — INCUMBENT)

Q1 Housing & Zoning: I am a vocal fighter in the House for policies to make housing more affordable. On the House Ways and Means Committee I lead on housing with the Affordable Housing Credit Improvement Act, portions of which were enacted last year. I secured federal funding for local affordable housing projects in Northern Virginia. This year, I helped enact the 21st Century ROAD To Housing Act to improve federal housing programs and expand financing options to spur home construction and make housing

more affordable.

Q2 Transit & Infrastructure: My strong track record strengthening our transportation infrastructure and ensuring transit in the DMV is safe and reliable includes helping pass legislation to fund WMATA and create new safety oversight for the Metro system, and passing the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act to fund transit and other surface transportation.

I helped secure funds to renovate Arlington Memorial Bridge, passed legislation to enable the Long Bridge Project to expand rail traffic over the Potomac River, and brought federal dollars home for investments in our bus systems. I've also worked hard to secure safety improvements on local roadways like GW Parkway.

Q3 Federal Workforce & Economy: The Trump Administration's assault on the federal workforce has been devastating. Thousands of civil servants who deserved thanks for their tireless work for the American people were fired illegally, and the essential ser-

vices they provide were gutted on the whim of corrupt figures like Elon Musk. I've done all I can to stand up for our feds, through direct challenges to the Administration, through legislation, and by holding jobs fairs and resource fairs for federal workers. It's hard to describe all I have done in response to this local crisis in the space allotted; I wrote about those efforts at greater length here.

Q4 Energy Grid & Utility Rates: I support policies and have introduced legislation to protect ratepayers from higher electricity costs.

I have also long worked to address challenges that hamper the delivery of affordable, reliable energy to the grid. I share Virginians' concerns about the proposed Dominion-NextEra merger, and have long shared the view that consolidation can be harmful to consumers. The merger should only go forward if it is in the best interests



COURTESY PHOTO

Bert K. Mizusawa (R)
Did not reply.

Bert K. Mizusawa (R)

Did not reply.

THE CONNECTION NEWSPAPERS 2026 VOTER GUIDE

FROM PAGE 8

of ratepayers and workers, and I am deeply skeptical that this will ultimately be the case.

Tony A. Sabio (Republican — Challenger)

Q1 Housing & Zoning: My goal is to make homeownership attainable while respecting local zoning authority. I would establish a Builder Tax Credit to encourage starter-home and a Workforce Homeownership Tax Credit for police officers, firefighters, teachers, nurses, EMTs, and medical personnel. I would cut unnecessary federal red tape that delays construction and raises costs while supporting responsible use of Housing Choice Vouchers, HOME funding, and housing tax credits. I would also examine appropriate underused federal land for housing. We need more supply, lower costs, and pathways to homeownership.

Q2 Transit & Infrastructure: Northern Virginia needs both reliable transit and roads that move. I would support long-term federal infrastructure funding for Metro reliability and safety, roads, bridges, congestion relief, and faster project delivery. I support programs such as Safe Streets and Roads for All when they help Fairfax address dangerous intersections and protect vulnerable road users. Transportation policy must also recognize that many Northern Virginia families depend on automobiles. We should improve Metro and bus connectivity while investing in roadway capacity and infrastructure that reduces congestion rather than forcing residents into one transportation option.

Q3 Federal Workforce & Economy: Northern Virginia's federal employees and contractors are important to our economy. Government should be efficient and accountable, but indiscriminate cuts are not reform. I would protect mission-critical positions and strengthen opportunities for small and veteran-owned federal contractors. But Northern Virginia must also become less economically dependent on the federal government. I want to build a new jobs ecosystem by attracting and growing industries in

advanced nuclear energy, technology, cybersecurity, advanced manufacturing, and skilled trades, supported by apprenticeships and workforce development. We can protect essential jobs today while creating high-paying private-sector careers for tomorrow and building a stronger, more diversified Northern Virginia economy.

Q4 Energy Grid & Utility Rates: Congress does not set Virginia's retail electricity rates, but federal policy significantly affects energy supply, transmission, reliability, and ultimately costs. My Promise for America prioritizes reliable American energy and grid modernization. I would advance the Nuclear Ready Grid Zone Act, support advanced nuclear and small modular reactors, strengthen domestic transformer production, and accelerate responsible permitting. With data centers creating enormous new electricity demand, I would pursue greater transparency over infrastructure cost allocation so residential customers are not disproportionately burdened. Our objective should be more power, greater reliability, and lower long-term costs.

Shelly M. Arnoldi (Libertarian — Challenger)

Q1 Housing & Zoning: Federal housing programs like vouchers, tax credits, and land deals grow the bureaucracy without doing much to make housing cheaper. They add rules and then subsidize the cost of the rules. I'd cut the federal mandates and paperwork that make it slow and expensive to build here, and let localities make their own zoning decisions instead of tying them to federal strings. When the federal government is involved, it should put citizens and legal residents first. We get more housing by clearing government out of the way, not by adding another program on top of the last one.

Q2 Transit & Infrastructure: Northern Virginia needs roads and transit that actually work, but I won't vote for another giant spending bill full of earmarks and wishful thinking. I've spent 27 years managing federal construction projects, so I know the difference between money that fixes a bot-

tleneck and money that vanishes into overhead. I'd put existing infrastructure dollars toward maintenance and congestion relief, with real accountability for what gets delivered, and I'd oppose the bloated programs that leave taxpayers paying more for less.

Q3 Federal Workforce & Economy: This region runs on federal workers and contractors, and I'll protect those jobs. I spent years working inside the federal system as an engineer, so I've seen the waste and the bureaucracy firsthand. I have zero tolerance for financial misconduct with taxpayers' money. I'd push for transparent budgets, cut the unnecessary administrative layers, and hold the government accountable for every dollar it spends. I'd also lower taxes and red tape so small businesses can grow here, so the 8th District isn't one budget fight away from crisis.

Q4 Energy Grid & Utility Rates: Two things are driving up what families pay: taxpayer subsidies for unreliable wind and solar projects, and data centers pulling huge new loads onto the grid. I'd end those subsidies. Energy that can't stand on its own shouldn't be propped up on the backs of ratepayers. And I'd hold data centers responsible for their own energy and water, not at the expense of working families. Big power users should fund and secure their own supply, not push the cost or the reliability risk onto households. As an environmental engineer, my priority is simple: power that's reliable and affordable.

Tim S. Sharman (Independent — Challenger)

Q1 Housing & Zoning: would encourage the General Assembly to give Northern Virginia localities substantially greater autonomy over housing and land-use. At the federal level, I would complement that with infrastructure grants that help communities build more housing where transportation and other infrastructure can support it.

Q2 Transit & Infrastructure: We need federal grants that increase transportation capacity and get more cars off our congested roads. I live close to the Wilson Bridge, and it's a factory of misery most afternoons.

We should invest more in mass transit, including exploring commuter ferries on the Potomac. We also need to make our roads safer. In urban areas that means addressing dangerous parking, double parking, scooters and other conflicts between road users. On our highways, reckless driving remains a serious problem. Federal transportation and safety grants should help local communities tackle these problems.

Q3 Federal Workforce & Economy: Northern Virginia cannot afford another federal government shutdown. The 2025 shutdown caused immense harm to federal workers, their families, contractors and local businesses. Imagine having your paycheck simply not show up twice. I believe there's a real risk of further shutdowns in 2027–28. We should pass legislation as soon as possible guaranteeing federal workers are paid on time during any future shutdown. I would also protect Northern Virginia's federal workforce and contracting base from arbitrary cuts while supporting reforms that make government work more effectively for Americans. Federal workers and this region should never become pawns of political dysfunction.

Q4 Energy Grid & Utility Rates: Local communities should decide whether and where data centers are built. Families and small businesses should not pay higher electricity and water costs because enormous new data centers arrive in their communities – the SCC's GS-5 rate class addresses that. And we also need to rapidly build the energy America will need. We need more generation, more transmission and a more resilient grid. I support building all forms of power generation where they make economic and environmental sense.

The answer to rapidly growing electricity demand cannot simply be higher bills for existing customers. At the Federal level we must abolish the Justice Department's AI Litigation Task Force, which was created to challenge state AI laws. The data center issue is so politically hot right now because people are rightly scared for their jobs. We need to prepare for the transformation of work. That's why America needs an AI & Robotics Transition Program.

BULLETIN BOARD

FROM PAGE 5

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 Extension 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 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. Instru-

ments 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.operaguildnova.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/>

Restoring Voting Rights

3rd amendment provides automatic restoration of voting rights, and protection for people with disabilities.

BY SHIRLEY RUHE
THE CONNECTION

Part 3 of a three part series.

Three amendments to the Virginia Constitution will be on the ballot Nov. 3: protection of women's reproductive rights; removing the ban on same sex marriage; and automatic restoration of voting rights for convicted felons as well as strengthening the protection of voting rights for people with disabilities. This is the third of a series of three articles focusing on each of the proposed amendments.

A Constitutional amendment follows a rigorous process in Virginia before it can be put before the voters. The proposed language must be passed in the General Assembly. Then after an intervening election, the exact language must be passed by the General Assembly again. Finally the language goes before the voters.

The language of the third proposed Constitutional amendment reads:

Should the Constitution of Virginia be amended (i) to provide for the fundamental right to vote in the Commonwealth, (ii) to revise the qualifications of voters so that a person convicted of a felony is not entitled to vote during his period of incarceration but is automatically invested with the right to vote on the release from incarceration, and (iii) to update the existing prohibition on voting by persons found to be mentally incompetent to instead apply to persons who have been found to lack the capacity to understand the act of voting?

State Senator Elizabeth Ben-



Sen. Elizabeth Bennett-Parker

nett-Parker, D-Alexandria, the patron of the third proposed Constitutional amendment in the House of Delegates in 2025 and the start of the 2026 session

explains, "I think Virginia is one of the most punitive states with their current practice on restoration of voting rights for those convicted of a felony. We are lagging behind."

She explains currently in Virginia a formerly incarcerated person has to apply individually to the governor to have voting rights restored. "This means a person could wait decades to get restoration of the right to vote. One of the problems of the current system is there is no transparency. It is left to a single politician."

The first felony disenfranchisement laws were introduced in the United States in 1792 in Kentucky, and by the Civil War about 24 states had some form of felony disenfranchisement. The growth of these laws led many to conclude that the laws were implemented to target African Americans.

By 2018 most states had implemented policies to restore voting rights upon completion of a sentence but only Virginia and Iowa permanently disenfranchised a former felon unless and until the governor had restored each individual's voting rights.

During his term as Virginia governor, Terry McAuliffe restored the voting rights of more than 173,000 individuals who had been convicted of felonies, one at a time. The Supreme Court of Virginia blocked him from issuing a blanket restoration of voting rights.

Bennett-Parker says during Governor Glenn Youngkin's four years in office, only 10,000 formerly incarcerated people had their voting rights restored but Governor Abigail Spanberger has already restored the rights of 100,000.

"I believe when the Constitutional amendment passes, 230,000 will have their voting rights automatically restored," Bennett-Parker says.

During consideration of the proposed amendment in the General Assembly an amendment was proposed, but defeated, that would have limited restoration of rights to those who had been convicted on non-violent offenses, had paid their restitution and who had completed probation or parole. House Minority Leader Terry Kilgore, R-Scott County supported these changes. He said he supported reform but not the constitutional amendment as written. He says they left Republican votes on the table by not including these changes and putting victims first.

Bennett-Parker explains she disagrees with the changes proposed in that amendment because denying formerly incarcerated people the right to vote until they have paid restitution is a "modern day poll tax."

"Not requiring restitution be paid before restoring the rights to vote doesn't eliminate the obligation to pay restitution.

"Having the right to vote helps a formerly incarcerated person enter society and helps them be able to pay their restitution. The current process lacks transparency. No one knows what to do."

The amendment also strengthens voting rights protections for people with disabilities. "Currently



PHOTO BY SHIRLEY RUHE

Three proposed Virginia constitutional amendments are on the Nov. 3 ballot, with this sign in support of all three.



This sign in opposition to the first two proposed amendments ("Catholics Vote No") is posted outside the Knights of Columbus on Little Falls Road in Arlington.

a person under a guardianship loses their right to vote no matter the circumstances. The amendment would ensure that their voting rights are lost only if a court has determined that a person is incapable of understanding the act of casting a ballot."

'Woody Sez, the Life and Times of Woody Guthrie' Is a Must-See

Protest Songs ring true in this beautifully performed play.

There is a reason why living across the river from Washington, D.C. has appeal. The other night, I saw "Woody Sez" at the Dupont Underground, and it was so good, I wanted to let readers who live just fifteen minutes away from Dupont Circle that this play is a perfect antidote to all the political upheaval we, on this side of the river, feel, more and more

every week. The musician/actors have taken this around the country and internationally, thanks to Voices Festival Productions. Created by David M. Lutken, the play is a joyful reincarnation of Woody Guthrie and his life in one of the most turbulent periods of the country, from the Dust Bowl to the Depression to the World War, to the McCarthy years to Vietnam. The music is su-

perb, with Lutken playing guitar and harmonica, equally gifted banjo and guitar by Hubby Jenkins, and violin and cello and spectacular singing by Raquel Chavez and Margaret Dudasik. When the audience bursts out in song more than once during the performance, you know you have reached them. Protest songs then, and now, give us an outlet for frustration, and this is the moment to sing them. The show is through Oct. 25. Don't miss it.

For more about this and other shows by VFP, see: voicesfestival-productions.com



PHOTO BY EDEN BROWN

Dupont Underground has vastly improved its space, with more comfortable chairs and a more finished look. The old tile signs pointing to New Hampshire Avenue and trolley tracks remain part of its charm.

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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/>.

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



Brenardo Taylor, the Sing-Song Poet, will appear on Monday, Nov. 2, 2026 at Busboys & Poets of Arlington.

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.

THURSDAY/OCT. 22

Howl-Ween! Dog Costume Contest. 5-7 p.m.

At Met Park, 1331 S. Elm Street, Arlington. Dog costume contest hosted by PuppyLuv, free pet polaroids and caricatures, vendors, fresh coffee from Rossana, and decorate a Halloween bow tie or bandana for your pup. Dress up your four legged friend in their most creative costume and watch them strut their stuff on the red carpet. Winners and prizes announced at 6:45 p.m., so arrive beforehand to participate!

"BELL WRINGER" PLAY

Pinky Swear Productions presents a new production of "Bell Wringer," the 2023 winner of Best Musical at Capital Fringe. At Gunston Middle School Theater 2, 2700 Lang St., Arlington. Based upon the legend of the Bell Witch comes a musical comedy written by local playwrights Seth Alcorn and Karen Lange. Half O Brother, Where Art Thou, half Blair Witch, Bell Wringer re-tells an Appalachian legend about a witch who torments a town in eastern Tennessee.

Show times:

October 22 @ 7:30 PM
October 23 @ 7:30 PM
October 24 @ 2:00 PM
October 24 @ 7:30 PM
October 25 @ 2:00 PM
October 25 @ 7:30 PM
October 29 @ 7:30 PM
October 30 @ 7:30 PM
October 31 @ 2:00 PM
October 31 @ 7:30 PM (Halloween party to follow)

Tickets are \$30 and can be purchased online at Eventbrite <https://tinyurl.com/Bell-Wringer>

SATURDAY/OCT. 24

Arlington Chorale Concert. 5 to 6:30 p.m. At

Westover Baptist Church, 1125 Patrick Henry Drive, Arlington. The Arlington Chorale presents For the Earth: Gabriel Fauré's Requiem. The Arlington Chorale opens its 60th season, Dream With Us, with music for a beloved and changing world. Excerpts from Antonio Vivaldi's "Four Seasons" are heard side by side with "The [Uncertain] Four Seasons," a recomposition shaped by climate science that imagines our seasons at their most extreme. A movement from Alex Berko's "Sacred Place" then leads us into Gabriel Fauré's "Requiem", perhaps the most consoling requiem ever written, sung this evening for the earth itself. Reception to follow the performance.

Tickets: free for youth, \$25 - \$30 general admission. Visit arlingtonchorale.org/tickets

SATURDAY/OCT. 24

The Nature of Poetry. 10 a.m. to noon. At Lubber Run Park, Arlington Forest, Arlington. Join Courtney LeBlanc, Arlington Poet Laureate Emerita, for a short walk through Lubber Run Park. The walk will include several stops where the group will gather and Courtney will read a poem that has a nature theme. A brief discussion about the poem will follow. Courtney will provide a prompt at the conclusion of the walk, and the group can write their own nature-inspired poem.

SATURDAY/OCT. 24

Arlington Chorale Performs. 5 p.m. At Westover Baptist Church, Westover Village, Arlington. The Arlington Chorale opens its 60th season, Dream With Us, with music for a beloved and changing world. Excerpts from Antonio Vivaldi's "Four Seasons" are heard side by side with "The [Uncertain] Four Seasons," a recomposition shaped by climate science that imagines our seasons at their most extreme. A movement from Alex Berko's "Sacred Place" then leads us into Gabriel Fauré's "Requiem", perhaps the most consoling requiem ever written, sung this evening as a requiem for the earth itself.

SATURDAY/OCT. 24

Drug Take Back Day. The Drug Enforcement Administration's (DEA) fall National Prescription Drug Take Back Day will take place Saturday, October 24, 2026, providing an opportunity for community members to safely dispose of unwanted, unused and expired prescription medications. The Arlington County Police Department (ACPD) is encouraging residents

to take advantage of this nationwide initiative and help prevent unused medications from becoming a public health and safety risk. Unused or expired medications can pose serious risks, including accidental poisoning, overdose and misuse. Arlington County offers four permanent drug take-back boxes where community members can anonymously dispose of unwanted prescription medications free of charge, year-round.

Permanent Drug Take-Back Locations in Arlington County

Safely dispose of prescription medications 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year with no questions at the following locations:

Fire Station #2
4805 Wilson Boulevard
Arlington, VA 22203
Fire Station #5
1750 S. Hayes Street
Arlington, VA 22202
Fire Station #9
1900 S. Walter Reed Drive
Arlington, VA 22204
Arlington County Police Department
2000 block of 14th Street N.
Arlington, VA 22201

SUNDAY/OCT. 25

51st Annual Marine Corps Marathon. The 51st annual Marine Corps Marathon will take place on Sunday, October 25, 2026. The wheelchair/hand cycle division will begin at 7:05 a.m., followed by duos at 7:07 a.m., and the Marathon at 7:20 a.m., all on Route 110 in Arlington County, Virginia. The Arlington County Police Department, Virginia State Police, United States Park Police and Pentagon Force Protection Agency will close numerous roadways in Arlington in support of these events.

WEDNESDAY/OCT. 28

Women in Business Networking. 5 - 6:30

p.m. At Lebanese Taverna, Pentagon Row, Arlington. Join the next Women in Business Networking event. Designed to spark conversation, strengthen connections, and create new opportunities, this event brings together professionals from across industries for an engaging and supportive networking experience. While Women in Business is centered on uplifting women in the workplace, all entrepreneurs, executives, and professionals are welcome to attend. Don't miss this opportunity to grow your network and be part of a community committed to connection and empowerment.

WEDNESDAY/OCT. 28

Americana. 7:30 p.m. At Wakefield High School, Clarendon, Arlington. The Arlington Concert Band will perform a star-spangled evening to celebrate America's 250th birthday! Selections will feature American composers along with a few interesting twists on patriotic favorites. Selections include Fanfare for the Common Man (Aaron Copeland), Simple Gifts (Frank Tichelli), Variations on America, Casey at the Bat, Yankee Doodle, Porgy and Bess (George Gershwin), and Stars and Stripes Forever (John Philip Sousa).

THURSDAY/OCT. 29

Trees in Arlington Virtual Info Session: Planting, Protection, & Care. 6:30 p.m.

Do you have questions about how the County cares for public trees, planting more or protecting them as our community grows? This is your chance to ask Arlington's Forestry team questions and learn more, including:

- ❖ Caring for our trees: How the County plants and maintains trees, and how you can help.
 - ❖ Challenges facing our urban forest: Invasive plants, deer, climate change and development.
 - ❖ Protecting and growing our canopy: Arlington's goals and efforts to preserve trees during construction.
 - ❖ Trees on your property: Planting programs and resources for residents.
- Visit the website: <https://www.arlingtonva.us/Government/Programs/Sustainability/Trees>

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NEWS

When Illness Collides With Real Life

Influenza exposes the fragile balance between health, responsibility, and the realities of daily life.

BY MARILYN CAMPBELL
THE CONNECTION

At 6:15 on a Monday morning, getting out of bed feels impossible. Every muscle aches. A fever has soaked the sheets, and a cough that began the night before now rattles deep in the chest. Across the room, a phone lights up with messages from work. A child needs breakfast. Someone has to make the school run.

For Lena Petrucci, a Mount Vernon single mother with a high-stakes client meeting at 9 a.m., the moment is paralyzing. Her son stands in the doorway, pale, unsure whether he's sick or simply tired. "I can't miss this meeting," she thinks. "But I can't send him like this." The decision feels impossible before the day has even begun.

The flu can flatten a household, endanger vulnerable people and force impossible choices between a paycheck and public health. Taking it seriously starts with recognizing what's at stake.

There is no convenient day to get influenza — and no way to know at first how far its effects may reach.

For one person, the flu may mean several miserable days at home. For an older adult, pregnant person, young child or someone with an underlying medical condition, it can mean serious complications, hospitalization or death. When a sick person goes to work, sends a child to school or shares a home with someone vulnerable, influenza becomes a community risk.

The virus is familiar enough to be underestimated. That, says Dr. Meena Rezazad, DO, is part of the problem.

"By definition, influenza is a highly contagious, acute viral respiratory infection," she says. Its symptoms can resemble those of a cold or COVID-19, but fever, cough, congestion, runny nose, intense body aches and fatigue are common.

"What makes the flu a little bit unique is the full-body ache that's associated with it," Rezazad says. Symptoms can overlap with other respiratory infections, however, so medical evaluation or testing may be needed.

Protection Is a Community Effort

Healthy people sometimes assume they have little reason to get

vaccinated. Rezazad urges them to consider the people they could infect.

"If you have a 21-year-old who's very healthy and has no issues, they may not be so inclined to get the flu shot," she says. "But you might want to think about the counterpart to that: If they were to get the flu, it might not affect them as much, but people they come into contact with who aren't as healthy could have a worse course of the flu."

Those contacts may include older adults, people with heart or lung disease, individuals with weakened immune systems, pregnant people and newborns.

"The vaccine is multipurpose in that sense. It's not just about protecting yourself; it's also about protecting the community."

Rezazad recommends vaccination for the general public, especially people at increased risk of complications and those who spend time around them. Vaccination during pregnancy can also help protect a newborn.

Some people worry that the vaccine causes influenza.

"A lot of people will say, 'The flu shot, the last time I got it, gave me the flu,'" she says. "That's a common misconception. There is no currently licensed flu vaccine that causes influenza."

A sore arm, low-grade fever or other temporary side effects can occur, but they are not influenza.

Others question the vaccine after getting sick despite receiving it. Rezazad explains that manufacturers must predict which strains will circulate each season.

"Every year, the flu vaccine changes based on what we think the main strain of the virus will be," she says. "We don't always know exactly what kind of vaccine is going to protect against the circulating strain."

The vaccine is not a guarantee against infection, but it can reduce the risk of illness and, if infection occurs, lessen its severity and the risk of death.

"There's not a 100% chance that you're covered," Rezazad says. "Unfortunately, that's just a limitation with science and medicine: We can't always perfectly predict how things will react."

When to Call the Doctor

Because influenza is caused by a virus, antibiotics do not treat it. Antiviral medications, including



Dr. Meena
Rezazad

oseltamivir, or Tamiflu, may shorten illness or reduce complications in appropriate patients.

"The flu is a virus. It's not a bacteria. We treat bacteria with antibiotics. We treat viruses with antiviral medication," Rezazad says.

Antivirals work best when started within 48 hours of the first symptoms, though treatment may still help people who are hospitalized, seriously ill or at increased risk of complications.

People who are pregnant, older, immunocompromised or living with certain chronic conditions should contact a health care professional promptly when influenza is suspected.

"Sometimes people think they have to wait until they're really sick before they call," Rezazad says. "But if you're someone who is at higher risk, it's better to reach out early so we can talk about whether antiviral treatment makes sense."

Warning signs of serious illness include trouble breathing, chest pain, confusion or an inability to keep fluids down.

"If you're having trouble breathing, chest pain, confusion or you can't keep fluids down, those are not symptoms to ignore," she says. "You should be evaluated."

A fever or cough that improves and then returns or worsens may signal a complication. People with more medical conditions or weakened immune systems may also have a more severe course.

The Cost of Staying Home

Staying home can be difficult for workers without paid sick leave, parents without backup childcare and families already under financial strain.

Rezazad acknowledges those pressures.

"I understand the reality of it. People have a job. People need to make an income. I understand that."

Marcus Anderson of Vienna, a line cook who earns hourly wages, remembers waking up with a fever so high he could barely stand. Missing a shift meant losing rent money. "I knew I shouldn't go," he says. "But if I stayed home, I wouldn't make the bills." He worked anyway, coughing into his sleeve, hoping no one would notice.

But Rezazad also reminds pa-

SEE WHEN ILLNESS, PAGE 11
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SENIOR LIVING

Flourishing after 55

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..

Ticket to Ride, a cross-country train adventure board game, join 55+ Center Director Jennifer Weber for instructions on how to play, Thursday, Oct. 22, 9:30 a.m., Walter Reed 55+ Center. Registration # 911600-05.

Health Tech: Tools and Information, presented by Dr. Barbara Phillip, Phillip Consulting, Friday, Oct. 23, 1 p.m., Arlington Mill 55+ Center. Learn how technology supports health and well-being. Registration # 911403-10.

Rodgers and His Collaborators, join pianist Ken Schellenberg and The Usual Suspects and look into the music of composer Richard Rodgers with Lorenz Hart, Oscar Hammerstein and Stephen Sondheim, Friday, Oct. 23, 1 p.m., Aurora Hills 55+ Center. Registration # 911301-06.

Just beneath the surface, explore what was happening behind the scenes of three artists, presented by Community Arts Programmer Jim Halloran, Friday, Oct. 23, 10 a.m., virtual. Registration # 911302-05.

55+ Travel group will enjoy an exciting day trip to Hollywood Casino in Charles Town, WV, Saturday, Oct. 24. Cost \$22, Arlington resident; \$26, non-resident. Registration # 902610-09.

Making the most of Medicare open enrollment, Monday, Oct. 26, 10:30 a.m., Walter Reed 55+ Center. Presented by a representative from the Virginia Insurance Counseling and Assistance Program (VICAP) on how to effectively use the Medicare Pathfinder and other tools to maximize savings. Register by calling 703-228-1725 or email MedicareHelp@arlingtonva.us.

Movie matinee, “Karate Kid: Legends” (2025) (PG-13), Tuesday, Oct. 27, 12:30 p.m., Lubber Run 55+ Center. Registration # 911804-11.

Equality NoVA Movie Club (new) films presented in partnership with the non-profit LGBTQ+ organization, Tuesday, Oct. 27, 6:15 p.m., Walter Reed 55+ Center. Open to all ages; no 55+ Pass required. Registration # 911804-17.

Cooking demonstration featuring Halloween appetizers by Virginia Cooperative Extension Master Food Volunteers, Tuesday, Oct. 27, 3 p.m., Walter Reed 55+ Center. Registration # 911501-08.

Rogers and his Collaborators, join pianist Ken Schellenberg and The Usual Suspect musicians as they look at the music of Richard Rodgers and his collaborators Lorenz Hart, Oscar Hammerstein and Stephen Sondheim, Tuesday, Oct. 27, 11 a.m., Langston-Brown 55+ Center, registration # 911301-08 and Thursday, Oct. 29, 3 p.m., Walter Reed 55+

Center. Registration # 911301-09.

55+ Travel group will enjoy Reynolds Tavern Tea in Annapolis, Wednesday, Oct. 28. Step back in time and savor a truly timeless experience. Cost \$101, Arlington resident; \$118, non-resident. Registration # 902610-10.

Piano Lounge and Sing-Along with pianist Valerie Welsh, revisit One Hit Wonders, Wednesday, Oct. 28, 1 p.m., Aurora Hills 55+ Center. Lyrics provided. Registration # 911304-16.

Death Café, a group-directed discussion about death with no agenda, objectives or themes, Wednesday, Oct. 28, 11:30 a.m., Lubber Run 55+ Center. Facilitated by Kathleen Garces-Foley, Ph.D., director of the Coalition to Improve Advanced Care. Registration # 911500-08.

Arlington’s Project PEACE is dedicated to preventing and addressing domestic, dating and sexual violence, Thursday, Oct. 29, 1:30 p.m., virtual. Learn about its goals and impact. Presented by Project PEACE Program Coordinator LaToya Young. Registration # 911400-06.

Haunted Prague, one of the most haunted cities in the world, Thursday, Oct. 29, 1 p.m., Langston-Brown 55+ Center. Presented by Michele Patrick, author of “Haunted Prague: Stories of Spirits, Sorcerers and the Supernatural, Registration # 911400-34.

Cybersecurity for mobile devices, learn how to secure devices, and recognize common scam warning signs and more, Thursday, Oct. 29, 3 p.m., virtual. Information provided by Arlington’s Dept. of Technology Services Cybersecurity Team. Registration # 911403-05.

Spooky stories, bring your favorite family-friendly spooky story to share, Friday, Oct. 30, 1:30 p.m., Aurora Hills 55+ Center. Open to all ages; no 55+ Pass required. Registration # 911301-20.

Big Picture: Documentary Series to feature “My Octopus Teacher” winner of the Academy Awards for best Documentary Feature, Friday, Oct. 30, 1 p.m., Arlington Mill 55+ Center. Registration # 911804-02.

Tea and a movie, “The Shipping News” (2001) (R), Friday, Oct. 30, 12:30 p.m., Aurora Hills 55+ Center. Registration # 911804-14.

Day of the Dead celebration, a traditional Mexican holiday that honors ancestors’ memories, Monday, Nov. 2, 1-3 p.m., Lubber Run 55+ Center. Decorate sugar skull cookies and watch the movie “Coco” (2017) (PG). Open to all ages; no 55+ Pass required. Registration # 911899-07.

55+ Travel group will attend the African American guided walking tour at the historic Congressional Cemetery in D.C., Tuesday, Nov. 3. One-of-a kind experience that brings to light the stories of Black Washingtonians whose lives shaped D.C.’s history. Cost \$29, Arlington resident; \$33, non-resident. Registration # 902611-01.

Langston-Brown 55+ Center’s book club will discuss “Our Missing Hearts” by Celeste Ng, Tuesday, Nov. 3, 1 p.m., Langston-Brown 55+ Center. Drop-in.

Mountain Dulcimer open practice, join fellow enthusiasts, both beginners and intermediate, Tuesday, Nov. 3, 3 p.m., Walter Reed 55+ Center. No lessons provided. Bring your own dulcimer. Drop-in.

Bayonet basics, led by Arlington Nature Center Historian Blake Lindsey, Tuesday, Nov. 3, 2:30 p.m., Fort C.F. Smith, 2411 24th St. N. Learn the steps and movements used by soldiers at Arlington’s Civil War forts. Registration # 911100-15.

Cooking demonstration of comfort foods by Virginia Cooperative Extension Master Food Volunteers, Wednesday, Nov. 4, 2 p.m., Aurora Hills 55+ Center. Registration # 911501-09.

Opera appreciation group will hear and discuss “Parsifal” by Richard Wagner, part one, Wednesday, Nov. 4, 1:30 p.m., Lubber Run 55+ Center, registration # 911300-05. Part two will be Wednesday, Nov. 18, 1:30 p.m., Lubber Run 55+ Center, registration # 911300-06. Professional commentary by volunteer George Cecchetti.

History discussion group led by Encore Learning’s Dwight Rodgers, Thursday, Nov. 5, 1 p.m., virtual. Topics will be emailed to participants before each meeting. Registration # 911402-09.

Open jam session featuring folk, country, classic rock, bluegrass, oldies and blues, Thursday, Nov. 5, 6:30 p.m., Lubber Run 55+ Center. All skill levels welcome. Bring your favorite acoustic instrument. Drop-in.

Peak foliage plus pie, Thursday, Nov. 5, 1 p.m., Walter Reed 55+ Center. Join Arlington Regional Master Naturalist Volunteers for a 1.5-mile urban nature walk with a stop at the ACME Pie shop. Volunteers will talk about native plants, notable trees and the intricacies of nature. Registration # 911106-34.

Friendly games fundraiser, enjoy a light-hearted day of games for all skill levels including bunco, five crowns, rummikub and more, Friday, Nov. 6, 1-4 p.m., Walter Reed 55+ Center. Registration # 911600-06. Once you have registered, pay the \$15 admission fee by visiting friendsofthealliance.org or pay at the door with exact cash.

First Friday Social with a theme of Gratitude Game Social, Friday, Nov. 6, 1 p.m., Arlington Mill 55+ Center. Light refreshments, music and fun. Registration # 911801-03.

Movie matinee, “Good Morning Vietnam” (1987) (R), Friday, Nov. 6, 12:30 p.m., Aurora Hills 55+ Center. Registration # 911804-09.

55+ Travel group will explore the vibrant Dutch Country Farmers Market, Laurel, MD, Saturday, Nov. 7. Cost \$22, Arlington resident; \$26, non-resident. Registration # 902611-02.

Are You Listening to Me?



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

I think I crossed the relationship Rubicon in the early days of our marriage, sometime in the early 80s. Dina and I had gotten married in the fall of 1978 and it took a few years to build up the trust and familiarity with one another so that in the following examples, I wasn’t being sent totally on a fool’s errand.

The first example of my wife having to ask/send me on an errand that was normal for her (but due to miscellaneous physical problems became difficult)/awkward for me was to buy feminine hygiene products for her. (And yes, I would look for a male cashier to lessen my anxiety.) Under the circumstances, I was happy to help; a bit uncomfortable with the process, nevertheless, I did what any good husband would do. However, not having been raised with sisters or having had too many serious girlfriends previously, I was quite inexperienced for the task at hand. That being understood between both parties, and my having failed at previous similar “shopping,” I began to ask Dina for explicit, mind-numbing details - and back-up options as well, to buy exactly what she needed me to buy. And since there were no cellphones back then, I was given those details because if left to my own devices, Dina no doubt would have ended up with a variety not of her preference. After fits and starts and poor choices by yours truly on previous occasions, eventually I learned what options - so to speak, to select and what never to get. Over time and with proper follow-up training, I became a reliable purchaser.

The second similar situation involved the purchase of stockings. Sometimes, Dina would get behind in her preparation - or suffer a stocking malfunction, and once again, yours truly would be thrown into the breach. And quite a breach it was. There seemed to be endless varieties: size, color, “sheer,” “opaque,” “reinforced toe,” “ventilated panel,” “reinforced waistband,” et cetera. It was all very intimidating, almost equal to the feminine hygiene aisle. “I was,” to quote my late brother, Richard, “flying blind.” Moreover, I had become aware of the importance of the correct stocking. Likewise, this was no place for an executive decision to be made by you know who. As repeated purchasing opportunities arose, it gave me a chance to right some previous wrongs. I was now writing down Dina’s explicit instructions on a piece of paper. Forearmed is forewarned. A necessary step as it had become clear I had bad stocking-purchase instincts.

The final example which re-arose recently are food selections made at the supermarket. Typically, I am the food shopper (Dina is the social director). And since we have different tastes/requirements, again I am thrust into situations where if my instincts take over, I will likely make the wrong selection. Cottage cheese and yogurt are those recent requests where I am at a loss. At least now, after multiple errors or incorrect presumptions, I know to ask specific questions depending on whether the product is available or not. (Obviously cellphones make this current issue less impactful as the two previous examples but hopefully you’ll appreciate the problem nonetheless.)

If I were left to fend for myself in the dairy aisle, I would likely come home with less-than-desirable choices. For cottage cheese, I need to know the brand (no substitutions I now know), the size of the container, the fat content, the curd size and the sell-by date. Are there flavors? I don’t know. I’m getting plain. As for yogurt: what brand? what size? what fat content? what flavor (very important?) what style (flip top, with or without fruit, Greek or not? Not that I’m a dunce but if I don’t my notes in hand, once I’m in store and see all the choices and variables, my mind goes blank. Every product looks and sounds similar enough to what Dina requested - but?

Years ago when I was a rookie husband, these choices were all new to me. Very often I did not fare very well. I was willing but for awhile, it appeared as if I was unable. But I was willing to learn and I was somewhat coachable. Oh sure, I made plenty of mistakes. Generally speaking, I knew what trouble was in the offing by the request and tried to anticipate my inevitable failings. But thanks to my evolution as a husband, I write everything down now and then review it all with Dina before I leave the house. Sure the cellphone eliminates the real disasters but sometimes my instincts kick in and it’s 1978 all over again. I never said I was perfect.

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

When Illness Collides With Real Life

FROM PAGE 10

tients that illness affects more than the person who has it.

“Not only do you have a duty to yourself as a patient who’s ill, but you have a duty to the community not to spread that illness.”

She looks for practical solutions, such as remote work or medical documentation and she’s happy to write a letter to her patients’ employers.

“That way, they don’t feel like the de-

cision was fully theirs,” she says. “It’s also partly my decision, too, and we kind of come up with that plan together.”

Parents face similar challenges when children are sick.

“Sometimes the parents, you know, they need their kid to be at school because that’s their form of childcare for that week, and I understand those limitations,” Rezazad says.

If someone must go to work, she recommends wearing a mask and avoiding close

contact.

“If you have to go into work, please just at least wear a mask and try not to cough or sneeze or share drinks with other people.”

People with influenza should stay home until symptoms are improving and they have been fever-free for at least 24 hours without fever-reducing medication. Additional precautions for the next five days can further reduce transmission.

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