The Arlington Connection



Andrea Hamre with her Swedish bread on Great American Bakeoff at Central Library on Saturday, Nov. 14.

Photo by Shirley Ruhe/The Connection

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Opposing the Arch, 'For So Many Reasons'

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Arlington's Best Bakers, at the Library

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Veterans Vociferous in Protesting 'Trump's Arch'

National Capital Planning Commission gets an earful.

By Eden Brown
The Connection

Rick Silverman was angry. He was also deeply moved. An upbeat, conversational man, he had just turned 83 and came over to Memorial Circle on November 5 to express his unhappiness with the proposed "Trump Arch." He visits the cemetery often as his father is buried there. On one visit, he happened to see a man kneeling by a grave, crying. At a loss for what to do, he went over and consoled the man, asking him about the bottle of Jack Daniels and two glasses sitting by the grave. "This is the bottle I opened with my son when he went off to war," said the man. "I told him when he came home, we would finish it." Silverman looked down at the almost full bottle of liquor that would never be finished. "That is the thing," he said. "This is a place where people come to feel close to their family members. It's hallowed ground. It's not a place for tourists to come gawk or for a president who dodged the draft to put up a monument on a whim."

Protesters, primarily from "Third Act," a group of activists who also helped vote in Democrats during the Mid-terms, knew a lot about the proposed construction. "It's going to take three years or more to build," they noted. "It will cause disruption in family visits to the gravesites. And how will grieving families feel when a nearby construction site includes a place for snipers and drones, instruments of violence in a place where "rest in peace" is enshrined?"

Several mentioned the arch would have elevators, a restaurant, and gift shop. "It's not just an arch," said one member of Third Act, " I've been in the tourist business. This arch will bring busloads of people and congestion. The view down from Arlington House, expressly why the cemetery was built where it was and how it was built with that direct line to the Lincoln Memorial, will be obstructed. " (The straight line was intended to visually unite North and South—linking Abraham Lincoln (the Union) with Robert E. Lee's former home (the Confederacy) across the graves of fallen soldiers.)

Other speakers spoke about out-

See Veterans, Page 11



Rick SIlverman stands in protest near the site of the proposed Arch. He just turned 83 and wanted to stand with other vets opposed to the arch. His father is buried in Arlington Cemetery; he was totally disabled during World War II in the Battle of the Bulge. Silverman is an Army veteran who served in Korea. Coming to visit his father at the cemetery is a cherished way to spend Memorial and Veterans days.



Photos by Eden Brown

Kyriaki Chris of Falls Church served 9.5 years in the Marine Corps and took part in five wars during that time. "This is not right for so many reasons. That's why I came out today."



The protesters constructed an "arch" to bring attention to the project.



Maryanne Vogel came up from Mount Vernon to protest the arch and stayed most of the day. She was encouraged by the number of horns honking support as cars drove past.

Tons of Food Collected for AFAC

By Shirley Ruhe
Arlington Connection

Cub Scouts from Pack 641 stop by an Arlington house on their pack's 1,100 house route to pick up non-perishable food items for the annual Scouting for Food drive on Saturday, Nov. 14. Ten-year-old Hank Hammerstrom and Ethan Sutton both say this is their fourth year of participating in the food drive. Hank explains they are gathering donations for Arlington Food Assistance Center (AFAC) to provide for people in Arlington struggling to get food.

The Scouting for Food drive aims to not only collect essential food donations but also to raise awareness of the issue of food insecurity. Since its launch in 1995, Scouting for Food reached a historic milestone last year, collecting a record-breaking 33 tons of food, the largest in the event's 31-year history. That's roughly 4.4 percent of AFAC's total annual food donations of 1.5 million pounds.



Photo by Shirley Ruhe/The Connection

Cub Scouts Hank Hammerstrom (left) and Ethan Sutton are Scouting for Food on Saturday, Nov. 14.

Thrive Holiday Season Highlights Stories of Success

By Shirley Ruhe
Arlington Connection

Treasure Henderson says she is starting over from scratch with the help of Thrive. In the spring she was fleeing domestic violence and she and her small daughter started living with her mother. "After I left the relationship, I was a single mother with no income and in need of assistance and daycare pretty fast."

Her mother heard about Thrive, and Henderson contacted them for help. "I loved how Sarah was very friendly and welcoming. They gave me a baby box with clothes, eating utensils, silicone bibs, toys and a gift card for diapers." She says she thought, "Wow this is amazing. I really needed it."

In addition, Henderson needed to find child care "because I had no income at all." She filled out the forms to apply for subsidized daycare but Thrive allowed her to complete the process by providing the notary for the paperwork. In addition, she says, Thrive gave her a list of their partner day care places and helped her figure out which was closest, the prices and gave her $100 for the enrollment fee. Now her 17-month-old daughter, Essence, is in daycare full time.

Henderson has been able to enroll in beauty school full time where she is hoping to get the credentials that will allow her to start her own business someday. "Right now we're learning about anatomy, skin diseases, cells and layers of the skin."

Previously Henderson was a model and an artist and hopes to return to freelance modeling like her previous experience appearing in advertisements and photo shoots as a glamour shampoo and make up model.

She says there is a big difference in her life right now in many ways. "When I lived with the controlling and abusive baby's father, Essence was withdrawn and would put her hands over her ears and had serious separation anxiety. It was a trauma response." Now Henderson describes her daughter as a bundle of energy and joy, a problem solver who is curious about the world.



Photo Contributed

Treasure Henderson and her daughter Essence.

"I don't know where I would be; Thrive gave me a chance to thrive in ways we needed to flourish as a family."

Melanie Anderson, Executive Director of Thrive says, "Today our holiday campaign begins, and I'd like to invite you to be part of it. We know that each phase of life comes with unique challenges from childcare to career changes to independent living to managing one's health and support is needed for each of those stages. Treasure is truly an example of that.

"Treasure first came to Thrive in search of

See Thrive Holiday Season, Page 5

Fairfax Water

NOTICE OF WATER RATE AND BUDGET PUBLIC HEARING

December 10, 2026 at 6:30 p.m.

At 6:30 p.m. on Thursday, December 10, 2026, Fairfax Water will conduct a public hearing on its Proposed Schedule of Rates, Fees, and Charges. The hearing will be held in Fairfax Water's offices at 8570 Executive Park Avenue, Fairfax, VA.

The proposed changes, to be effective April 1, 2027, include the following:

- An increase in the Availability Charge from $5,090 to $5,370*.
- An increase in the Service Connection Charge from $1,960 to $2,050*.
- An increase in the Account Charge from $50 to $51.
- An increase in the Quarterly Service Charge from $17.55 to $26.00*.
- An increase in the base Commodity Charge from $4.35 to $4.61 per 1,000 gallons of water.
- An increase in the Peak Use Charge from $4.20 to $4.45.
- An increase in the Turn Off / Turn On Charge from $61 to $62.
- An increase in the Fees for Use of Fairfax Water Fire Hydrants to include the increase in the Commodity Charge and Peak Use Charge.
- An increase in the Overhead Charges for Labor from 104% to 106% and a decrease for Materials from 14% to 13%.
- An increase in the Installation of Sewer Use Meter Charge Inspection Fee from $48 to $49.
- An increase in the After Hours Service Restoration Charge from $58 to $60.
- New proposed rate: Cross-Connection Control and Backflow Prevention Non-Compliance Charge ranging from $150 to $2,400.

**Charges reflect fees associated with a standard 5/8" residential meter. Changes in charges for larger residential and commercial meters are reflected in the Proposed Schedule of Rates, Fees, and Charges.*

Fairfax Water is also proposing a $281 million budget for calendar year 2027.[1] Water sales are expected to provide $249 million and the remaining $32 million is expected from connection charges, investment income and other sources.

The major areas of operation and maintenance expense are:

Category	-- $1,000s -- 2026	2027
Personal Services & Employee Benefits	$ 78,983	$ 86,354
Power and Utilities	14,759	17,200
Chemicals	14,476	15,410
Purchased Water	10,622	9,625
Supplies and Materials	8,315	9,038
Insurance	1,402	1,285
Fuel	849	915
Postage	650	700
Contractual Services	16,877	18,630
Professional Services	2,421	2,221
Other	3,220	3,293
Sub-Total	152,574	164,671
Transfer to Improvement Fund	(12,104)	(12,632)
Total	**$ 140,470**	**$ 152,039**

Net revenues are expected to be appropriated as follows:

Debt Payment	$52,802,485
Improvement Fund	$11,000,000
General Fund	$63,691,000

[1] *Fairfax Water's Board will continue to monitor economic factors and review revenues and expenditures at mid-year to determine if additional action is needed.*

Visit **fairfaxwater.org/rates** to view a copy of the proposed changes.

Those wishing to speak at this hearing or desiring a copy of the proposed changes should call Ms. Jessica Love at 703-289-6029. Interested parties may submit written comments to **PublicHearingComments@fairfaxwater.org** or mail written comments to:

Fairfax Water
Public Hearing Comments
8570 Executive Park Avenue
Fairfax, VA 22031

All written comments must be received by close of business on **Wednesday, December 9, 2026** to be included in the record of the public hearing.

Thrive Holiday Season Highlights Stories of Success

From Page 4

affordable childcare and with the support of Sarah, she secured childcare for her daughter and was able to access essential needs through the baby pantry. We are proud to be part of her journey.

"The holiday season brings unique challenges to the families we serve. Prices are climbing.

Unemployment is rising. Utility bills are increasing. But a month of rent assistance, affordable childcare secured, a supply of baby essentials, a utility bill paid, or the hope of a new job training opportunity, means parents can focus on their children and the holiday season for the month. We are also looking forward to bringing a little extra joy and surprises to our families over the holiday season."

Thrive is the only non-profit organization in Arlington that offers immediate emergency assistance. They are committed to making sure that when crisis strikes, no one in the community falls through the cracks by providing quick and compassionate responses and the immediate assistance that helps Arlington residents stay housed, stay healthy, and stay hopeful.

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

See Bulletin, Page 7



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VDOT
Virginia Department of Transportation

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
HALIFAX	9250	639	ROCK BARN ROAD	BUFFALO CREEK	10/30/2026
APPOMATTOX	1665	700E	TRENT HATCHERY ROAD	BRANCH CUB CREEK	10/30/2026
NELSON	12612	776	GRAPELAWN DRIVE	DAVIS CREEK	10/29/2026
WISE	19495	1135N	LITTLE LEAGUE ROAD	TOM'S CREEK	10/26/2026
HALIFAX	9295	685	LEWIS FERRELL ROAD	BIRCH CREEK	10/22/2026
SCOTT	16704	625N	ANGLERS WAY ROAD	BRANCH	10/20/2026
LEE	10829	624N	ROUTE 625	CREEK	10/15/2026
PITTSYLVANIA	13652	713	BIRCH CREEK ROAD	BIRCH CREEK	10/15/2026
LEE	10745	912E	ROUTE 912 (OLD 58)	BRANCH	10/13/2026
KING & QUEEN	26123	33E	ROUTE 0034	MATTAPONI RIVER	10/6/2026
BATH	2492	618	DUNNS GAP (ROUTE 618)	COWARDIN RUN	10/2/2026
TAZEWELL	29681	0	SAGE HILL ROAD	INDIAN CREEK	10/1/2026
TAZEWELL	18616	643	BRUSHFORK ROAD	NS RAILWAY	10/1/2026
PATRICK	13211	40	CHARITY HWY/ROUTE 40	POPLAR CAMP CREEK	9/30/2026
GRAYSON	8756	58E	HIGHLANDS PKY	HELTON CREEK	9/30/2026
SCOTT	16690	621N	ENGLAND VALLEY ROAD	BRANCH	9/30/2026
TAZEWELL	18614	643E	ROUTE 643	MUD FORK	9/30/2026
NELSON	12521	640	WHEELERS COVE ROAD	DUTCH CREEK	10/31/2026
ALLEGHANY	1031	159N	DUNLAP CREEK ROAD (ROUTE 159)	DUNLAP CREEK	10/20/2026
DINWIDDIE	6050	624	HILLS DRIVE	WHITE OAK CREEK	10/24/2026

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.

CAN Raises Funds for Immigrant Support

Congregation Action Network on Faith and Justice in a Time of Deportation.

By Shirley Ruhe
Arlington Connection

A large drum announced the interfaith choir weaving through the crowd at the Congregation Action Network event on Thursday, Nov. 12 at Rock Spring UCC on Little Falls Road. They said they were singing for the voices of all those whose voices can't be heard.

The fundraiser, "Faith and Justice in a Time of Deportation," featured a panel of interfaith speakers addressing key questions about the role in the current climate of the faith community to bring justice and dignity to the immigrant community.

The panel participants included: Bishop Mariann Edgar Budde, Rabbi Jeffrey Saxe, Bishop Philip Hirsch, Imam Yahya Hendi and Omar Angel Perez, former CAN executive director and national organizer.

Rev. Julio Hernandez explained CAN is about action that brings about change. "It is love, faith and dignity in practical ways. It is a voice that cries out 'stop' with no more authoritarian regime that we are living under and freedom for every living human being."

Hirsch responded to the first question about how the faith community could do things beyond tangible support to support the immigrant community. "As people of faith we see things differently. Our citizenship is in heaven where no one checks your immigration status. We have dignity and worth, this understanding deep in our faith."

Budde added, "We are like a rapid response team. We find ourselves on a bus or show up in a courtroom because we were given something to do."

Hendi responding to the two-minute time limitation reminded the audience he was trained by a Baptist minister. He says, "We need to be united; it is a fight for all of us. We refuse to be the devil, ignoring truth." He cited Matthew chapter 25 verses 31-46 which emphasizes active tangible compassion demonstrated by such actions as feeding the hungry, giving water to the thirsty, "speaking for the least of us."

See CAN Raises Funds, Page 7

Photos by Shirley Ruhe/The Connection



An interfaith panel addressed "Faith and Justice in a Time of Deportation" at Congregation Action Network (CAN) fundraiser Thursday, Nov. 12.



The Voices for Justice choir urged the group to put one in front of the other until "Justice Rolls Down."



Arlington Board Member Julius D. "JD" Spain Jr. and Rock Spring UCC associate pastor Laura Martin.



A sell out crowd enjoyed appetizers from Cafe Sazon at the Congregation Action Network event on Nov. 12 while silent auction bidders perused the choices.

CAN Raises Funds for Immigrant Support

From Page 6

Saxe repeated the theme of community. “Love the stranger; community is important. People don’t want to be standing up alone. They want their religious community with them.”

The second question elicited answers about the importance of action and living out commitment.

Saxe responded, “Take to the public square. Not all religious people do it. I have my people ask me, why do we need to do political stuff. Why can’t we just do Jewish stuff?’ But we need to act in all parts of our life, not just our private. I hope more of our religious congregation will be dedicated.”

Hirsch responded, “We hear too much dogma. We need action. How do we create a community with a passion for compassion? We need to create an actual movement that changes how politicians speak and what they work on.”

Omar Perez stresses the necessity of pushing for a real solution. “We have a tendency to push for what is easy. The real long term solution is citizenship.”

Budde remembers that 20 years ago she was in Minnesota where they were trying to put a rigid definition of marriage in the state constitution. “I remember a Minnesota minister saying ‘just hold on for five more years. Just hold steady. I’m convinced times will change.’” Budde continued, “I saw the first truth of this last week. This won’t last forever. Part of the job is to just hold steady. In five years, new people will believe what we have been saying.”

The final comment came from Bishop Philip Hirsch. “What I dream about is that immigrants would be able to feel secure being here, know what they can expect. I hope long term we restore our country to a beautiful welcoming place. We have forgotten that.”



Photo by Shirley Ruhe/The Connection

Revd. Kathy Dwyer, Senior Pastor at Rock Spring UCC who hosted the fundraiser, thanked the group for “helping us realize our deepest values and understand how to live out our faith.”

CAN was organized in 2017 to stand in solidarity with immigrants facing detention, deportation and systemic harm. Their work includes lobbying and legislative visits, protests, petitions, demonstrations and marches, vigils and interfaith prayers, actions and public rituals.

Bulletin Board

From Page 5

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.

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/naloxone for details.

Monthly Memory Café. 1-3 p.m. at 7910 Andrus Road, Suite 6, Alexandria. The Memory Café, a social gathering for individuals living with memory loss and their families, virtually. Registration is free and highly recommended to reserve spots, which are open on a first come first served basis. To reserve a spot, please call 571-210-5551 or email bdesai@seniorhelpers.com. Visit www.dementiacareconnections.com/memory-cafe or www.seniorhelpers.com/arlington-alexandria-va for more.



Taste Just A Bite If You Can

Central Library hosts Great American Bake Off.

By Shirley Ruhe
The Connection

A line of people waits down the hall outside the Barbara M. Donnellan Auditorium at the Central Library on Saturday, Nov. 14 for a taste from some of Arlington's best bakers. Small white cups, each with a tiny wooden spoon, are lined up on tables crisscrossed across the room. The crowd is tightly packed around the tables as hands attempt to squeeze through an open space to grab a bite and pick up a recipe sheet nearby.

What to do? To choose a bite of whoopie pie, key lime pie, peanut butter sandwich cookie, birthday brownies or kardemummabullar bun? Each participant was asked to try two samples, vote and then leave space for the next in line who were waiting patiently to enter the room.

Each entry had a story. Just inside the entrance Jamie Gelsond was cutting her milk chocolate cheesecake into bite size pieces. "I post all my baking online just for fun. I entered because I thought it would be a really great way to meet people in the community." Gelsond says she combined a bunch of different ideas to come up with her recipe. "I tested it once last weekend but I make it every year for my boyfriend's birthday

See Great American, Page 9



Photos by Shirley Ruhe/The Connection
Andrea Hamre with her Swedish bread.



Nancy Broff with her apple-blackberry pie with designer crust.

Get Your Game On with Arlington Pillsbury Bake Off Finalist

By Shirley Ruhe
Arlington Connection

A slice of deli ham, a layer of shredded gouda, a dab of mustard, a sprinkle of bagel spice and a Pillsbury flaky biscuit with a twist or two. An Arlington woman is one of the 24 national finalists in the Pillsbury Bake Off with her "Hurts So Gouda Twists" in the biscuit category. Emma Watkins says she was notified that she had made the contest the day before her wedding in May.

"My wedding was pretty small with just 24 of us over a weekend so I could just focus on freaking out about the show."

Watkins says a producer from a previous competition had reached out to her back in the spring and asked her to apply. She says they asked her a number of questions, and she was interviewed and asked to bake things for several different categories including pies and cakes and biscuits, and they chose this recipe. "It was a very long process, a couple of months."

Watkins says this is a recipe very much based on what her family likes to eat when they are watching a football game. She says her 26-year-old twin brother in Georgia is a sports fanatic and they are really close. "He loves football, ham, cheese and biscuits. And I love my brother. So I made this so he can ignore that we don't root for the same team (Go Birds!)."



Photos Contributed
Emma Watkins, Pillsbury Bake Off finalist, with her twin brother, the inspiration for her recipe, and her father, the inspiration for her love of baking.

Watkins was notified in August that she had made the finals. "I had a friend over and missed the call but got a voice mail congratulating me and telling me the filming would take place in October. She says filming took place over two days in Jersey City with individual interviews of the contestants and then making and baking the recipe. "It was crazy; I'd never seen any kind of show behind the scenes.

"It was two full days—so intense and we all became really close. It was really a fun group of people." They filmed the whole contest at that time.

Watkins says she loves baking — "really more my thing than cooking. I think my dad got me into it. He's Sicilian, and they're always cooking and baking. And my grandma and I take cooking classes together whenever we can and love to bake together."

The Bake Off features four groups including pies, cakes, cookies and biscuits with six different contestants in each category. The top baker in each category will advance to the Best in Bake finale. The grand winner will receive $25,000 in cash, a complete Kitchen Aid equipment package and a Pillsbury golden rolling pin trophy. The Pillsbury Bake Off dates back to 1949.



Emma Watkins baking with her grandmother.

Watkins says the entire contest has been filmed so she knows the winner. But if you want to know, you need to tune in to CBS on Monday, Nov. 23 at 8 p.m. to find out for yourself. Watkins will be back home in Atlanta watching the show with her family and mostly her mom's mahjong group. And, yes, she will be serving her gouda twists.

Photos by Shirley Ruhe/The Connection





Crowds line up to taste bakery treats submitted by amateur bakers in the Great American Bake Off sponsored by the Arlington Library.

Central Library Hosts Great American Bake Off

From Page 8

in February. We've been together 2-1/2 years so it must work." Alec, standing nearby adds, "Yes, it's the secret sauce."

Nancy Broff, entry number 58, has made an apple-blackberry pie. "I like to bake with colored dough. It's all natural. I've made this a number of times with different designs for the crust. The pie today is inspired from a quilt I saw recently when I made a visit to the National Museum of Women in the Arts." She says it was quite a process. "I made three different pie crusts for the design. I made the dough yesterday and let it sit in the fridge overnight."

Andrea Hamre has made a Swedish bread. "I learned to make this bread from my Swedish family when I was a Rotary exchange student in 2000. I think what makes this bread different is the high amount of milk and butter." She says, "There is a culture in Sweden built around fresh bread. They eat this bread with butter, cheese, meat, and, of course, it is good with fondue."

Susan Smith has made Kardemummabullar (Swedish cardamom buns). She says she made two batches ahead of time and then made another extra one yesterday which proofed overnight so she would have it baked fresh for the judges. "I chose this recipe because I have a friend in Sweden. It is good for the cold weather now, to have a cozy warm day when you have a sweet treat and coffee with a friend."

Melanie Vinojur's mother stands with her grandson behind her daughter's samples of apple-almond tart. "Usually this tart would be made with pears but the kids went apple picking. We came home with a whole bunch of apples so we peeled them all and made this with apples instead."

Amy Fuller has made her Bakery Lane Soup Bowl Apple Cake with Caramel Frosting. "I have been making this since I was a college student, a long-time ago! It's not too complicated, just peeling the apples. I always get a request to take it at Thanksgiving."

Library Director Diane Kresh, in disguise as Paula Hollywood, after the famous British Bake off Judge Paul Hollywood, mingles around the room chatting with the contestants and waiting to pronounce the grand "Showstopper" winner of the day.

The Great American Bake Off is part of the Library's year long celebration of the nourishing and community building power of food. This event invited amateur bakers from the DMV area to show off their best creations and the community to taste and vote for their favorite. Each category was also considered by a judge along with the votes from the community, and the final Showstopper award was given by Paula Hollywood.

The winners were:

Showstopper: Cassandra Mattson (Black Sesame Oatmeal Cream Pies)

Pie: Kimberly Shiao (Miso Caramel Gochujang Tart)

Bread: Kristen Stevens & Shannon Mok (Sticky Gulab Jamun-Inspired Cardamom Buns)



Melanie Vinojur's apple-almond tart.



The Great American Bake Off at Central Library Nov. 14



Janie Gelsond, entry number 50, with her milk chocolate cheesecake which won People's Choice Award.



Amy Fuller with her Bakery Lane Soup Bowl Apple Cake with Caramel Frosting.



Susan Smith with her kardemummabullar Swedish cardamom buns.

Cake: David Inserra (Torta de Santiago)

Tray Bake: Leni Perkins (Peanut Butter Sandwich Cookies)

People's Choice: Janie Gelfond (Milk Chocolate Cheesecake)

An estimated 500 were in attendance, and when the event was over only crumbs remained at many of the tasting sites.

Other events have included author talks sponsored by the premier Public Library "Arlington Reads" program which began in February and will end in December. The Arlington Reads program turns 20 this year, and to celebrate it's anniversary as well as the 250th anniversary of the United States, the program looked at American life, culture and history through the lens of food.

Neighborhood Health Celebrates Arlington Pediatric Center

Neighborhood Health marked the first anniversary of Arlington Pediatric Center at its current Columbia Pike location with an open house and ribbon cutting on Nov. 10. The center brings pediatric primary care, dental care, behavioral health and vision care together at 2301 Columbia Pike, Suite G.

Arlington County Board Chair Matt de Ferranti and Board members Susan Cunningham and JD Spain joined Neighborhood Health CEO Dr. Basim Khan, clinic staff, and community partners for the celebration. Guests toured the clinic and met members of the pediatric, dental, behavioral health and vision care teams.

Arlington Pediatric Center joined Neighborhood Health in January 2024. Its pediatric optometry program, supported by a grant from the Virginia Health Care Foundation, means that a child whose pediatrician spots a possible vision problem can get an eye exam in the same clinic. Families can also get help ordering prescription glasses at the clinic for children with eligible Medicaid coverage. The Delta Dental of Virginia Foundation helped equip the clinic to provide pediatric dental care.

Neighborhood Health provides care regardless of a patient's insurance status, background, or ability to pay.

Families can call 703-535-5568 to ask about appointments at Arlington Pediatric Center.

Neighborhood Health is a nonprofit Federally Qualified Health Center serving Alexandria, Arlington, and Fairfax County.



Photos courtesy of Neighborhood Health

Neighborhood Health CEO Dr. Basim Khan, center, holds the ceremonial scissors just after cutting the ribbon at Arlington Pediatric Center on Nov. 10. Arlington County Board member JD Spain applauds at left.



Anita Friedman speaks during the Arlington Pediatric Center open house on Nov. 10.



Delicia Claure, administrator of Arlington Pediatric Center, speaks with guests during the open house on Nov. 10.



Arlington County Board member JD Spain, left, takes a selfie with Neighborhood Health CEO Dr. Basim Khan during the Arlington Pediatric Center open house on Nov. 10.



Arlington Pediatric Center administrator Delicia Claure, right, talks with Matt de Farranti during the open house.



Neighborhood Health CEO Dr. Basim Khan greets guests at the Arlington Pediatric Center open house on Nov. 10.



Neighborhood Health CEO Dr. Basim Khan, second from left, and Arlington County Board Chair Matt de Ferranti, right, talk with guests at the open house on Nov. 10.

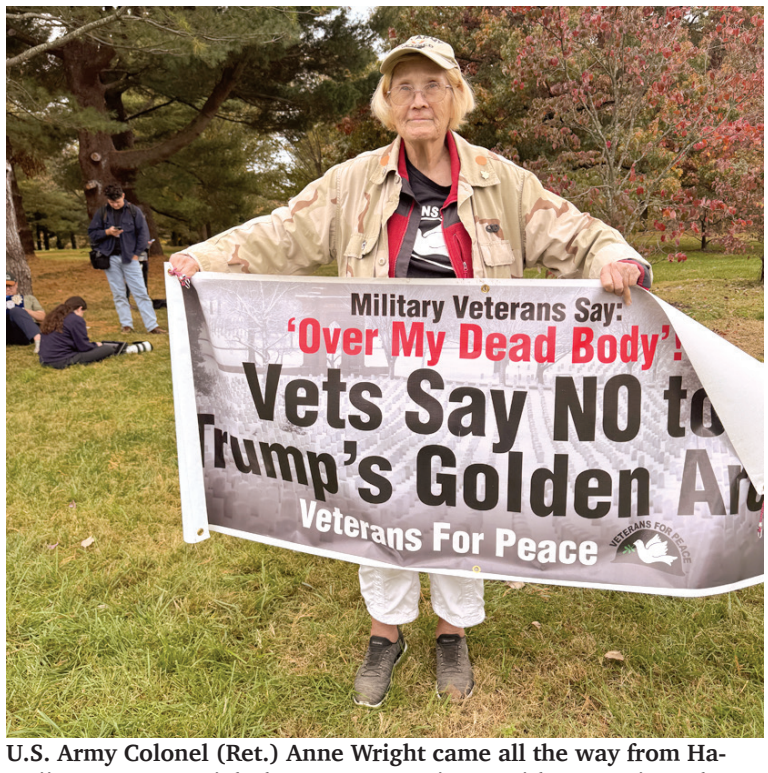
Veterans Vociferous in Protesting 'Trump's Arch'

From Page 3

rage at the lack of adherence to legal requirements such as height limits. "Over 100,000 comments have been submitted to the commission - mostly against," said one speaker. "We saw clearly on Tuesday night the contempt the American people have for the kind of illegal activity this arch represents, and the American people will continue to prevail!"

The National Parks Commission got an earful, with speakers also noting the VVA (Vietnam Veterans of America), a group of 94,000 vets, was not given a voice in the decision and one particularly angry protester pointed out "it was clear the commission had already made up its mind and was "kowtowing" to the whims of a vain president" to bend the rules on construction of this arch.

U.S. Army Colonel (Ret.) Anne Wright was there in army fatigues, a dynamic personality who felt so strongly about the arch she flew here from her home in Hawaii to protest. A woman of principle and a superior officer in both the army and the foreign service, she sent a strongly worded letter to Colin Powell in 2003, resigning from the service because of the invasion of Iraq. She was one of three foreign service officers to resign. She served in all the tough places: Nicaragua, Afghanistan, Sierra Leone, Mongolia, to name a few.



U.S. Army Colonel (Ret.) Anne Wright came all the way from Hawaii to protest. Wright has some experience with protesting. She served in the U.S. Army with distinction and then joined the Foreign Service, again awarded for her superior service. She resigned in protest in 2003 when President George Bush invaded Iraq.



Photo sby Eden Brown

As the afternoon wore on and speaker after speaker addressed the National Capital Planning Commission, protesters gathered in the middle of the circle to greet commuters who may not have focused on the arch construction issue.

Protesters (and the roughly 10 reporters camped around the area) planned to stay as long as it took for the Commission to vote, and for U.S. District Judge Tanya Chutkan to be informed, as she had asked to be within ten minutes of the decision. Once told, she issued a 14-day temporary restraining order halting construction on Trump's proposed 250-foot triumphal arch. On November 10, nine members of the Kennedy family moved to join pending motions seeking a preliminary injunction to block the Trump administration from beginning construction of the arch.

"I just turned 83," Rick Silverman said. "I don't have a lot of time left to serve my country, but I know this is wrong and I will lay down in front of the bulldozers if they start digging tomorrow."

Democracy Not a Spectator Sport for Arlingtonians

Activists travelled long distances, wrote postcards, raised funds.

The Blue Wave in the midterm elections didn't happen by itself. Groups all over Arlington (and the U.S.) rolled up their sleeves and got to work. Arlington Blue Families, We of Action Virginia, Postcards4VA, Network NOVA, Arlington Democrats, a little neighborhood group called "Do Something" and many others realized that voter turnout was key, particularly in redrawn districts. Elaine Luria, running in a gerrymandered Congressional District 02, in and around Virginia Beach and Chesapeake, was well known to Arlington Democrats. But she was less well known in parts of what would be her new district. She had been out of politics four years, and only came back when she saw how her successor was not supporting her district, voting against healthcare bills, not taking care of sailors, not paying attention to climate change. Fundraisers kicked into action to support a candidate who had been, with Abigail Spanberger and Jennifer Wexton, one of the three Virginia women to turn the U.S. House of Representatives Blue back in 2018. Supporters drove down to Virginia Beach and Richmond, canvassed, wrote 10,000 postcards, and made phone calls, for her and the candidate in the next district over, Shannon Taylor, who was fighting an uphill battle in Henrico County, Spanberger's old district 1. Both women won their elections.

Arlingtonians drove out to Ohio four weekends in a row in the Fall, again knocking doors, writing postcards, phonebanking and texting, to help voters understand the importance of a midterm vote. Many voters don't vote unless it is a presidential election. The candidate in Columbus, Ohio for whom they knocked doors, Don Leonard, a young professor at Ohio State who decided to run for office and who had a largely Republican area to convince, also won his election.



Shannon Taylor at a fundraiser in Great Falls in September.

Photos by Eden Brown/The Connection



Elaine Luria at a fundraiser in Great Falls in September.

The postcard writers, the phone bankers, the door knockers all faced comments from cynics who didn't think the candidates could win or that postcards really achieved anything, or that the elections would even be held. But the retirees, the students, the grandfathers and mothers, the recently downsized, all proved that Democracy is not a spectator sport. Getting out and voting works.

Entertainment



The Bull Run Festival of Lights is now open at Bull Run Regional Park in Centreville.

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 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

NOVA PARKS HOLIDAY LIGHT SHOWS OPEN

Drive, Walk and Smile into the holidays with three unique holiday light show experiences. Tickets for the 2026 holiday season are now on sale, and all 3 NOVA Parks light shows will be open as of Saturday, November 14.

Meadowlark's Winter Walk of Lights

Walk a sparkling half-mile garden trail while sipping on a hot beverage for an enchanting evening at Meadowlark's Winter Walk of Lights in Vienna.

Meadowlark's Winter Walk of Lights is an elegant garden trail aglow with countless sparkling lights, perfect for a date night or family holiday outing. The half-mile walk through the enchanting Meadowlark Botanical Gardens (Vienna, VA) features lighted nature themes and animated displays along a paved wheelchair and stroller-accessible trail. Stay warm by sipping on a hot beverage (with or without spirits) as you walk and s'mores to finish out the evening. Treat your pup to their favorite walk of the year on specific dates. The Winter Walk of Lights is illuminating the gardens for its 15th season, bringing joy to more than 110,000 visitors each year.

Open nightly November 11 through January 3. Capacity is limited; reservations are required to ensure access on a specific date. Tickets start at $19 per person; promotions are available for specific dates. Visit novaparks.com/WinterWalk for details.

Bull Run Festival of Lights

Drive through 2.5 miles of dazzling lights at Northern Virginia's largest drive-through light show at the Bull Run Festival of Lights in Centreville.

Experience the magic of the holidays at the Bull Run Festival of Lights, Northern Virginia's largest drive-through holiday light show! A family favorite for three decades, the Bull Run Festival of Lights dazzles with a 2.5-mile display of holiday and fairytale vignettes. Enjoy time with family while staying warm and cozy as you slowly drive through the animated displays in Bull Run Regional Park. New displays are added every year–drive through the Winter Wonderland where it's always snowing and see the tallest light display yet. Don't miss the Holiday Village and Carnival at the end of the drive to visit animals at the stable, roast marshmallows, and new this year, enjoy an extra special treat at the new hot chocolate and dirty soda bar!

Open November 14 through January 3. Price per vehicle varies by date. Book now for visits before December 11 for the lowest rates of the season. Visit novaparks.com/FestivalofLights for details.

Bright Nights – The Winter Village at Cameron Run

Explore a winter village wonderland for a playful outdoor experience at Bright Nights – The Winter Village at Cameron Run in Alexandria. Just minutes from Old Town Alexandria, explore new, dazzling light displays at Cameron Run Regional Park (Alexandria, VA). Bright Nights offers a fun, unstructured outdoor family experience to explore unique light displays, snap family pictures or selfies with a variety of festive scenes and enjoy a hot beverage and snack. New this year, enjoy lighted mini golf, a scavenger hunt, a giant maze, and bring your own camera and capture a special holiday memory with Santa Claus through December 23. Visits and photos with Santa are free with admission to Bright Nights. Open weekends November 14 through 22, then nightly November 27 through January 3. Admission is $9 online; promotions available for specific dates. Visit novaparks.com/BrightNights for details, hours and Santa's schedule. Visit novaparks.com/Lights for more information and to purchase tickets.

NOVEMBER ON COLUMBIA PIKE

❖ Wednesday, Nov. 18 – Columbia Pike Lunch Club. Join us at MoMo GoGo for lunch and a community conversation focused on civic associations.

❖ Saturday, Nov. 28 – Small Business Saturday. Shop, dine, and support Columbia Pike's local businesses as you kick off the holiday season. For event details and registration updates, visit columbiapike.org.

NOW THRU JAN 18

Image Building. Exhibit at Cody Gallery at Marymount University, Virginia Square, Arlington. Image Building is a solo exhibition of abstract and representational works, including paintings, drawings, and assemblages. Every image in this exhibition is built. Together, the works show abstraction and observation as two approaches to constructing an image, piece by piece, until it holds together.

NOW THRU NOV. 29

Color Stories. 5–7 p.m. At Alliance Gallery, Clarendon. Alliance Gallery is pleased to present Color Stories, a member juried exhibition celebrating how color can tell a story, evoke a mood, capture a moment, or express ideas. This show invites artists to explore their relationship to color and light, whether through vibrant palettes or pastel hues.

NOV. 20-22 & DEC. 5-13

Madeline's Christmas. At Gunston Arts Center, Long Branch Creek, Arlington. "In an old house in Paris that was covered with vines lived 12 little girls in two straight lines." So begins Madeline's Christmas! After a cheerful day of adventures and French lessons, a sudden case of the flu leaves everyone in Miss Clavel's house feeling under the weather... except Madeline. As Christmas Eve arrives, Madeline sets out to bring hope, joy, and a little holiday magic to her friends. Filled with heart, laughter, and festive wonder, this charming classic is a cozy celebration of kindness, courage, and the magic of the season.

SATURDAY/NOV. 21

Rosslyn Cheer 2026: Holiday Market. 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. At Central Place Plaza | Rosslyn, Arlington. Shop local this holiday season at the Rosslyn Holiday Market, happening Satur-

day, November 21, from 10 a.m. - 4 p.m. at Central Place Plaza. Discover one-of-a-kind gifts, handmade goods, and festive finds from local artisan makers from across the region. Plus hands-on holiday crafts, live music, and personalized calligraphy gifts.

SUNDAY/NOV. 22

Washington Balalaika Orchestra. 3 p.m. At Kenmore Middle School Auditorium, 200 South Carlin Springs Road, Arlington. Featuring "Winter is Coming!", under the direction of our beloved Conductor, Svetlana Nikonova. This special performance highlights two world-class virtuosos:

Ekaterina Skliar – The brilliant, internationally acclaimed domra soloist.

Andrei Saveliev – Prima balalaika master and perennial audience favorite.

SUNDAY/NOV. 22

Chaos, Myth and Majesty. 4 p.m. At Gunston Theatre One, Long Branch Creek, Arlington. Celebrate the Arlington Philharmonic's 20th anniversary season with Chaos, Myth and Majesty, a free concert featuring music by Haydn, Rebel, and Beethoven. Arrive early for a pre-concert reception hosted by Encore Learning, and explore a string instrument petting zoo hosted by Day Violins.

POLICE FILL THE CRUISER TOY DRIVE

The Arlington County Police Department (ACPD) 12th annual Fill the Cruiser Toy Drive, continuing a beloved holiday tradition of bringing joy to children in need across Arlington. Community members can help make the holidays brighter by donating toys at designated collection events or convenient drop box locations throughout the county in November and December.

Collection Events

Officers will collect new, unwrapped toys for children ages newborn to 17 at the following locations:

Saturday, November 21



The Color Stories exhibit will be held now through Nov. 29, 2026 at Alliance Gallery in Clarendon.

Our Lady of Lourdes Church, 11:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m., 830 23rd Street S.

Saturday, December 5

Lee Harrison Shopping Center, 12:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m., 2425 N. Harrison Street

Stationary Drop Box Locations

If you are unable to attend one of the donation collection events, stationary drop boxes will be located at the following locations from November 1 to December 9:

Westover Market Beer Garden, 5863 Washington Boulevard

Compass Coffee, 4710 Langston Boulevard

Cathedral of St. Thomas More, 3901 Cathedral Lane

Office Building, 200 N. Glebe Road

Arlington Courthouse, 2nd Floor, Administrative Support Unit, 1425 N. Courthouse Road

Ireland's Four Courts, 2051 Wilson Boulevard

Celtic House Irish Pub, 2500 Columbia Pike

Shirlington Library, 4200 Campbell Avenue

Ruthie's All-Day, 3411 5th Street S.

Long Bridge Aquatics & Fitness Center, 333 Long Bridge Drive

Freddie's Beach Bar, 555 23rd Street S.

Courthouse Public Library, 2100 Clarendon Boulevard

SATURDAY/DEC. 5

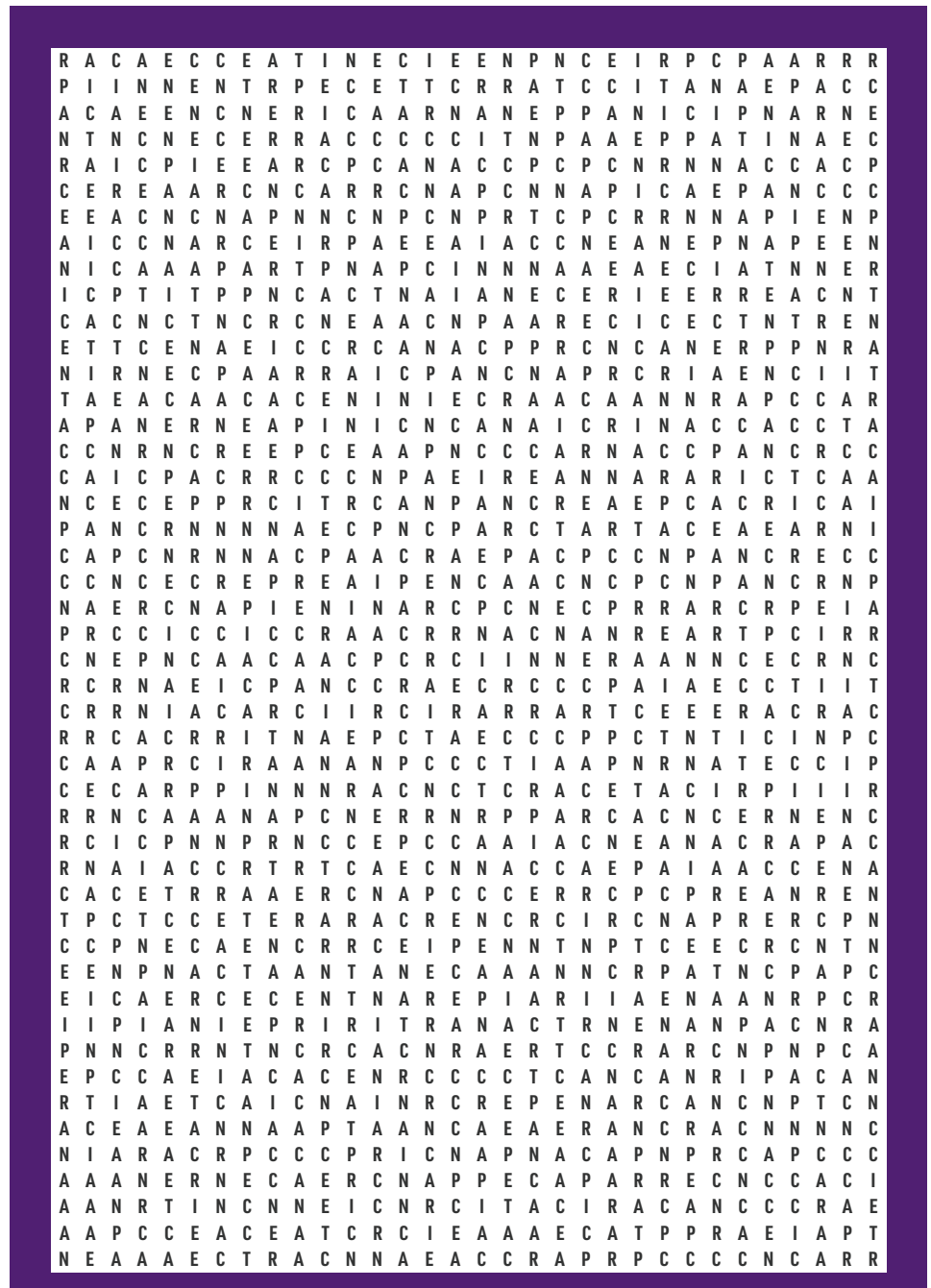
The Studios Holiday Show and Sale. 10 a.m.-4 p.m. At The Studios at Arlington Arts | Green Valley, Arlington. It's time again for The Studios at Arlington Arts' annual Holiday Show & Sale! Our 2026 event includes artwork by over 20 member artists working in ceramics and printmaking. Shop for handmade functional pottery like mugs, bowls, and plates; or collect original sculptures, linocuts, monoprints, screen prints, and etchings. Tour our studios and chat with artists about their creative process. See you there!

SATURDAY/DEC. 5

Third Annual Poetry and Art Noir. At the Fuse at Mason Square, George Mason University Arlington Campus. The Northern Virginia Alumnae Chapter (NoVAC) of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc., in partnership with the Northern Virginia Delta Education and Community Service (NVDECS) Foundation, presents Poetry and Art Noir, an evening celebrating the richness of Black art, culture, creativity, and community impact.

SATURDAY/DEC. 12

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 experience features comedy from the DC area's finest comics. The headliner for December's show is the hilarious Haywood Turnipseed Jr.!



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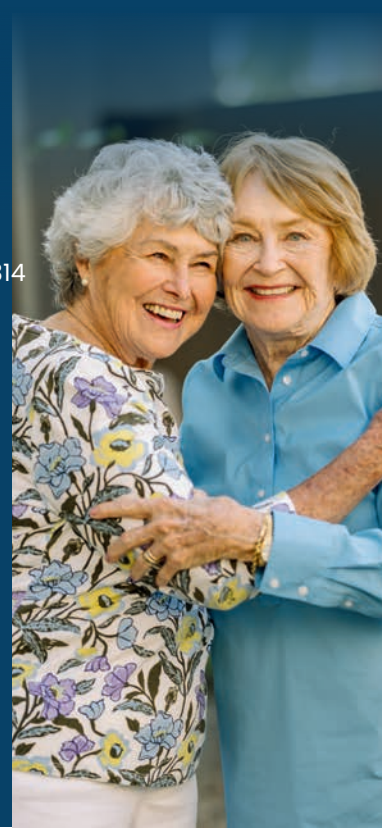
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Senior Living

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.

How to read a credit report, presented by Tanise Bing, financial counselor with CommonWealth One Federal Credit Union, Thursday, Nov. 19, 3 p.m., virtual. Registration # 911400-09.

Phase 10 Game Day, classic card game, join 55+ Center Director Jennifer Weber for a friendly game, 9:30 a.m. – 12 p.m., Walter Reed 55+ Center. Beginners welcome. Registration # 911600-07.

Healing Steps: Grief Walking Group with licensed clinical social worker Jennifer Lanouette, Thursday, Nov. 19, 10 a.m., begin at Long Branch Nature Center, 625 S. Carlin Springs Road. Walk about two miles at a relaxed pace, supporting healing through nature. Registration # 911106-23.

Open jam session, bring your favorite acoustic instrument and join volunteer Al Robertson for a relaxed jam featuring folk, country, classic rock, bluegrass, oldies and blues, Thursday, Nov. 19, 6:30 p.m., Lubber Run 55+ Center. All skill levels welcome. Drop-in.

Brains and Brawn, interactive wellness program with 55+ staff, Friday, Nov. 20, 1 p.m., Lubber Run 55+ Center. Walk the indoor track and answer a trivia question after each lap. Registration # 911106-26.

Forest Bathing with Nature and Forest Therapy Guide Jane Stubbs, Sunday, Nov. 22, 10 a.m., Virginia Highlands Park, 1600 S. Hayes Street. Registration # 911106-33.

Secrets revealed, an exploration of famous artists and their distinctive and sometimes secretive techniques, Monday, Nov. 23, 10:30 a.m., virtual. Presented by Community Arts Programmer Jennifer Droblyen. Registration # 911302-04.

Scale down, a weight loss support group, private weigh-ins, interesting programs, Monday, Nov. 23, 1:30 p.m., Langston-Brown 55+ Center. Drop-in.

Piano Lounge and Sing-Along with pianist Valerie Welsh featuring songs from the "Oldies but Goodies" LP Collection, lyrics provided, Monday, Nov. 23, 1 p.m., Aurora Hills 55+ Center. Registration # 911304-18.

Arlington Mill 55+ Center Coffee Shop Walk, Monday, Nov. 23, 10 a.m. Join 55+ volunteer Rita Cronley at Arlington Mill for a two-mile morning walk along the Four Mile Run Trail and nearby quiet streets with a stop at a neighborhood coffee shop. Drop-in.

Absolute beginner pickleball, try this sport in a judgement-free zone, Monday, Nov. 23, 10 a.m., Walter Reed 55+ Center. Volunteers on hand to answer questions. Paddles and balls available. Drop-in.

Billiards and table tennis, Monday, Nov. 23, 10 a.m., Walter Reed 55+ Center. Equipment provided. Drop-in.

55+ Ice Skating, MedStar Capitals Iceplex, Monday, Nov. 23, 8:40 – 9:50 a.m. (senior hours). Roof level 8 parking in the Ballston garage, $1. Register for Senior Public Skate at www.medstarcapitalsiceplex.com. Drop-in.

Yarn creations, if you love to knit or crochet join a casual group of crafty individuals to share ideas and fellowship, Tuesday, Nov. 24, 1 p.m., Langston-Brown 55+ Center. Bring your own supplies. Drop-in.

Movie matinee, "Ticket to Paradise" (2022) (PG-13), Tuesday, Nov. 24, 12:30 p.m., Lubber Run 55+ Center. Registration # 911804-12.

Line Dance 101, a fun, low-impact class featuring easy-to-follow steps and lively music, Wednesday, Nov. 25, 11 a.m., Arlington Mill 55+ Center. Taught by volunteer instructor Elaine Eder. Drop-in.

55+ Walking group, Wednesday, Nov. 25, 9:30 a.m., Lubber Run 55+ Center. Explore nearby trails and neighborhoods. Registration # 911106-12.

Canasta, fun and easy to learn card game, Wednesday, Nov. 25, 10 a.m. -12 p.m., Walter Reed 55+ Center. Drop-in.

Hearts Club, enjoyable, less complicated card game, requires four players, Wednesday, Nov. 25, 10 a.m. – 12 p.m., Aurora Hills 55+ Center. Drop-in.

Scrabble, the ultimate game of strategy, vocabulary and fun, Wednesday, Nov. 25, 1 p.m., Langston-Brown 55+ Center. Drop-in.

Aurora Hills 55+ Center book club will discuss "Mount Vernon Love Story" by Mary Higgins Clark, Monday, Nov. 30, 11:30 a.m. Drop-in.

Intergenerational rock painting, Monday, Nov. 30, 2 p.m., Lubber Run 55+ Center. Participants of all ages are invited to paint rocks for the new Lubber Run Rock Garden. Supplies provided. Registration # 911319-07. No 55+ Pass required.

Flourishing your work, join art instructor Sandra Philips to learn how to create ornate flourishes on cards, stationery, envelopes and art projects, Monday, Nov. 30, 1 p.m., Arlington Mill 55+ Center. Bring a mechanical pencil with eraser, a black 01 or 05 micron pen and a white gel pen. Registration # 911310-14.

Warm up with chili, cooking demonstration by Virginia Cooperative Extension Master Food Volunteers, Tuesday, Dec. 1, 1 p.m., Walter Reed 55+ Center. Registration # 912501-01.

Stay Active and Independent for Life (SAIL), is a fitness class proven to improve balance, mobility, strength and flexibility plus reduce risk factors for falls, Tuesdays and Thursdays, Dec. 1- Feb. 25, 25 sessions, 10:30 a.m., Arlington Mill 55+ Center. Registration # 912502-01; also Mondays and Thursdays, Dec. 7-Feb. 25, 21 sessions, 1 p.m., Lubber Run 55+ Center, registration # 912502-02. No fee.

Line dance level one, low impact basic steps, wide variety of music. Led by 55+ volunteer Hanni Cordes, Wednesday, Dec. 2, 10:15 a.m., Walter Reed 55+ Center. Drop-in.

Stroke awareness, learn the signs and symptoms and steps to take to act fast, presented by Dr. Edward Allcock, DO, medical director of inpatient rehabilitation at VHC Health and registered dietician Andrew Malone, Wednesday, Dec. 2, 1 p.m., Walter Reed 55+ Center. Registration # 912500-01.

Memoir writing and autobiography, share and exchange ideas, methods and life experiences, Wednesday, Dec. 2, 2 p.m., Langston-Brown 55+ Center. Drop-in.

Opera appreciation group to meet Wednesday, Dec. 2, 1:30 p.m., Lubber Run 55+ Center to hear and discuss part one of "Cosi Fan Tutte" by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, registration # 912300-01; part two, Wednesday, Dec. 16, 1:30 p.m., Lubber Run, registration # 912300-02. Professional commentary by volunteer Geoge Cecchetti.

Line dance level two with 55+ volunteer Hanni Cordes, learn more complicated combinations and choreography, Wednesday, Dec. 2, 11:30 a.m., Walter Reed 55+ Center. Drop-in.

Memory Café, supportive environment for people with dementia and their family caregiver, Thursday, Dec. 3, 1:30 p.m., Walter Reed 55+ Center. For more information or to sign up, call Adult Services Librarian Zoe Mann at 703-228-5193 or email zmann@arlingtonva.us. Open to all ages; no 55+ Pass required.

First Friday Social, kick off the month in a relaxed social gathering with holiday trivia, music and light refreshments, Dec. 4, 1 p.m., Arlington Mill 55+ Center. Registration # 912801-04.

Introduction to beginner line dance with 55+ volunteer Suzie Pratt, Friday, Dec. 4, 10:15 a.m., Aurora Hills 55+ Center. Learn steps like the box step, quarter turn and grapevine. Drop-in.

Travel gurus share stories and tips about their experiences including a long-distance hike through Italy presented by Lowell Nelson, Friday, Dec. 4, 1 p.m., Aurora Hills 55+ Center. Registration # 913400-11.

55+ Travel group will ring in the holiday season with the U.S. Army Band "Pershing's Own" at the DAR Constitution Hall, Saturday, Dec. 5. Cost $22, Arlington resident; $26, non-resident. Registration # 902612-01.

The Arlington Connection

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"Cartality"



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

Every month when I receive my paper bill from Audi (the car, not the belly button) to make my monthly payment, I also take notice of how many payments I have remaining (I purchased this SUV and financed it for 60 months after having completed a 42-month lease on the same car). Given my diagnosis, I am also mindful of what my car future may or may not be. It's in this context I remember a conversation I had with Dina's late Italian grandfather: Cesear aka "Chez." It was about cars, specifically the Oldsmobile Omega sedan parked in front of his house. Chez took the opportunity to begin listing all the cars he remembered buying over his lifetime before summarizing that the Omega would be the last car he'd ever buy; acknowledging his own mortality. Being 85-ish, give or take, at the time, "Chez" wasn't driving very much anyway so his comment was hardly a revelation. Still it was funny how he recounted all the other cars that he had owned/had previously driven and laughed at their memory while understanding his car future was over.

I feel similarly about my 2022 Audi Q3. One of two cars we own/lease in our retirement. Additionally, our driving demands are somewhat less than while we were working. As such, our cars are odometer friendly: the miles just aren't adding up. Therefore, there's less wear and tear on both the car and the driver and since I'm not a car guy (sports and chocolate are my areas of expertise), but rather more of a budget guy, I would much rather have two paid-off cars than new/leased cars with payments. As the years have passed, I have gained much less pleasure in making my car payment. Those payments never seemed to be a means to an end as they feel now (not an end to my life but instead an end to car payments). I anticipate the joy I'll feel when I no longer have to pay $631. 30 every month. I think then, this Audi might be my last car. And every month receiving its bill reminds me of my goal and how much closer I am to reaching it. It also reminds me of the time when the late comedienne Joan Rivers burned her home's mortgage on live television after she had paid the balance due. She was free, unencumbered. Likewise, I'll be car rich rather than car poor. Granted there might have been a time in my life when my car mattered more. Not anymore. Now that car payment represents my future. I just hope I get to enjoy it sort of the way "Chez" enjoyed knowing his Omega was going to be his last car. Meaning to me that he was content with his life/what his life had been and the car was incidental.

Unlike "Chez" I won't be aged 85 when my car is paid off; I'll be 75-ish with a few good years likely to have left. Still, I have to temper my anticipation/enthusiasm because I am an active cancer patient still undergoing treatment. And considering one's cancer diagnosis is generally not an ideal way to plan your retirement, it is hopefully not the impediment it used to be. Some cancer survivors are now treated as if they have a chronic disease, sort of like diabetes, with many normal-type years left to live. My "13 month to two years" prognosis back in 2009 is a thing of the past. Nevertheless, for the moment, life goes on and though I'm not throwing caution to the wind (hardly), I am certainly throwing myself into my car as per usual knowing that each trip is getting me closer to heaven on earth: car-payment freedom. And though I'm not exactly planning on how I am going to spend this $600+ monthly windfall, I am looking forward to not having to send it to Audi. I can only imagine the effect it will have on our budget. Can you say "Come to papa?"

The older I get, it's discretionary income that tickles my fancy, and being able to say "yes" to a random demand for my cash. Saying "no" all those previous years was prudent certainly, but in the midst of a cancer-centric life, it was a bit of a, to quote my late father, "confliction." If I didn't have as long to live as I had anticipated/planned/hoped et cetera, budgeting money became a sort of which way the wind/diagnosis was blowing. What seemed to end up most was me spending in the present in a way that might not bankrupt my future. It was a fine line to be sure and one not always appreciated. When diagnosed with a "terminal" diagnosis, it's nearly impossible to not live exclusively in the present. And a big expense like a car is front and center in that spending dilemma. And though I may have driven myself anxious over this issue over the preceding years, I've survived, no thanks to my cancer diagnosis.

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