

NEWS

WILD NIGHT

After hours of sparring, Civic Federation defers action on key resolution.

➤ PAGE 9

EDUCATION

THEN THERE WERE 3

Three candidates emerge to seek Democratic nod for county School Board.

➤ PAGE 11

SPORTS

STATE TITLE

Yorktown girls team wins state championship in swimming and diving.

➤ PAGE 17



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STATE CROWN ON THE WRESTLING MAT!

Yorktown High School's Liam Gil-Swiger capped the 2022-23 campaign and his high-school wrestling career by winning the Virginia High School League's Class 6 state title at 165 pounds. Gil-Swiger was 4-0 in the state tourney, bringing home Yorktown's first individual championship in the sport in 33 years. See full coverage in Sports. [Family photo]

Major Changes to Pay the Bills for Stormwater?

County Board Members Seem Set to Move from Taxes to Fees

SCOTT McCAFFREY
Staff Writer

Arlington government leaders continue to put the procedural steps in place to change the way county property owners are charged for stormwater-related costs.

As part of their fiscal 2024 budget plan, County Board members will consider moving from the existing funding stream (a tax levied based on the value of property) to a fee-based one that is dependent on the amount of impervious surface on any given lot. Once adopted – and it almost surely will be adopted – the new arrangement will take effect as next year dawns.

County Board members said making such a change would connect tax burdens more directly to the actual impact a property has on the government's stormwater infrastructure.

"The shifting of the rate structure is the right way to



do this," County Board member Katie Cristol said at a recent work session on the topic.

The result, in general, would be a higher bill for homeowners; the current median tax for stormwater (a 1.7-cent-per-\$100 property-tax add-on) equals \$136 for single-family homeowners, while going to the new system would raise that median rate to \$232, based on a Jan. 31 staff presentation to County Board members.

(The public can search for "stormwater utility fee estimator" on the county government's Website at arlingtonva.

Continued on Page 22

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Co. Board Advertises No Change in Real-Estate Tax Rate

SCOTT McCAFFREY
Staff Writer

Arlington County Board members on Feb. 21 voted to advertise a maximum real-estate tax rate for the current year at \$1.03 per \$100 assessed valuation.

TAXES

If adopted later in the budget season, that would mean no change to the previous tax rate, although most homeowners would pay more owing to rising home assessments.

Under state law, governing bodies must hold public hearings on tax rates if they would result in an increase in the average tax bill. The rate advertised on Feb. 21 is the maximum board members could adopt without going back and re-starting the process; they could adopt a lower rate, but during the pandemic era have declined to reduce it despite rising assessments.

County Manager Mark Schwartz had requested advertisement of the \$1.03 rate as part of his proposed \$1.5 billion fiscal 2024 budget, which was unveiled on Feb. 18.

County Board members will hold the requisite tax hearing on March 30, and are slated to adopt the fiscal 2024 budget in late April. The budget will go into effect July 1, but the tax rates will be retroactive

to the start of the year.

Fees for Water, Sewer to Rise: A typical Arlington household will pay the county government \$768 for annual water and sewer service in the fiscal year beginning July 1, up 3.5 percent from a year before, under the budget proposal being considered by County Board members.

The rate increase will cover operating expenses, capital needs and reserves for the utilities fund, which is designed to be self-supporting. The extra charges are expected to bring in an additional \$1.7 million in revenue.

Arlington will remain in the middle of the pack in costs associated with water and sewer use, according to data from the county government. Typical annual costs for the current year (with Arlington at \$742) range from \$674 in Loudoun County to \$1,141 in the District of Columbia.

The "typical" household, in parlance of the Arlington County government, uses 48,000 gallons of water over the course of the year, or about 132 gallons on an average day.

While county residents will see relatively modest (for these inflationary times) increases in water/sewer fees, County Manager Mark Schwartz has proposed a 30-plus-percent increase in the trash-collection fees imposed on single-family neighborhoods, passing along higher

costs from contractors under new contracts.

Long Bridge Park Aquatic/Fitness Fees Hold Steady: It's been plagued with staffing issues of late, but at least there is good financial news for users of the Long Bridge Park aquatics and fitness center.

Under the fiscal 2024 budget proposed by County Manager Mark Schwartz, most fees for use of the facility will remain unchanged for the coming year.

One-day passes remain at \$9 for adults, \$6 for seniors, \$5 for youth and \$25 for families under the proposal, which will need to be ratified by the County Board.

Multi-use passes, ranging from 10 entrances to annual admission, also will remain unchanged. Fees are reduced for lower-income residents.

The facility, which opened in 2021 in the northern end of Crystal City, lately has faced challenges with staffing, particularly with lifeguards. When the issue was brought to County Board members in mid-February, they acknowledged the problems and said they would be addressed during the upcoming budget deliberations.

Costs for 55+ Memberships to Remain Steady: Good news for Arlington's adventurous seasoned citizens: It doesn't appear costs for the county government's 55+ programming will be going up in the

coming year.

Under the budget proposal from County Manager Mark Schwartz, the basic costs for membership will remain the same: \$20 for individuals, \$30 for households if Arlingtonians, \$45/\$65 for others.

Most fees for individual trips, programs, clubs and special events under the 55+ umbrella will remain the same, assuming Schwartz's recommendations are ratified by County Board members in April.

New for the fiscal year that begins in July: The 55+ summer camp, while retaining its 5-day option (\$100), also will include a 3-day alternative (\$50).

'Escape Trail' Programming Set for New Fiscal Year: Have the urge to escape without leaving Arlington's cozy confines? The county government's Department of Parks and Recreation soon will have an option for you.

As part of its fiscal 2024 budget proposal, the parks department plans to begin offering "escape trail" programs to the public, featuring a nature theme.

The cost will be \$8 per person.

In addition, the parks department is planning to add an escape-room program, also with a nature theme, where groups work together to try and extricate themselves from predicaments.

The cost is slated to be \$275 per group, county officials say.



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Favola Measure on Menstrual Data Fails in Lower House

SCOTT McCAFFREY
Staff Writer

Safeguarding personal information, or handcuffing the public-safety process?

Those were the two positions staked out as a subcommittee of the House of Delegates killed a measure from a local legislator.

The bill from state Sen. Barbara Favola (D-Arlington-Fairfax-Loudoun) would have prohibited the issuance of search warrants to obtain menstrual information from women during criminal investigations.

The measure, which passed the state Senate on a 31-9 vote, was “very simple, very straightforward,” Favola told members of the House subcommittee.

“It’s intended to keep very personal health data personal,” Favola said. “There’s very little that is as personal and private as your menstrual data.”

That was a view shared by Lexi Wright, policy chair of the REPRO Rising Virginia advocacy group.

The measure “recognizes the sensitive and personal information” that is held by health-care providers and in online apps, she told subcommittee members.

But the Youngkin administration saw things differently.

The bill was the first she knew of to propose limits on legitimate search warrants, said Maggie Cleary, deputy director of the Virginia Department of Public Safety and Homeland Security.

“This would ultimately open the door to put further limits on search warrants down the road – that would be incredibly problematic,” Cleary said at the hearing.

On a party-line vote, the subcommittee agreed with Cleary, killing off the measure 5-3.

In a later e-mail to supporters, Favola hinted at what she saw as the Youngkin administration’s motives.

“Why would prosecutors ever need your menstrual data?” she wrote. “I think you can draw your own conclusions about that.”

Before moving to the House of Delegates, the measure – SB852 – had garnered support of all 22 Democrats and nine of 18 Republicans in the Senate, including the GOP leader, Sen. Thomas Nor-

ment (R-Williamsburg).

Favola Bill on Walking Trails Goes to Governor: A measure by state Sen. Barbara Favola, authorizing localities and park authorities to create walking trails in the communities they serve, is headed to Gov. Youngkin’s desk.

The measure (SB807) by Favola (D-Arlington-Fairfax-Loudoun) also provides a degree of liability protection for those property owners that allow the trails to run through their land.

The measure won passage 37-3 in the state Senate and then was approved 98-0 in the House of Delegates.

A companion bill, patroned by Del. Irene Shin (D-Herndon), had a similar fate, passing without opposition in the House of Delegates and then being approved, with a handful of “no” votes, in the state Senate.

Among those voting against both measures were state Sens. Chap Petersen and Scott Surovell, both Fairfax Democrats.

Hope Bill on Liquid Nicotine Wins Passage: It got amended a couple of times along its journey, but legislation patroned by Del. Patrick Hope to study issues related to the sale of liquid nicotine is on its way to the desk of Gov. Youngkin.

The bill as initially crafted by Hope (D-Arlington) would have added new regulations and taxes regarding the sale of vaping products and the like. But in a House of Delegates subcommittee, all sides agreed to instead have the Virginia Secretary of Finance assess a potential licensing scheme, reporting back to legislators by Nov. 1.

“I think it is sort of a half of loaf, and will tee it up for success next session,” Hope said of the changes made to his bill during the session. “It’s not a question of if, but how, we’re going to do it.”

“We’re having a big problem among vaping retailers of underage sales. Nearly one in five tobacco/vaping sales in Virginia are to underage [people],” Hope told the GazetteLeader. “The vaping retail industry is supporting retail licensing as a way to curb the rising abuse of underage vaping. In fact, they approached me about carrying the bill.”

The legislator said he hopes having the executive branch study the measure will provide tailwinds to support action in

2024.

“I thought the introduced bill was very close, but there were some structural questions about who was going to do the enforcement,” Hope said. “There’s a successful model already in use with the Alcoholic Beverage Control (ABC) board. They already enforce licensing for underage sales on alcohol and vaping could be an extension of that structure. Some, however, prefer we create a different agency, and the hope is this workgroup will help us chart a course that everyone can get behind.”

As part of the measure on its way to the governor’s desk, the secretary of finance would be directed to determine the most appropriate manner and entity to enforce and administer licensing, age verification, product verification and advertising restrictions related to the sale of liquid nicotine.

A similar measure was patroned by state Sen. Adam Ebbin, which also passed both houses and will go to the governor.

Measure to Cut Property Taxes for Low-Income Residents Dies: A measure to provide tax relief to low-income, long-term Virginia homeowners facing major tax-bill increases will have to wait at least until 2026 before it goes to voters.

A subcommittee of the powerful, Republican-led House of Delegates Rules Committee on a party-line 5-1 vote killed a proposal that would have started the process of putting a constitutional amendment addressing the issue on the ballot.

State Sen. Ghazala Hashmi (D-Richmond), who patroned the measure, said it was an effort to aid those who are seeing tax bills skyrocket due to rising assessments.

The pattern of gentrification “has been going on for more than a decade,” said Hashmi, who introduced the measure at the request of the Richmond city government.

“Real-estate tax increases are actually driving longtime residents out of their homes,” Hashmi said in testimony before the subcommittee. “These new buyers are driving home prices up exponentially.”

Her measure “is an effort to keep communities stable,” she said.

Rising home values are beneficial to property owners when it comes time to

sell, but prove problematic in the interim if leaders of localities opt not to reduce tax rates to fully account for rising assessments. It is a situation residents of Northern Virginia have come to know well, as growth of the local tax burden has far outpaced the rate of inflation.

The state constitution gives localities the ability to provide targeted tax relief to those who are elderly or disabled, but otherwise generally requires everyone to pay his/her fair share of the tax burden. It ultimately is up to the governing bodies of Virginia’s counties, cities and towns to set tax rates, which, coupled with assessments, determine annual tax bills.

A scaled-back version of Hashmi’s original bill had passed the state Senate, 24-15, but members of the House subcommittee killed it without discussion after hearing from a number of proponents.

State law requires that, for a constitutional amendment to get on the ballot, it must be approved in one session of the General Assembly, then an identical version be passed in a subsequent legislative session after a General Assembly election has occurred. If approved the second time, amendments then go on the ballot the subsequent November.

Should Democrats win back control of the House of Delegates later this year while maintaining control of the state Senate, a measure such as Hashmi’s would be more likely to win approval in the 2024 or 2025 General Assembly sessions, but given the procedural steps involved, the earliest it would get to voters would be 2026.

Legislators to Wrap Up Session During League of Women Voters Event: The Arlington and Alexandria branches of the League of Women Voters will host a post-legislative session, featuring members of the local delegation to the General Assembly discussing the results of the session and their own efforts.

The event will be held on March 12 from 1 to 3 p.m. at Arlington Independent Media, 2701 Wilson Blvd., C.

Confirmed speakers to date include state Sen. Barbara Favola and Dels. Patrick Hope, Rip Sullivan, Alfonso Lopez and Elizabeth Bennett-Parker.

For information and registration, see the Website at <https://bit.ly/3IZqYeX>.

Legislators Ratify Arlington Delegation’s Choice for Judges

SCOTT McCAFFREY
Staff Writer

The General Assembly has followed the recommendation of its Arlington delegation, electing Daniel Lopez to an eight-year term on the 17th Judicial Circuit and Cari Steele to a six-year term to the General District Court.

Lopez currently serves on the General District Court, and on July 1 will succeed Circuit Court Chief Judge William New-

man Jr. (He will not, however, become chief judge; likely a more senior judge will get that title.) Steele, who has been a member of the staff of the county’s commonwealth’s attorney for 22 years, will succeed Lopez.

Jurors to Get a Little More for Their Trouble: It’s not quite the bump up some legislators wanted, but jurors in Virginia legal cases will be getting more for their services starting in July.

After some wrangling between the

two houses, members of the General Assembly settled on an increase from the current \$30 to \$50 per day as reimbursement to members of juries, sending that measure to Gov. Youngkin’s desk.

A majority of the state Senate had wanted a \$100-per-day reimbursement for jurors, while the House of Delegates insisted on \$50. A conference committee comprised of members of both bodies recommended going with \$50, which both houses agreed to.

The change will take effect with the start of the state government’s new fiscal year on July 1.

Paul Ferguson, who is clerk of the Circuit Court for Arlington and Falls Church, said the \$20 increase was less than he might have liked, but better than nothing.

“I appreciate that the General Assembly passed this,” Ferguson told the GazetteLeader. “Fifty dollars should at least cover

Continued on Page 22

GOP Still Coming Up Empty on Candidates

SCOTT McCAFFREY
and BRIAN TROMPETER
Staff Writers

It was zero-for-February for the Arlington County Republican Committee, which remains without any announced candidates for the 13 offices on Arlington's November ballot.

"We are actively looking," party spokesman Matthew Hurtt said at the Feb. 27 committee meeting. "It's a tremendous opportunity this year to make a strong case for fiscal sanity."

On the ballot in November are two County Board seats and one School Board seat, none of which will have incumbents in the mix. While odds are against Republicans in Arlington, with open seats, "you never know," Hurtt said.

Also to be decided in November will be races for two state Senate and three House of Delegates seats and five constitutional offices (clerk of the Circuit Court, sheriff, commonwealth's attorney, commissioner of revenue and treasurer). Democrats hold them all.

At the GOP meeting, Hurtt mocked the Arlington Democrats' efforts, saying its nominations were going to the contender who "fits on the 'grievance totem pole' the highest."

Republicans have until mid-June to have a slate of candidates in place, but given the lack of prospects to date, it may be rocky road ahead. Given that it never hurts to ask for help from a higher power, the prayer that kicked off the monthly GOP meeting asked for divine assistance in recruiting credible candidates.

Greens Confirm Leadership, Look for Candidates: The Arlington Green Party enters 2023 with stability in the leadership ranks.

In the party's monthly meeting in February, John Reeder was re-elected chair and Steve Davis was re-elected treasurer.

The meeting also took a look at candidate recruitment; while there are 13 posts on the November ballot in Arlington, Greens likely will work hardest in finding someone to contest for the two County Board seats that are part of the mix.

"We are still looking for a good candidate to run," Reeder told the GazetteLeader.

Sullivan Now Has Open Path to Re-Election: He no longer will be representing Arlington, but Del. Rip Sullivan's path to re-election just became a little clearer.

Del. Kathleen Murphy on Feb. 24 announced she would not be seeking a new term. Murphy and Sullivan each live in McLean and, under General Assembly redistricting approved last year, would have had to face off in a Democratic primary for the new House of Delegates District 6, had each run.

The decision was not unexpected. Mur-



phy, who has been in office since winning a special election in January 2015, told colleagues that she was stepping down, in part, to provide care for the children of

a daughter who recently died.

"I am proud of the work I've been able to do here," Murphy told fellow delegates, citing bills regarding gun safety and female veterans.

In the summer 2014, Sullivan won a special election to represent the 48th House of Delegates seat, which was split between McLean and Arlington. He has held it without facing a significant challenge ever since.

Shortly after Murphy announced her

Continued on Page 22



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OPINION

Editorial: Anyone Looking Out for the Taxpayer?

Say what you will about it otherwise, but at least the Arlington County government's leadership has consistency.

For another year, County Board members have signaled that they don't anticipate reducing real-estate tax rates on property owners, even though, for another year, assessments have gone up disproportionately on the residential side of the equation, leaving those of modest means once again scrimping and saving to cover the cost.

It's of course possible that, later in the two-month budget season that runs through late April, board members will find a way to lower tax rates to at least partially offset the higher assessments. But in recent history – since the start of the pandemic if not earlier – board members have refused to make even token tax-rate reductions. Localities all around Arlington have been able to do it, but Arlington leaders have refused.

Why? In part because they don't have to, as there seems no political price to be paid for an ever-spiraling tax burden. Who's standing up for those being priced out? Just about nobody.

The message has been simple from the elected and

top staff of the Arlington government: *"We think we are more deserving of taking your money than you are of being allowed to keep it."* And apparently, enough residents agree that there's no penalty to be paid for such let-them-eat-cake posturing.

Nobody's saying the Arlington government should be starved of resources. What's maddening is the attitude of entitlement that county leaders seem to have, viewing the community as an ATM to fund their expansion (and even in bad times, our local government is ALWAYS expanding) and pet projects.

It'll be interesting to see, in the upcoming Democratic-primary campaign for County Board (the only race that's going to count), if budget restraint is raised by any of the contenders. Hope springs eternal, but history suggests otherwise.

And boy-howdy, if you think the residential tax burden is high *now*, just wait until the full ramifications of office downsizing begin to impact the equation. That golden goose is going to be a dead duck, owing to pandemic-created workplace changes. Arlington, which has benefited so much from a heavy office-worker presence, will soon feel real pain.

Affordable-Housing Crisis Demands Fast Action

To the editor:

Across our nation, there is a crisis that has been gripping our communities, both large and small, for many years now. It does not discriminate between young and old, native or immigrant, poor or middle class.

It is the affordable-housing crisis.

Here in Arlington, we have a unique opportunity to remedy the crisis by supporting proposals currently being put forth by the County Board. We should unequivocally support these proposals, including the Missing Middle housing effort and Plan Langston Boulevard, for a number of reasons.

First is the issue of quality of life. Northern Virginia has some of the worst traffic congestion in the country. It is not uncommon for workers in the region to have combined commuting times of one to two hours or more. Much of this is directly attributable to the lack of affordable housing. If you can't afford the rent or mortgage for housing close to the city,

then you are going to have to buy or rent in the suburbs.

This has led to a terrible time crunch. People lose out on so much of their lives when precious time is sucked away by long commutes on top of their already long work schedules. When this happens, there is rarely time for family dinners, social and leisure activities, exercise and much-needed sleep. Our current mental- and physical-health crises are directly tied in with these quality-of-life issues. In short, people should be able to live close to where they work, and we need to make it affordable to do so.

Second, the affordable-housing crisis has left a devastating impact on our environment. Over the last few decades, we have paved over and bulldozed hundreds and thousands of acres of beautiful Virginia countryside to make way for thousands of homes and miles of multi-lane highways. All of this has led to more traffic congestion and air pollution.

Moreover, this ever-expanding sub-

urban sprawl is simply not sustainable. It requires ever more money and resources to maintain, and the tax base to support it is wholly inadequate.

Higher-density housing close to the city is a much better solution. It reduces greenhouse-gas emissions and pollution, there's an adequate tax base to support infrastructure, and it preserves the countryside's natural habitat.

Finally, there is the ongoing issue of diversity and inclusion. What kind of society are we and what kind of society do we want to be? Do we really want whole neighborhoods and communities separate and unequal? Is it really in our best interest to divide our communities by socio-economic status? These problems can be fixed if we adjust our zoning laws to allow for higher-density housing that will in turn bring more affordable and equitable housing options.

The time has come to make these necessary changes.

Michael Gering, Arlington

Addiction Editorial Missed Issue's Many Nuances

To the editor:

The GazetteLeader's Feb. 9 editorial ["Another Opioid Wake-up Call"] reflects a serious misunderstanding of opioid addiction. It suggests that opioid deaths are the result of "transgressions," lack of "common sense" or "reckless" behavior by wayward teens. This is far from the truth about opioid addiction.

The massive increase in opioid addiction started with legally prescribed med-

ications, when drug manufacturers criminally marketed opioids as non-addictive. Too many children and adults who were prescribed these medications became addicted, and this timing happened to overlap with COVID. When the doctor inevitably cuts off legal prescriptions, the addicted turn to the illegal market for cheaper heroin, that is now lethally laced with fentanyl.

The reality of addiction is a deep and

overwhelming physical need for the drug as part of the addict's very survival. Please don't ascribe opioid addiction to teenage reckless behavior, lack of common sense or foolish transgressions. Most opioid addiction did not start that way.

It is far more insidious and far more difficult to address than simply having more fortitude, especially for the addicted themselves.

Joan FitzGerald, Arlington

Mental-Health Staffing an Ongoing Issue for County Govt.

SCOTT McCAFFREY
Staff Writer

The Arlington County government's efforts to address addiction and mental-health issues in the community won't work without effective levels of staffing. And in many cases, that's a big problem.

"They're doing an amazing job, but the rates of attrition are high," County Board Chairman Christian Dorsey said of the government's behavioral-health workforce.

County-government officials have offered bonuses and other incentives to keep staff in place, but that only goes so far in addressing recruiting and retention challenges. One example Dorsey cited at the Feb. 21 County Board meeting: There is a 43-percent vacancy rate in the children's behavioral-health section of the Department of Human Services.

Both the county government and school system were galvanized into addressing the matter following the recent death of a Wakefield High School student, who overdosed on opioids in a school bathroom and died the next day.

Dorsey asked for community support as efforts are rolled out to address the concern.

"We are all in this together," he said. "We will work to do the best that we possibly can."

County Board OKs Arlington Ridge Road Upgrades: Arlington County Board members on Feb. 18 approved a contract worth just under \$650,000 for transportation improvements to South Arlington Ridge Road at two intersections.

The funding will support:

- Reconfiguring the existing intersection at Arlington Ridge Road and South Lynn Street to a "T" configuration, bringing bus stops up to current standards and installing a median to shorten crossing distances.

- Changing the configuration at the Interstate 395 on/off ramp intersection, and installing traffic-control devices.

Funding also will support new streetlights and plantings between both intersections.

Fort Myer Construction Corp. was the low bidder among seven that submitted bids in January. Funding for the project, whose total cost is estimated at \$1.273 million, will come from local and state dollars.

County Officials Gear Up for Sister City Anniversary: Arlington County government leaders plan to do their part in the upcoming 30th anniversary of the Arlington Sister Cities Association.

"We can see the world differently through other people's eyes," said County Board member Libby Garvey, the board's liaison to the non-profit association.

While activities slowed during the pandemic period, they never completely ground to a halt, and now the Arlington Sister City Association is rebounding with programs and student exchanges.

The efforts will prove "quite worthwhile as we get the world back together a bit," Garvey said.

The international Sister City effort began in 1956 as an initiative of the Eisenhower administration to foster goodwill. Today, more than 500 communities in 140 countries connect through a total of more than 2,000 Sister City partnerships.

Arlington's Sister Cities are Aachen, Germany; Reims, France; Ivano-Frankivsk, Ukraine; San Miguel, El Salvador; and, currently in "emeritus" status, Coyoacan, Mexico.

The Arlington Sister City Association is slated to hold a 30th-anniversary celebration in October. For updates, see the Web site at www.arlingtonsistercities.org.

While it receives funding from the county government, the organization has no direct ties to the government.

County Board Members Make Advisory-Committee Appointments: Arlington County Board members on Feb. 21

made the following appointments to local advisory panels.

Ken Matzkin and Jose Penaranda were reappointed to the Board of Equalization of Real Estate Assessments. Robert Sando and Doug Snoeyenbos were appointed and Mikaila Milton and Majdi Shomali were reappointed to the Climate Change, Energy and Environment Commission. Roland Watkins was appointed to the Commission on Aging.

John Carey and Nat Ames were reappointed to the Forestry and Natural Resources Commission. Diana Preston was appointed to the Joint Facilities Advisory Commission. Nia Bagley and Elizabeth Gearin were appointed and Sara Steinberger was reappointed to the Public Facilities Review Committee. Bryan Coleman and Adam Theo were appointed to the Transportation Commission.

The GazetteLeader may be the new kid on the local news scene, but we have the most seasoned team of local-news professionals across Northern Virginia. While other outlets attempt to make do with a rotating band of new arrivals trying to get the lay of the land, the GazetteLeader has gone with those who have decades of experience – experience that counts!

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Chamber Celebrates 'Hospitality Superstars'

Awards presented by Flavia Sampaio, general manager of the Residence Inn Rosslyn and chair of the Arlington Chamber's hotel-general-managers' committee.



Erika Batjargal, Homewood Suites Rosslyn Key Bridge.



Cynthia Thomas, Homewood Suites Arlington Rosslyn Key Bridge.



Robert Spencer, Hyatt Centric Arlington.



Antonio Spencer, Ritz-Carlton Pentagon City.



Bacilia Vasquez, Renaissance Arlington Capital View Hotel.



Ana Sandoval, Residence Inn Arlington Ballston.



Abrhame Geremew, Residence Inn Arlington Rosslyn.



Joselito Reyes, Homewood Suites Arlington Rosslyn Key Bridge.



Fabrice Afabu, Hyatt Centric Arlington.



Elizabeth Bennett, Ritz-Carlton Pentagon City.



Shawn Morris, Crystal City Marriott at Reagan National Airport.



From far left: Arlington Chamber CEO Kate Bates; Eriz Lozano, Renaissance Arlington Capital View Hotel; Forson Gya-du, Crystal Gateway Marriott Hotel.

**Photos by
Deb Kolt**

Civic Federation Defers Action on Contentious Resolution

Organization President Is Hopeful That Common Ground Can Be Found in Coming Weeks

SCOTT McCAFFREY
Staff Writer

Sometimes, punting isn't such a bad idea. In fact, it often can be the only viable option.

After spending more than two hours wrangling over procedural steps while barely touching the substance, Arlington County Civic Federation delegates on Feb. 21 deferred, for a month, action on a contentious resolution related to Arlington governance.

"We're not going to get anywhere tonight – we're going to wrangle and wrangle," federation president John Ford said around 9:30 p.m., as the crowd had thinned, tempers were beginning to openly flare and the gathering's host (Virginia Hospital Center) was about to shoo the group out the door and into the night.

The rank-and-file remaining on hand agreed, opting in a voice vote to postpone the matter until March. (It was the same rank-and-file who, 25 minutes earlier, had jeered Ford when he had initially proposed the exact same course of action.)

The issue creating such a brouhaha was the same one that had roiled the federation since last September: a resolution proposed by five former organization

presidents taking to task the Arlington County government for failing to better engage the public.

"It's about the fundamentals: The county [government] just does not listen," said Michael McMenamin, one of the resolution's sponsors. "We've all had some kind of gripe."

Few in the audience (in-person or online) disagreed with that sentiment, based on a straw poll taken by Ford during the proceedings. But substantive discussion of the resolution never got out of the starting gate, as delegates spent most of the meeting sparring over the procedural propriety of considering a substitute proposal that had been offered by the Arlington branch of the NAACP.

The wording of that alternative was designed "not to complain, but rather convince" county leaders in promoting more engagement, said NAACP second vice president Bryan Coleman.

Coleman is one of a group within the Civic Federation who believe the former-presidents' resolution was unnecessarily antagonistic. The NAACP alternative "finds common ground among diverse views," he said.

In a procedural morass not seen at Civic Federation meetings in years – coupled

with the challenges of trying to juggle a hypercaffeinated in-person meeting and a Zoom audience – things quickly went south.

"This has been a free-for-all," the normally placid McMenamin harrumphed at one point, calling the unfolding situation "ridiculous."

Another of the former Civic Federation presidents supporting the resolution, Stefanie Pryor, said the NAACP had submitted a "hostile amendment" that should not be considered at that meeting.

(Pryor and McMenamin were joined by fellow former presidents Duke Banks and Sandy Newton in backing the resolution. The fifth initial patron, former president Allan Gajadhar, is no longer listed as a backer.)

Early in the meeting, a vote that effectively would have removed the NAACP alternative from consideration died on a rare tie vote – 52-52 – keeping that option alive, if on life-support.

Although it seemed as though the federation was breaking into armed camps over the issue, Ford said that a month's reflection, and the two sides working together in good faith, could produce a workable compromise where two previous attempts to do so have failed.

"We have made some headway. The differences are not great," he said.

"There's been a lot of passion on both sides. Personally, I find that's good," Ford added. "We are all pulling in the same direction . . . but we're not using the same oars."

Those pining for the good ol' days of local governance, in the grand tradition of "the Arlington Way," might want to consider that, in some respects, they weren't so good, either.

Nearly a quarter-century ago – time flies! – the Arlington government commissioned a study to address concerns. The conclusion back then? That, much like today, power is concentrated in the hands of a select few who have the time and understanding of the process to wield it, leaving out large segments of the community.

And the likelihood that the effort in 2023 to improve things was all sound and fury, signifying nothing, was not lost on some with a long history in civic participation.

"It's not going to matter," one supporter of the initial resolution sighed before the meeting even began. "The county government isn't going to listen."

...

Update to Historic-Preservation Plan Keeps Moving Forward

SCOTT McCAFFREY
Staff Writer

Efforts to update the Arlington County government's Historic Preservation Master Plan continue to move forward.

"We are hopefully in the home stretch," county staffer Cynthia Liccese-Torres said at the Feb. 15 meeting of the Historical Affairs and Landmark Review Board.

"Our goal would be to release the plan in March," Liccese-Torres said. Given the levels of review it will have to go through, adoption by the County Board is unlikely to occur until fall at the earliest.

The update, when adopted, will guide

the Arlington government's efforts to preserve existing heritage – efforts that have come under criticism from some quarters in recent years, as a number of prominent homes and other structures have fallen to the wrecking ball without, critics contend, county government using existing powers to stop the razing.

Those with interest in the subject will be kept in the loop. "There will be ample opportunity to learn about the plan through the spring and summer," Liccese-Torres said.

Perhaps the centerpiece of the effort is a planned May 6 informational session.

Panel Considers Adding Pre-Historic

Expertise: Will the HALRB some day also become the "P" HALRB?

That's the question, as members of the Arlington County government's Historical Affairs and Landmark Review Board, or HALRB, mull adding members with knowledge of the county's pre-history to the panel.

An archeological component "could be part of the future . . . if anyone's interested," HALRB chair Omari Davis said at the board's Feb. 15 meeting. He said the idea came up during a discussion with Arlington County Board member Libby Garvey.

Whether adding pre-history to the body's oversight powers would require

a change to its charter remains to be seen. But adding those with knowledge of pre-historic Arlington would be easier; there currently are two vacancies on the 15-member body, which could be filled by those with archeological expertise.

The Arlington Historical Society says evidence of occupancy by indigenous individuals can be traced back more than 10,000 years. The first European to make contact with Native Americans in what eventually would become Arlington took place in the early 1600s. Increasing colonization and the ills that accompanied it sent the Native American population of the local area plummeting.



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Positivity, Kindness Seen as the Keys to Long Life

Porta Nickles Is Oldest Resident at Brightview, and Likely Most Beloved

BRIAN TROMPETER
Staff Writer

"Aged to Perfection" read Porta Nickles' white-and-gold sash, and it was hard to argue otherwise on her 107th birthday.

Staff and residents at Brightview Senior Living in Great Falls helped Nickles celebrate that nearly incomprehensible milestone Feb. 15 with a party featuring a crooning disk jockey, a loud bang followed by a shower of confetti, a spread of her favorite Greek foods and a cake topped with colorful icing balloons.

Nickles smiled and clapped as residents danced to "New York, New York," "Celebration," "My Way," "Electric Slide," "Macarena," the "Hawaii Five-O" theme song and – her favorite – "YMCA," which she has had played annually ever since her 85th birthday.

"I love to dance," Nickles said from her wheelchair. "They're dancing for me."

Born to native Greek parents in Fort Edwards, N.J., on Feb. 15, 1916 – during President Woodrow Wilson's administration, mind you – Nickles (maiden name Lemberakis) later moved to Trenton, N.J. She had two brothers and a sister.

Nickles knew within 20 seconds when she had met her future husband, and married him after two weeks of courtship, said her son, Peter Nickles, of Washington, D.C.

"Their families knew each other," he said. "That's very important in the Greek tradition. They knew he would be a good provider for the family."

After marrying, she moved with her husband to Middletown, N.Y. Nickles was a homemaker while her husband worked in the restaurant business, and she was active in the local Greek community and Greek Orthodox Church, her son said. She never had a driver's license, he added.

Her husband died after they had been



Above, Porta Nickles reacts as confetti comes down as part of her 107th-birthday celebration at Brightview Senior Living on Feb. 15. Below, Nickles takes a look at the cake baked to celebrate. "She always looks on the bright side of life," said son Peter Nickles. [Photos by Brian Trompeter]



married about 40 years, and then Nickles did something unexpected: She went to Orange County Community College and got certified to become a teacher's assistant. Nickles was highly popular with students and did that job for more than 30 years, retiring in the late 1980s, her son said.

Friends and relatives agreed Nickles is an absolute stickler for correct spelling and grammar; one was nervous about writing a birthday card, lest her gimlet eye catch a mistake.

Those hoping to glean the secret to her longevity might be surprised to learn it did not have to do with exercise or a special diet. Instead, it stemmed from her boundless positivity, constant smile and unwillingness to complain or carry grudges, her son said.

"I've grown young by watching my mother grow old," Peter Nickles said. "She never harbors any resentment toward anyone. I've never seen her angry."

Porta Nickles' family moved her from Upstate New York to the Brightview facility in early 2016, just months after it opened. Brightview resident George Haas said Nickles' personality has made her popular at the facility.

"She's a delight," he said. "Everyone gravitates toward her. She always has that smile."

Nickles is the oldest resident at Brightview Great Falls. Her hearing has declined, so staff and fellow community members often communicate with her by writing on a dry-erase board, said Brenda White, the 88-bed facility's executive director.

"She's always positive, always happy, very complimentary and never complaining," White said. "She always tells everyone how beautiful they are and says, 'You're an angel.'"

Nickles has been a model for her children and grandchildren, her son said, and shows love without reservation.

"She always looks on the bright side of life," he said. "I don't think there's a tense bone in her body."

Va. Home Prices Down from Peak, But Up Year-Over-Year

Having peaked at just over \$400,000 during the market frenzy last spring, the median sales price of homes sold across Virginia in January stood at \$350,000.

But that was still up 3.7 percent year-over-year, according to new data from the Virginia Realtors trade group.

"Home prices continue to rise in most communities around the commonwealth, though the price of growth has moderated," said Ryan Price, chief economist for the organization, in parsing the new sales data.

It's not unusual that median sales prices in the fall and winter months are lower than those in spring and summer, and comparing January 2023 to Januaries of years gone by shows a relatively upward climb from \$275,399 in 2019 – a bump up of 27 percent over five years.

Across the eight broad geographic regions of Virginia, home sales were up in six, down in one (Southside Virginia) and unchanged in another (Eastern Virginia). In

the Northern Virginia reporting region, which includes the inner and outer suburbs and areas as far south as the Fredericksburg area, the average sales price was up 5.9 percent to \$540,000.

The average sold-to-list-price ratio for sales in January was 98.8 percent, still high by historic norms but an easing of the rates achieved over the past three years.

Total sales across the commonwealth in January stood at 5,609, down 30 percent from a year before, when the market was still hot. And with homes taking longer to sell these days, inventory is beginning to build; it stood at 14,867 at the end of the month, up nearly 22 percent from a year before.

Sales were off in each of the eight geographic areas by double-digit margins, with one exception – in Southwest Virginia, sales actually increased one, from 127 in January 2022 to 128 in January 2023.

And overall, there was more variety waiting for prospective purchasers.

"About three out of every four cities and counties in Virginia had more active listings at the end of January compared to last year," Price said. "The sharpest increase in listings this month was in parts of Northern Virginia, the Charlottesville region and the Northern Neck market."

The good news for the Virginia market? The year-over-year sales decline should be easing shortly; the number of pending sales reported for the month was down, but only 12 percent. (And starting in late spring, the 2022 figures that 2023 will be compared to will be lower, as the market last March and April began to see drops owing to spiking interest rates and general concerns about affordability and the economy.)

While inventory is up from a year before, it remains low by historic norms.

Trio Qualifies to Seek Democratic Nod for School Board

SCOTT McCAFFREY
Staff Writer

It will be a field of three seeking the Arlington County Democratic Committee's endorsement for the lone School Board seat on the November ballot.

Candidates Angelo Cocchiaro, Erin Freas-Smith and Miranda Turner filed requisite paperwork in advance the Feb. 23 deadline, party officials said. Turner ran once before; the other two are first-time candidates.

Contenders are seeking to fill the seat being left vacant by Reid Goldstein, who previously announced he would not seek a third four-year term.

Under state law, political parties cannot formally nominate School Board candidates, but they can endorse candidacies. All five current School Board members received the Democratic endorsement before winning general-election victories.

Voting for the endorsement will be held:

- May 7, 2023, from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. at Dr. Charles Drew Elementary School.
- May 10, 2023, from 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. at Campbell Elementary School.
- May 13, 2023, from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. at Washington-Liberty High School.

The three candidates are likely to make kickoff announcements at the March 1 Arlington County Democratic Committee meeting. The full rules of the endorsement caucus are posted at <https://arlingtondemocrats.org>.

The filing deadline for those seeking to get on the general-election School Board ballot is mid-June.

Plea Made for More Substitute Teachers: Michael Beer is not a politician, but he knows the politicians' credo: "Never let an available microphone go to waste."

During a rare lull in the action at the frazzled Feb. 21 Arlington County Civic Federation meeting, Beer used an available microphone to encourage delegates with time available during the day to consider service as an Arlington Public Schools substitute teacher.

The school system is desperately short of substitutes, said Beer, who long has been active in education issues.

The Arlington Public Schools Website says it is hiring substitutes on an ongoing basis in an on-call capacity. The pay starts at \$18 per hour.

Applicants must have at least 30 college credits under their belt and be willing to provide two letters of reference. Arlington Public Schools' employees are required to show proof of COVID vaccination.

The substitute openings are among nearly 300 different positions currently available on the school system's Website, although a chunk of that total is for summer-school instructors.

Montessori Program's Playground to Be Relocated: Arlington School Board members are slated later this month to approve a contract worth about \$716,000 to relocate the playground at Montessori Public School of Arlington, which fronts on South Walter Reed Drive just north of Columbia Pike.

The existing playground sits atop the parcel that will be used for a new Arlington Career Center building, with the elementary school itself ultimately planned for relocation into the existing Career Center facility once the new Career Center is completed.

The relocated playground will have separate areas for ages 2-5 and 5-12, and the equipment being purchased as part of the project can be relocated to the eventual permanent site of the playground once all the construction on the Arlington Career Center parcel is completed, staff said.

NVCC Launches 'Student Success' Donor Fund: Northern Virginia Community College and the NOVA Educational Foundation have raised \$3.675 million to launch what will be called the NOVA Student Success Fund.

Donors, students and the wider community recently came together to celebrate the milestone at a launch event, which featured a panel where guests could hear directly from students about how much the college has changed the trajectory of their lives.

"NOVA is a beacon of opportunity for our students. It's also a beacon of opportunity for our community," said university president Anne Kress. "We've heard from our students that the impact of inflation has been devastating for some of them. These are the funds that help them move forward."

The NOVA Foundation's Student Success Fund will provide "just-in-time" emergency grants and scholarships to students who need timely financial support to continue their education. Beginning in the fall, funding will be widely available to address student needs, including tuition, fees and books, as well as transportation, food, housing, childcare and unforeseen financial emergencies.

"We are fortunate to be a part of a community of individuals, foundations and corporations that understand the critical role of the Student Success Fund in keeping our students on the path to completion," said Kelly Persons, executive director of the NOVA Educational Foundation.



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REAL ESTATE

ON THE MARKET: Stylish Showstopper in Southgate



A stunning colonial filled with natural light and elegance in an incredibly convenient location is our highlight for the week.

Set in the Southgate community, literally a stone's throw from the Pentagon and D.C. line, this charmer features Charleston-style porches throughout, with vistas that range from the Air Force Memorial, Army Navy Country Club and even the U.S. Capitol itself.

And with 4,400 square feet of living space (with six bedrooms and 5.5 baths), you're guaranteed luxurious daily living plus marvelous entertaining opportunities.

The property currently is on the market, listed at \$1,425,000 by Patricia Jordan and Mark Middendorf of Long & Foster Real Estate. An open house is slated for Sunday, March 5 from 1 to 3 p.m.

Quality construction is evident in this 11-years-young delight, with four levels of exceptional quality and design waiting to greet you. (There's even room to



add an elevator, if desired.)

Highlights are many, ranging from the graceful foyer and formal dining room to the chef's-caliber kitchen in white, with accompanying butler's pantry and wine refrigerator.

The family room serves up a dry-stacked, stone fireplace on one side.

The showplace primary suite is just the first of the comfortable and welcoming bedrooms, which include au-pair/nanny suites AND a teen suite.

Bonus spaces on the lower level include a family room with separate outside entrance, plus the final two bedrooms, both en-suite.

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simply hard to top, making it one of the county's hidden-gem neighborhoods.

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Articles are prepared by the Gazette-Leader's advertising department on behalf of clients.

DETAILS:

Address: 1601 13th Street South, Arlington (22204).

Listing Price: \$1,425,000 by Patricia Jordan and Mark Middendorf, Long & Foster Real Estate (703) 928-3915.

Schools: Hoffman-Boston Elementary, Thomas Jefferson Middle, Washington-Liberty High School.

Affordability Issues Plaguing California's Homes Market

A rapid rise in mortgage interest rates depressed housing affordability in California during the fourth quarter of 2022 and pushed the statewide affordability index for an existing, single-family home down close to a 15-year low.

The percentage of home-buyers who could afford to purchase a median-priced, existing single-family home in California dipped to 17 percent in fourth-quarter 2022 from 18 percent in the third quarter of 2022 and was down from 25 percent in the fourth quarter of 2021, according to CAR's Traditional Housing Affordability Index (HAI).

The HAI measures the percentage of all households that can afford to purchase a median-priced, single-family home in California. The highest reading (56%) ever recorded was in the first quarter of 2012.

A minimum annual income of \$201,200 was needed to qualify for the purchase of a \$790,020 statewide median-priced, existing single-family home in the fourth quarter of 2022. The monthly payment, including taxes and insurance on a 30-year, fixed-rate loan, would be \$5,030, assuming a 20-percent down payment and an effective interest rate of

6.8 percent.

The impact of higher interest rates during the quarter was blunted, a bit, by softness in housing prices in the Golden State.

The statewide median price of an existing single-family home in California dipped on a year-over-year basis in the fourth quarter of 2022 for the first time in 11 years. It also experienced the second largest quarter-to-quarter decline since the first quarter of 2011.

Home prices are expected to soften further in the upcoming quarter as rates remain elevated, which will continue to

put some downward pressure on housing demand.

Mono (7%) and a two-way-tie between Santa Barbara and San Luis Obispo (11%) were the least affordable counties in California. Lassen (54%) remained the most affordable county in California in the fourth quarter of 2022, followed by Tehama (40%) and Shasta (39%).

Four counties — all in the San Francisco Bay Area — required a minimum qualifying income of more than \$400,000 to purchase a median-priced home: San Mateo, Marin, Santa Clara and San Francisco.

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Player One: ready. It's time to adventure through the fantastical world of "Claudio Quest."

CAPPIES

McLean High School's intimate and wildly entertaining rendition of this creative show pulls itself together through outstanding technical work, a dedicated cast and the right amount of fun.

The musical – a parody of a certain platforming, red overall-wearing plumber– undoubtedly follows in the footsteps of its source material as he sets out on a journey, defeats the enemies, saves a princess, so forth and so on.

Where "Claudio Quest" strikes out on its own, however, is in its campy, tongue-in-cheek humor and its quaint charm.

Drew Fornarola and Marshall Paillet wrote the musical's book, lyrics and score. The show premiered at the New York Musical Theatre Festival in 2015, where it was directed by John Tartaglia.

Although Luis, played in this production by Nathan Bass, may have been Player 2, he was anything but second best. Bass immediately launched the audience into his own world during his first solo with his soaring vocals and effortless vibrato.

Bass' portrayal of the awkward yet



Noah Chlan, Miranda Simpson and Nathan Bass perform in McLean High School's production of "Claudio Quest." [Photo by Arielle Else/McLean High School]

charming role was kept animated through sharp and energetic movements. Still, he painted moments of gravity when his voice wavered and his body language shifted. Overall, Bass emerged as a victor on the stage, evident by the ferocious cheers of audience approval.

The pompous and zany Claudio, portrayed by Noah Chlan, was a comedic delight when he graced the stage. Chlan boasted his way through the show, successfully building a character that radiated cockiness through his broad vocals and

expressive reactions.

Completing the trio was Princess Fish, played by Miranda Simpson. Simpson's portrayal of the spunky character was infused with her own spirit. Despite the silly nature of the role, Simpson kept her delivery down-to-earth and witty.

The production boasted exceptional sound design by Emma Springer. Like any video game, every action by the players was accompanied by a sound effect. Springer worked to seamlessly synchronize dozens of effects with the move-

ments of actors. Additionally, the actors' audio was blended in a way that resonated perfectly within the small performance space.

Lighting, designed by Jolie Korfonta and Alex Elders, elevated the video-game effects. Every sound effect was paired with an appropriate lighting cue, bathing the stage in red for lost lives, green for dense jungle shrubbery, and purple for the evil boss.

Megan Wright, the special-effects designer, leveled up the entire production with handmade animations. The sound effects worked in sync with the sound and other tech elements, changing in real time based on the actors' every move. Each frame was designed with the utmost artistic talent by Wright, who created over 400 cues.

The fusion of technical elements and actors created a show that was amusing and entertaining. Beyond the antics of the world, the story concluded with a feel-good message that is sure to leave any audience member wanting to replay the game.

The GazetteLeader partners with the Critics and Awards Program (CAPPIES) in presenting student-written reviews of local high-school theater productions.

For more on the initiative, see the Web site at www.cappies.com/nca/.

George Mason Student-Dining Options Now Including Kosher

George Mason University Dining has worked closely with Mason Hillel and Chabad at Mason to provide students, faculty and staff with a new, eclectic mix of Kosher cuisine at the Southside dining facility, enabling diners to easily follow Kosher dietary rules.

The new station, known as Mason Mensch, launched for the spring semester. Kosher dinners are served from 6 to 8 p.m., Sunday through Thursday.

The station is located between the desert and Simple Servings stations, with offerings available on a first-come, first-served basis.

"We are thankful to the Mason administration for their true commitment to inclusion," said Rabbi Ezra Wiemer, co-director of Chabad at Mason. "There's a Jewish expression, 'May we go from strength to strength!' This is a huge milestone for the Jewish community, and we know that together with Mason Hillel, our community will continue to grow and strengthen."

Char Bar, a well-known Kosher establishment in downtown Washington, is providing a selection of brisket tacos, hot honey chicken, burgers, kabobs, sand-

wiches and other offerings. Production and service will be overseen by a mashgiach – an expert Kosher supervisor – to ensure the highest standards of Kosher are followed.

Char Bar's owner, Michael Chelst, said he's honored to be part of the inaugural Kosher food program at George Mason. "The university's commitment to inclusion for everyone is a blessing for the Jewish community," Chelst said.

"Kosher food is part of our tradition and how we live our lives," said senior Emma Sameth, a global-affairs major. "It's a commandment from the Torah, it makes us feel proud to be Jewish, and more connected to who we are."

This addition to the dining program has been in the works for years, and aligns with the university's overall mission.

"We are very excited to bring this innovative and inclusive concept to fruition at Mason," said Pascal Petter, executive director of Auxiliary Services. "With such a diverse campus and requests for foods that fit into a Kosher lifestyle, we know that Char Bar's Kosher selections will be a great addition to Mason's dining line-up."

You know who is an integral component of the GazetteLeader's news team? You are! That's right: You can help us by providing news tips, upcoming calendar events, notes about student achievement and more. We'll take it from there, ensuring that the community has the freshest news available!

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SHOOTING:

• On Feb. 21 at 7:59 p.m., the drivers of two vehicles in the 1000 block of North Quincy Street became involved in a dispute, Arlington police said.

During the incident, one of the individuals exited his vehicle, brandished a firearm and discharged rounds, striking the victim's vehicle, police said. The suspect then fled.

There were no injuries.

The suspect is described as a black male, tall, with dreadlocks. The vehicle is described as a gray coupe.

RECKLESS HANDLING OF FIREARM:

• On Feb. 18 at 9 p.m., a man exited a business in the area of North Randolph Street at Wilson Boulevard when a man approached him and began acting disorderly, Arlington police said.

The two individuals became engaged in a verbal dispute, during which the suspect allegedly assaulted the victim and made threatening statements, police said.

According to police, the victim walked away, then the suspect removed a firearm from his person, placed it into a flowerbox and asked a witness to watch it before re-approaching the victim, police said.

Responding officers took the suspect into custody.

The suspect – 32-old Justice Keystone of Falls Church – was arrested and charged with reckless handling of a firearm, concealing a weapon, assault-and-battery, possession of a controlled substance, possession of a controlled substance while possessing a firearm, and drunk in public. He was held without bond.

INDECENT EXPOSURE:

• On Feb. 20 at 2:15 a.m., a victim reported seeing an individual exposing himself in the hallway of a residential building in the 3400 block of Washington Boulevard, Arlington police said.

The suspect – 29-year-old John Smith of Arlington – was issued a summons for indecent exposure.

• On Feb. 21 at 3:32 p.m., two men were reported to be engaged in a verbal dispute in the 5100 block of 7th Road South, Arlington police said.

According to police, one of the individuals exposed himself to another during the incident. Witnesses reported the incident to police.

The suspect – 29-year-old Misael Wilson Rivera of no fixed address – was arrested, charged with drunk in public and indecent exposure, and was held without bond.

ROBBERY:

• On Feb. 18 at 6:15 a.m., a woman was inside her home in the 600 block of South Carlin Springs Road when a woman knocked on her door and announced she was conducting an inspection, Arlington police said.

The suspect the entered the residence and stole the victim's purse, which included cash, personal documents and a debit

card, police said.

The victim confronted the suspect during the incident; the suspect struck the victim, causing injuries described as non-life-threatening. The suspect then fled, police said.

The suspect is described as a black female, with a thin build and long, braided hair.

• On Feb. 19 at 12:54 a.m., an individual entered a business in the 1800 block of Wilson Boulevard, stole merchandise and exited the store, Arlington police said.

An employee followed the suspect and confronted him, at which time the suspect assaulted the victim before fleeing on foot. The suspect was treated on the scene for what were described as minor injuries.

The suspect is described as a black male, 20 to 30 years old, 5'9".

• On Feb. 19 at 1:55 a.m., a woman attempted to enter a business in the 2900 block of Columbia Pike at closing time, Arlington police said.

The individual became involved in a verbal dispute with an employee, at which time the first suspect approached the woman and physically assaulted her, police said.

Three additional female suspects then became involved, damaging the victim's phone and stealing her wallet, police said. No injuries were reported.

The first suspect is described as a black female, 5'5", with a medium build and medium complexion. There are no descriptions of the other suspects.

• On Feb. 21 at 9:52 p.m., an individual was walking in the 900 block of South Columbus Street when he was followed into a residential building by two men, Arlington police said.

As the victim entered the elevator, the suspect approached him on foot, took his wallet and then fled on foot.

The suspects are described as white males, 18 to 20 years old, 5'8" to 5'10", wearing ski masks.

• On Feb. 21 at 9:27 a.m., an individual was unloading a delivery in the 500 block of 23rd Street South when two men approached and one brandished a firearm, Arlington police said.

The first suspect stole several cases of cigarettes and handed them to the other suspect before both fled in a black BMW sedan.

The suspects are described as black males, one approximately 6 feet tall with a thin build and the other approximately 6'1" with a medium build.

• On Feb. 21 at 12:56 a.m., two men entered a business in the 4900 block of Columbia Pike and concealed merchandise in a backpack, Arlington police said.

An employee confronted the suspects, during which they pushed the employee and left the scene with the merchandise. No injuries were reported.

The suspects are described as an Hispanic male, 17 to 20 years old, with his hair in a bun, and a black male, 17 to 20 years, with a medium complexion.

• On Feb. 23 at midnight, two women

entered a business in the 2500 block of 9th Road South, selected merchandise and attempted to leave without paying, Arlington police said.

Two store employees confronted the suspects, during which the suspects sprayed them with a cleaning solution and struck one of the employees with a plastic bottle, police said.

The suspects then left with the stolen merchandise and fled the scene in a white SUV. Both employees were treated on scene by medics.

The suspects are described as black females.

• On Feb. 23 at 3:51 p.m., a man entered a business in the 2900 block of South Glebe Road, stole a tip jar and attempted to flee the scene, Arlington police said.

An employee confronted the suspect outside the business, and a struggle ensued before the suspect fled the scene on a bicycle, police said. The employee was treated on scene by medics.

The suspect is described as a black male.

DESTRUCTION OF PROPERTY:

• On Feb. 18 between 12:40 and 12:55 p.m., an individual broke the side window of a vehicle with a rock in the 1200 block of South Thomas Street, Arlington police said.

During investigation into the incident, it was discovered that four other vehicles in the immediate vicinity had similar damage, police said.

No items were reported stolen from the vehicles, police said.

The suspect is described as a black female.

SUSPICIOUS CIRCUMSTANCES:

• On Feb 19 at 2:25 a.m., the occupants of two vehicles in the 500 block of 23rd Street South were involved in a verbal dispute, with witnesses reporting hearing what sounded like glass breaking or the potential discharge of a firearm, police said.

The vehicles – a silver sedan and white SUV – left the scene before the arrival of police.

Responding officers canvassed the area and did not locate evidence of a shooting, police said. No injuries or property damage were reported.

BURGLARY/UNLAWFUL ENTRY:

• Sometime between Feb. 16 at 4:30 p.m. and Feb. 21 at 9:30 a.m., a home in the 4600 block of 22nd Street North was burglarized. Jewelry was taken.

• Sometime between Feb. 19 at noon and Feb. 21 at 10 p.m., a home in the 6800 block of Washington Boulevard was burglarized. Jewelry was taken.

• On Feb. 20 at 4:15 a.m., a business in the 3800 block of Fairfax Drive was entered, and the suspect tampered with several cash registers before leaving, Arlington police said.

Investigation determined that additional businesses in the 4300 block of

Fairfax Drive and the 4300 block of Wilson Boulevard also were entered, with items rummaged through and safes tampered with, police said.

The suspect – 59-year-old Steven Pugh of no fixed address – was arrested and charged with two counts of burglary and two counts of destruction of property.

• On Feb. 20 at 7:15 p.m., a vacant residence in the 5600 block of 26th Street North was entered. No items were reported stolen or damages.

• On Feb. 21 between 6 a.m. and 5 p.m., a home in the 200 block of North Thomas Street was burglarized. Cash, jewelry and electronics were taken.

• Sometime between Feb. 22 at 5 p.m. and Feb. 23 at 1 p.m., a vacant building in the 1400 block of Langston Boulevard was entered.

Responding officers did not locate anyone on scene, but did find personal property from unknown individuals. No items were reported damaged or stolen.

POLICE SEEK POTENTIAL VICTIMS OF MAN CHARGED WITH SEX OFFENSES:

• The Arlington County Police Department is seeking possible additional victims of a 94-year-old suspect charged with sex offenses.

Police on Feb. 22 announced that Adolfo Zambrano of Arlington had been arrested and charged with two counts of aggravated sexual battery. He was being held without bond in the Arlington County Detention Facility.

At approximately 6:25 p.m. on Feb. 10, officers were dispatched to the late report of an assault, police said in a statement. Upon arrival, it was determined that at approximately 4:30 p.m., a witness observed a suspicious incident between the known suspect and a child inside a residence along Columbia Pike.

The witness confronted the suspect, then he left the home. The witness subsequently contacted police, the police statement said.

During the course of the investigation, detectives determined the suspect inappropriately touched the child, police said. Additionally, detectives identified an adult female victim who reported having been touched inappropriately by the suspect in 1999 when she was a child, police said.

As a result of the investigation, detectives obtained warrants for his arrest and he was taken into custody on the evening of Feb. 16.

Anyone with past inappropriate encounters with this suspect or who has additional information related to this investigation is asked to contact Detective H. Molina at 703-228-4208 or hmolina@arlingtonva.us.

Information may also be provided anonymously through the Arlington County Crime Solvers hotline at (866) 411-TIPS (8477).

Items compiled from reports issued by the Arlington County Police Department and other public-safety agencies.

The GazetteLeader welcomes your submission of items for inclusion. Items can be sent to the editor; see contact information on Page 6.

ARLINGTON SEES HIGHER JOBS TOTAL IN NEW DATA: Employment in Arlington grew 2.7 percent year-over-year in the third quarter of 2022, according to new data, below the national rate of growth but in line with localities in the Northern Virginia area.

A total of 175,700 people were counted as employed in Arlington in the Bureau of Labor Statistics data, released Feb. 22. Figures count those working within a locality, no matter where they live.

Arlington's growth rate placed it 226th out of the 355 largest counties in the nation that comprise the quarterly survey.

Nationally, 346 of those 355 locales saw higher year-over-year employment. Overall, the 151.2 million people counted in the survey represent an increase of 4.3 percent from a year before.

New Orleans led the pack, with a jobs increase of 10.7 percent.

Among other Northern Virginia jurisdictions, job totals were reported as 621,800 in Fairfax County, up 2.7 percent; 83,900 in Alexandria, up 2.7 percent; 181,100 in Loudoun County, up 4 percent; and 134,900 in Prince William County, up 3.3 percent.

In Virginia but outside the local area, employment totals were 139,300 in Chesterfield County, up 2.7 percent; 188,400 in Henrico County, up 2.4 percent; 102,200 in Chesapeake, up 1.4 percent; 100,100 in Newport News, up 0.8 percent; 138,400 in Norfolk, up 2.3 percent; 157,500 in Richmond, up 5.4 percent; and 174,400 in Virginia Beach, up 2.1 percent.

(Because, in Virginia, cities are completely independent of counties, they are included in the national rankings. In other states, cities are counted as part of the counties they inhabit.)

CIVIC FEDERATION TO BEGIN BESTOWING 'GAZETTE LEADER CUP': The GazetteLeader has been tapped as the new sponsor of the highest honor in Arlington civic activism.

The "GazetteLeader Cup" will be the new name of the annual award presented by the Arlington County Civic Federation.

It will continue the tradition of media organizations sponsoring the award (the Civic Federation itself decides on the recipients). The honor was known as the Evening Star Cup from 1938-81, the Journal Cup from 1982-2004 and the Sun Gazette Cup from 2004-22.

The first recipient, in 1938, was Robert Plymale, a Civic Federation Committee chair, for his efforts reforming electric-utility service in the county. The most recent honoree, in 2022, was Allan Gajadhar, for his service as Civic Federation president.

The award traditionally has been presented at the Civic Federation's annual springtime banquet. The arrival of COVID caused those events to be canceled in 2020, 2021 and 2022; the passing of the cup those years was accomplished at other times.

This year, the award presentation is planned for a Civic Federation picnic slated for June.

The Civic Federation traces its roots to 1916, when a group of six homeowners associations banded together to promote public purposes. It has grown to more than 80 member organizations in the intervening years.

For information, see the Website at www.civfed.org.

NAACP TAPS COMMITTEE CHAIRS FOR NEW YEAR: The Arlington branch of the NAACP has announced its committee chairs for the coming year.

Leah Maderal will chair the communications committee. Heather Kelly will chair the criminal-justice committee. Megan Brew will chair the economic-development and labor-industry committee. Tia Alfred will chair the education committee.

NAACP president Michael Hemminger will head the finance committee. Karen Nightengale will chair the Freedom Fund banquet and awards committee. Bryan Coleman will chair the housing committee, with Wells Harrell as vice chair.

Kathleen McSweeney will chair the membership committee. Janmarie Pena will chair the political-action committee. Rosa Dunkley will serve as vice chair of the religious-affairs committee. Adora Williams will chair the scholarship committee. Kenya Pennington will chair the financial-audit committee.

GALLERY UNDERGROUND OPENS NEW SHOW: "Beyond Boundaries," a show featuring works from artists of Studio 10, will be featured in the Focus Gallery of Gallery Underground through March 31. An opening reception is slated for Friday, March 3 from 5 to 7 p.m.

Works by artists Elisabeth Hudgins, Kat Jamieson, Linda Maldonado, Elise Ritter and Deborah Taylor will "explore what it means to move through and across many kinds of boundaries in a personal way," organizers said.

The gallery, an initiative of the Arlington Artists Alliance, is located at 2100 Crystal Drive in the Crystal City Shops. Gallery hours are weekdays from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.

For information, see the Website at <https://arlingtonartistsalliance.org>.

NATIONAL CHAMBER ENSEMBLE PREPS MULTI-MEDIA OUTING: The National Chamber Ensemble will be joined by renowned pianist and composer Lowell Liebermann for an evening of his original music coupled with works from Brahms on Saturday, March 18 at 7:30 p.m. at Marymount University's Ballston auditorium.

"This is a rare opportunity to experience incredible, gorgeous music straight from the master," said ensemble artistic director Leo Sushansky. "This will be an evening that will both thrill with power of the music and the beauty of the original art."

Also on stage will be French horn musician Evan Geiger and visual artist Yasmine Iskander.

Tickets are \$38 for adults, \$19 for students. There is free garage parking for the event.

For information, see the Website at www.nationalchamberensemble.org.

ARLINGTON PHILHARMONIC HOSTS CONCERT: The Arlington Philharmonic will present "Music in Bloom," featuring soloists Irina Mulesano on violin and Eric Kutz on cello, on Sunday, March 5 at 4 p.m. at Washington-Liberty High School.

The orchestra will be under the baton of artistic director A. Scott Wood. The concert is presented in partnership with the Arlington Office of 55+ Programs, Alliance for Arlington Senior Programs and Encore Learning.

The concert is free; donations of \$20

per adult are requested. For information, see the Website at www.arlingtonphilharmonic.org.

LIBRARY TO HOST OPEN HOUSE FOR 'THE SHOP': The Arlington library system will host a full-day open house for "The Shop" at Central Library on Saturday, March 4 from 10 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Industry experts, artisans, community partners and library staff will provide interactive demonstrations, tours, workshops and artist talks for those with a creative bent.

All programs are free.

For information and a schedule of events, see the Website at library.arlingtonva.us.

LIBRARY PROGRAM TO TEACH DADS, GRANDDADS TO BRAID HAIR: Westover Library will host a program for men interested in learning how to style the hair of their young daughters, stepdaughters, granddaughters or other family members on Saturday, March 11 at 10:15 a.m. at the library.

Students from Ballston-based Aveda Arts & Sciences Institute will teach a number of hairstyles. Participants will practice on new and freshly sanitized mannequin heads with 80 percent human hair.

The program is free, but registration is required at library.arlingtonva.us. For information, call (703) 228-6327 or e-mail aschulz@arlingtonva.us.

BOOK CLUB TO FOCUS ON HISTORICAL FICTION: Westover Library's book club continued with a program on Monday, March 13 at 7 p.m., featuring the historical novel "The Dictionary of Lost Words" by Pip Williams.

The monthly program looks at a variety of genres. "Take a chance!" library officials say.

A limited number of reserved print copies are available on a first-come, first-served basis, and digital copies also are available.

Registration is required at library.arlingtonva.us. For information, call (703) 228-3738 or e-mail sdrewer@arlingtonva.us.

The program will feature the detective novel "Maggie Murders" by Anthony Horowitz on April 10.

STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

• **Natalie Coschigano** of Arlington earned a master of business administration degree during recent commencement exercises at Frostburg State University.

• **Jenna Johnson** of Arlington earned a master of science degree in cartography and geographic information systems; **Shutao Wang** of Arlington earned a master of science degree in computer sciences; and **Olivia Evans** of Arlington earned a bachelor of science degree in communication arts during recent commencement exercises at the University of

Wisconsin-Madison

• **Simon Roman** of Arlington, a graduate of the Maret School, earned a dean's award with distinction for the fall semester at Colgate University.

• **Emma Deering** of Arlington, a graduate of Washington-Liberty High School, has been named to the dean's list for the fall semester at St. Lawrence University.

• Arlington residents **Madison Gill, Lucy Nguyen, Matt Allen, Amy Parr, Lee Smith, Tyler Phillips** and **Theodore**

Rockey have been named to the dean's list for the fall semester at Rochester Institute of Technology.

• Arlington residents **Lilith Pilkerton, Sam Bracy, Emery Davis** and **Katherine Johnson** have been named to the dean's list for the fall semester at Emerson College.

• Arlington residents **Camden Praed, Jessica Layton, Emma Avent, Avery Nassetta** and **Emory Ibrahim** have been named to the dean's list for the fall semester at the College of Charleston.

• **Mariya Mehandzhiyska** of Arlington has been named to the dean's list for the fall semester at Northern Vermont University.

• Arlington residents **Gerard Maraj, Madalyne Baird** and **Jason Unovitch** have received awards of excellence for superior performance at Western Governors University.

• Two Arlington students are part of a James Madison University team selected

Continued on Page 22

Generals' Season Ends In Regional Semifinals

DAVE FACINOLI
Staff Writer

Their season ended sooner than the Washington-Liberty Generals wanted, losing in the semifinals of the 6D North Region boys basketball tournament.

In the end, the high-school campaign **BASKETBALL** extended the team's string of recent successful seasons, as W-L has become one of the region's top boys programs during that time. The Generals have had winning records for six straight years, with 18 victories this winter and last and an overall mark of 93-53.

The squad had hopes that the 2022-23 season might bring its first region championship since 1966.

Overall this season, Washington-Liberty finished with an 18-9 record, was second in the Liberty District tournament, runner-up of Wakefield High's highly-regarded eight-team George Long holiday tourney, and reached the region final four for the third time in four seasons, finishing second a year ago.

"We have done a lot and gone through a lot this season," Washington-Liberty coach Bobby Dobson said. "We've had a good season."

The Generals finished 1-1 in the region tournament, routing the Westfield Bulldogs, 77-52, in a first-round home game by building a big lead early and cruising to victory. The team shot 58 percent from the floor in the win, holding Westfield to just 36 percent.

Elijah Hughes, Brian Weiser, James McIntyre, Collin Lu (two three-point-

ers), Max Hickey, Cody Cameron (three three-pointers) and Matt Bristol were among W-L's top scorers. Bristol had three blocks on defense and Hughes two.

Next, W-L lost to the defending champion South Lakes Seahawks, 71-55, in the region semifinals. The game was a rematch of last season's final, when the Generals lost, but still qualified for the Class 6 state tournament for the second time in three seasons. Washington-Liberty needed to win that semifinal this year to return to the state.

Washington-Liberty fell behind 4-1 early, took a 19-7 lead, but was behind by halftime and trailed the rest of the way.

The teams met early during the regular season, with South Lakes winning, 64-57.

The Generals finished the postseason with a 3-2 record, as the No. 2 seed lost to the top-seed Marshall Statesmen in the district-tournament championship game.

Hughes and Weiser were chosen first-team all-region for their performances this season. James McIntyre made second team.

From the Wakefield boys team, Kobe Davis made first team and Seth Langford second.

Dobson discussed how the Generals season began during the preseason with the "devastating" news that W-L senior guard Braylon Meade died when he was the victim of a drunk driving accident. The juvenile driver of the other vehicle was charged with driving under the influence of alcohol and involuntary slaughter.

Meade was very popular among team-

Continued on Page 17



Brian Weiser, left, was one of the top players for the Washington-Liberty Generals this season, helping the team win 18 games and reach the region-tourney semifinals. [Photo by Deb Kolt]

Marymount Teams Win Conference Titles, NCAAs Up Next

A Staff Report

The afternoon of Saturday, Feb. 25 was a special time at Marymount University.

In a three-hour stretch, first the men's basketball team then the women's squad each won Atlantic East Conference tournament-championship games on the same Converse Family Fieldhouse home court against Pennsylvania opponents in Division III action.

With those victories, the Saints teams earned NCAA tournament berths, the first for the men's team in 23 years. The women's team has qualified for the NCAAs many times the last two decades.

The Marymount teams were top seeds in the conference tournaments, each finishing 2-0 in the competition after having

first-round byes.

The Marymount men own a 17-10 overall record, have a four-game winning streak and have won 12 of their last 13 games. The women stand 23-4 and have won eight straight.

The men defeated Immaculata University, 81-73, in the semifinals, then the Neuman University Knights, 57-52, in that Feb. 25 title tilt. The women routed Immaculata, 66-35, in the semis, then the Cabrini University Cavaliers, 53-49, in the final.

Both championship games were close throughout, with the Marymount teams each making key foul shots in the closing seconds to hold off their opponents for the championships.

In the men's final, Marymount's Ra'Shawn Cook scored 13 points with three rebounds and two steals. Montell

Cooper had 13 points, as well, added seven rebounds, an assist, and a block. Marcus Stubbs had six points, five rebounds, two assists, two blocks and a steal and Jack Bifano and Wyatt Hockenberry each scored six.

The men's final had seven ties and five lead changes.

The Marymount men began the season strong with a 3-0 record, then struggled and fell to 5-9.

After that, the Saints righted their ship with eight straight victories to get in position to become the top seed in the conference tournament.

For the Marymount women in the tourney final, Symantha Shackelford had 16 points, five rebounds, three assists and two steals to lead the way. Chandler Ed- dleton scored 14 and had nine rebounds;

Ava Schtyl had 10 points, eight boards and two steals; Terra Dzambo added eight points and four rebounds; and Kyla Treadwell scored four.

The women's final had three ties and five lead changes.

The Marymount teams will each participate in the single-elimination NCAA tournaments. They were expected to find out where they will play and when earlier this week after press time for the gazette-leader.

NOTE: The Marymount men last won a conference tournament and advanced to the NCAA tournament when the Saints were members of the Capital Athletic Conference when Chuck Driesell was the team's head coach. Marymount left the CAC a few years ago to join the Atlantic East Conference.

Yorktown Caps a Triple Crown by Winning State Title

DAVE FACINOLI
Staff Writer

The Yorktown Patriots have won all of the big meets in recent years, but until this winter, the girls team had never won all three in the same season.

SWIM & DIVE

That changed the night of Feb. 18 in Hampton when Yorktown achieved that triple-crown milestone by winning the 2022-23 Virginia High School League's Class 6 state swimming and diving championship.

Yorktown won with 216 points, just four more than runner-up and defending champion Battlefield. A year ago, Battlefield nipped Yorktown by two points in the state meet.

Prior to the state event this winter, Yorktown won region and district post-season titles.

"I didn't think we would have enough at the start of the season to be state champions," Yorktown coach Torey Ortmayer said. "But these girls have done so much winning the last four or five years, they know how to win big meets. That was their maturity that showed up."

Yorktown clinched the season-ending state meet by finishing third in the 400 freestyle relay, the final event of the competition.

"A fourth would have been good enough and a fifth would have given us a tie for the title. So the girls knew what they had to do in the race," Ortmayer said. "I told them before the race to have safe starts and go and compete hard."

That relay consisted of Nora Sherman, Lauren Fatouros, Sarah Newman and anchor Rachel Conley. All four already had



The Yorktown Patriots gather after winning the Virginia High School League's Class 6 state swim and diving championship for the fourth time in program history. (Yorktown Athletics)

swam a considerable amount of yardage in other races that day, including the earlier preliminary events, prior to the 400 relay.

"They swam their best race of the seasons, time-wise," Ortmayer said.

The Patriots finished as state champions despite not winning a single event. A second by Conley in the 200 freestyle and a runner-up by the 200 medley relay were the team's highest finishes.

Conley had a third in the 100 butterfly, Bridget Morris Larkin was fourth in the 100 breaststroke, and Sherman was fifth in the 100 backstroke and sixth in the 200 individual medley.

Also sixth for Yorktown were Clara McCarthy in the 200 free and Sophie Freder-

icks in the fly.

Fatouros was eighth in the 500 free and 10th in the breast, McCarthy was 10th in the 500 free and Fredericks was 11th in the back.

That medley relay consisted of Morris Larkin, Sherman, Newman and Fredericks.

Yorktown's ninth-place 200 free relay was made up of Conley, McCarthy, Newman and Mary Hecmanczuk.

"We had a very strong showing in the preliminary races earlier in the day, and that put us in a position to win the meet," Ortmayer said. "Winning this state title was very tough, because Battlefield just kept rising up and swimming well. It was a very big accomplishment for this team."

The state title was Yorktown's fourth in

school history. The other championships came in 2021 and back-to-back in 2006 and 2007. Since 2013, the Patriots have finished second in the state four times.

• In the boys Class 6 state swim and dive meet, the Yorktown Patriots finished third with 177 points. Langley won with 219 and Robinson was second with 184.

Leading Yorktown was double state champion Nolan Dunkel. The junior won the 100 butterfly in a state-record time of 47.33 seconds and was first in the 100 backstroke in 47.91. Both times also were school records.

Dunkel also swam on the team's second-place 200 free relay by anchoring the event and third-place 200 medley relay.

"We had eight swimmers to put ourselves in contention to win, and we did that," Yorktown coach Torey Ortmayer said. "Nolan did a lot of the heavy lifting for us. He understands about doing what it takes to put the team first."

Dunkel won all six of his postseason individual races, including two victories each in district and region meets.

Yorktown's Luke Aslaksen finished fifth in the 50 free and sixth in the 100 free in the region meet, Noah Robinson was fifth in the 100 breaststroke and 12th in the fly, and Rayce Winn was seventh in boys diving.

Billy Weber swam on the 200 free and medley relays. Robinson, Aslaksen, Lincoln Hop and Colin Sartori also swam on relays.

• For the Washington-Liberty Generals boys team at the Virginia High School League's Class 6 state meet, Eli Martin had a strong showing by finishing third in the 100 backstroke and fourth in the 200 individual medley.

Sports Briefs

ARLINGTON SENATORS INFO: The Arlington Senators (the travel program for Arlington Senior Babe Ruth baseball) has announced spring tryouts beginning Feb. 25 for 13-year-old players, March 4 for 14-year-old players and March 11 for 12-year-old players. Visit www.ArlingtonSenators.com for more information and to register.

SENIOR BABE RUTH BASEBALL: Arlington Senior Babe Ruth spring registration is open on the league's website at www.arlingtonseniorbaberuth.com.

SENIOR BASKETBALL: Join weekly half-court basketball games from noon to 2 p.m. on Wednesdays at Arlington's Walter Reed Center. Players ages 60 to 81 play at a comfortable and competitive pace. No fees nor need to be Arlington resident. Contact Tom at tbtb1313@gmail.com or (954) 756-4646.

SOFTBALL UMPIRES NEEDED: The Northern Virginia Softball Umpires Association is seeking individuals interested in becoming certified umpires for high-school and recreational fastpitch softball

in the local area. Complete training is provided.

For more information, email uic@nv-sua.org or visit www.nvsua.org. Complete training provided. Schedules are flexible.

GLEBE LADIES TENNIS CLUB: The Glebe Ladies Tennis Club is holding its annual membership drive, which is open to all women in or near Arlington who enjoy playing tennis.

The club is a group of more than 70 members who pay a small annual dues and host a variety of tennis and social

events throughout the year.

For more information visit <https://sites.google.com/view/glebe-ladies-tennis-club/home>. For questions, contact Kathy Opitz at (703) 568-8316 or email kathyopitz@gmail.com.

SENIOR SOFTBALL Join Northern Virginia Senior Softball for the spring season to play slow-pitch softball, with the average age of 66, and no tryouts, just an assessment to place players teams in three skill-level conferences. Visit nvss.org or call Dave at (703) 663-7881 for information.

Basketball

Continued from Page 16

mates and would have been a returning varsity player. Dobson said Meade would have seen significant playing time this past season.

"Braylon was special to me," Dobson

said. "He had worked so hard to earn his chance and he was going to get that this season. He would have helped us."

Meade was remembered and honored throughout the season in various manners by his teammates, coaches, and opponents. Dobson retired Meade's uniform number 22. Scholarships have been established in Meade's name.

• In the girls 6D North Region basket-

ball tournament, the Wakefield Warriors (11-12) lost a first-round road game to the two-time defending champion Madison Warhawks, 48-36.

Wakefield trailed just 17-14 at the end of the first quarter and 21-20 at halftime, and had a couple of times to take a lead as the second quarter ended and the third began.

The Warriors finished 1-2 in the post-

season, also losing to the Langley Saxons in the semifinals of the Liberty District tournament.

From Wakefield, Loren Nelson was chosen second-team all-region. She was one of the team's leading scorers and rebounders. Yorktown High School senior guard/forward Taylor Chase also was chosen to the second-team all-region for her play.

Senior Ends Career With a Much-Wanted State Title

DAVE FACINOLI
Staff Writer

After an accomplished but also disappointing end to his postseason a year ago, Yorktown High School wrestler Liam Gil-Swiger finished considerably better in that competition this winter by amassing a perfect record, and ending with a state championship.

The senior capped his 2022-23 campaign by winning the Virginia High School League's Class 6 state title at 165 pounds. Gil-Swiger was 4-0 in the state tourney. He recorded a first-round technical fall, then three close decisions, including a last-second, come-from-behind 6-5 semifinal victory, followed by a 5-3 triumph in the title match after trailing 2-0 over Langley High School's Ryan Roncskevitz.

Gil-Swiger is Yorktown's first individual state wrestling champion since Charley Schollaert in the 1990 season.

"Winning a high-school state title has been my main goal since I started wrestling in the sixth grade," Gil-Swiger said. "I haven't forgotten the disappointing feeling of last season, when I thought I should have done better in the state [fourth place at 152 pounds]. But now, this is an overwhelming feeling of joy. Winning the state is what every high-school wrestler wants



Liam Gil-Swiger holds the state-championship bracket sheet and his medal. [Swiger family]

to do."

The state title was especially satisfying because Gil-Swiger thought he'd missed making the finals when he trailed 5-4 in the semifinals with seven seconds left in the match. After getting encouraging directions from head coach Andrew Adams, Gil-Swiger rallied by recording a finesse takedown with two seconds left to win,

6-5.

"I told him the match wasn't over, so go after it," Adams said.

Said Gil-Swiger: "I told myself I had been through so much and worked so hard, I was not losing this match. That was the craziest moment of my life, and I was so happy after that, because I was in the state finals."

Overall, Gil-Swiger was 10-0 in the postseason, with four pins. He won the Liberty District and 6D North Region-tournament titles at the same weight class with 3-0 records in each. For the season, his overall mark was 40-4, coming despite having nagging knee and ankle injuries for most of the campaign.

Gil-Swiger also defeated Roncskevitz in the region and district finals by close decisions. The two wrestlers have been friends for years.

In the postseason a year ago, Gil-Swiger won a district championship, finished second in the region and fourth in the state, all at the 152 weight class.

In addition to his post-season success during the 2022-23 campaign for Yorktown, Gil-Swiger won the NOVA Classic at Fairfax High School and finished second at the Joe Vercigilo Classic at Chantilly High and the Battle of the Bridge event at Woodbridge High.

"It's been a great time," Gil-Swiger said.

"My three recent goals were to win the state, finish my Eagle Scout project and get straight As, and I've done all three now."

His Eagle Scout project was building wooden kids steps at Gulf Branch Nature Center in Arlington.

Gil-Swiger is a year-round wrestler, having competed and placed high in tournaments over the years in numerous national and state events for the Lions Wrestling Club, which is run by his father, David.

Next year, he plans to wrestle in college, but the decision as to where has not been finalized.

"Any collegiate wrestling room would be lucky to have Liam," Adams said. "He is so hard-working, determined and coachable. He had a remarkable season for Yorktown."

Also at this season's state tournament for the Yorktown team, senior wrestler Max Apsel (138 pounds) and Cambyses Khani (106) each finished fifth in their weight classes.

Yorktown was 14th in the state team scoring.

"When Liam and Max joined our team as freshmen in 2019-20, they really helped change the attitude and direction of this program to having much more success and being a positive experience," Adams said.

High-School Roundup

OVERLEE DIVER WINS STATE TITLE: Flint Hill School diver Michayla Eisenberg won a girls private-school state diving championship in Lynchburg recently with a point total of 452.65. During the summer, the junior dives for Arlington's Overlee team of the Northern Virginia Swimming League. Last summer, she won the senior girls all-star meet.

She is expected to be a top diver again in the league this coming summer season for Overlee.

O'CONNELL SWIM & DIVE TEAMS PLACE IN STATES: Led by Paul Mullen's third in the 500 freestyle race and a sixth in the 200 free, the Bishop O'Connell High School boys swim and dive team finished sixth in the state private-school meet.

Also for O'Connell, Chris Kinsella finished ninth in the 50 and 100 free races.

In the girls state meet, O'Connell finished 11th with divers Maddie Cervenak (eighth) and Reagan Cervenak (10th) leading the way.

O'CONNELL STATE TRACK AND FIELD RESULTS: Led by victories from Chayse Raymond in the 55-meter dash in 7.19 seconds and Molly Weithman in the 3,200 (11:18.93) the Bishop O'Connell Knights girls indoor track and field team finished eighth in the recent private-school state meet.

In addition to her victory, Weithman finished third in the 1,600. Raymond was 13th in the 300 meters, Eva Woodcock finished eighth in the high jump, the 4x200 relay was sixth and the 4x800 relay ninth.

In the boys state meet, O'Connell's Nick O'Donnell was sixth in the 500 and Anthony Lenzi 11th in the 1,600. They were the Knights highest finishers in the swimming competition.

O'CONNELL BASKETBALL ROUNDUP: The fourth-seeded Bishop O'Connell Knights (17-13) finished 0-1 in the Washington Catholic Athletic Conference boys basketball tournament, losing to the fifth-seeded DeMatha Stags, 66-63, in the quarterfinals.

O'Connell led 17-15 at the end of the first quarter and 42-36 at halftime. DeMatha was ahead, 54-51, by the end of the third period.

O'Connell was 2-0 against DeMatha in regular-season games.

The Knights are the No. 5 seed in the 12-team Division I state private-school tournament and were scheduled to host St. Christopher's of Richmond (19-10) in the first round.

O'Connell was ranked fourth in the final Division I regular-season state poll, then fell to the fifth-seed for the state tournament.

St. Paul VI Catholic is the No. 1 seed in

the state tournament.

• In girls Washington Catholic Athletic Conference basketball tournament play, The Bishop O'Connell Knights (11-15) lost their opening game to Carroll, 56-41, and awaits the upcoming Division I private-school state tournament.

Next for the O'Connell girls is the 12-team Division I state private-school tournament. The Knights will be the No. 6 seed and were scheduled to host a first-round game against No. 11 seed Trinity Episcopal. With a victory, O'Connell would face No. 3 seed Bishop Ireton in the quarterfinals.

O'Connell finished 1-1 in last season's state tournament, recording a first-round upset over host Potomac School.

Multiple-time defending state champion St. Paul VI Catholic is the No. 1 seed in this year's event.

YORKTOWN ICE HOCKEY: The Yorktown High School club ice hockey team defeated Broad Run, 6-4, in a first-round playoff game of the Northern Virginia Hockey League.

Jacob Kirshner and Andy Coleman each scored two goals for Yorktown, with Kirshner having an assist. Roger Allenbaugh and Max Whittington each had one goal and one assist and Noah Robinson had two assists to round out the Yorktown scoring.

Ander Andreev made 22 saves in goal to get the win, as Yorktown improved to 9-1-1 overall.

• The Washington-Liberty Generals finished the regular season with an 8-1-1 overall record and were a top playoff seed in the Capital Scholastic Hockey League tournament.

Washington-Liberty, though, lost a first-round playoff match to Bishop Ireton by a 5-4 score in the Capital Scholastic Hockey League to end its season in league play.

Washington-Liberty was the two-time defending playoff champion in the league.

The team will play one more game at a date to be determined against their big Arlington rival Yorktown Patriots.

Yorktown is still involved in the playoffs in another league.

WASHINGTON-LIBERTY HIGH SCHOOL NEEDS FIELD HOCKEY COACHES: Washington-Liberty High School is looking for girls field hockey assistant coaches for the fall season. Needed is a head freshman coach and a varsity assistant. Contact Justin Bolfek at: Justin.Bolfek@apssva.us.

Washington-Liberty is a perennial Liberty District and 6D North Region contender during the fall sport, having qualified for the Virginia High School League's Class 6 state tournament in recent seasons.

Generals, Statesmen Clash in District Tourney Final



The host Marshall Statesmen defeated the Washington-Liberty Generals, 55-49, in the championship game of the boys Liberty District high-school basketball tournament. From top left: Washington-Liberty's James McIntyre, left, is defended closely by Jason Penn. Marshall coach Jerry Lin cuts down and holds the championship net. Players on the Marshall bench react positively. Elijah Hughes, left, of W-L defends Cameron Jones. Penn passes to Jones as McIntyre and Collin Lu defend. Hughes, left, and Brian Weiser box out as Marshall's Omar Phillips shoots a free throw. See a slide show with more photos from the game at <https://gazetteleader.com>.

Photos by Deb Kolt

ABC LICENSE

Six Cluckers, LLC, trading as Westover Taco, 5849 Washington Blvd., Arlington, VA 22205. The above establishment is applying to the VIRGINIA ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGE CONTROL (ABC) AUTHORITY for a Retail Beer and Wine On and Off Premises and Mixed Beverage Restaurant.

Michael Danner,
Owner

Note: Objections to the issuance of this license must be submitted to ABC no later than 30 days from the publishing date of the first of two required newspaper legal notices. Objections should be registered at www.abc.virginia.gov or 800-552-3200

Date notice posted at establishment: 2/12/2023

2/16 & 2/23/23

ABC LICENSE

Rustic Crafts, LLC, trading as Board and Brush Creative Studio, 11215 Lee Hwy, Suite J, Fairfax, Fairfax County, VA 22030-5660. The above establishment is applying to the VIRGINIA ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGE CONTROL (ABC) AUTHORITY for a Retail Marketplace Application -Art Instruction Studio, Wine, Beer, Consumed On Premises.

Brenda Hostler,
Owner

Note: Objections to the issuance of this license must be submitted to ABC no later than 30 days from the publishing date of the first of two required newspaper legal notices. Objections should be registered at www.abc.virginia.gov or 800-552-3200

02/23/23 & 03/02/23

PUBLIC NOTICE

Dish Wireless proposes to increase the overall height of an existing 90-foot transmission tower to a proposed overall height of 100 feet. Additionally, Dish Wireless proposes to collocate new antennas at a centerline height of 95 feet on the newly extended tower at the approx. vicinity of 7742 Bristol Square Court, Springfield, Fairfax County, Virginia 22153 Lat[38-44-04.02] Long[-77-12-32.10].

Public comments regarding potential effects from this site on historic properties may be submitted within 30 days from the date of this publication to:

Trileaf Corp,
Katelyn Belzner, k.belzner@trileaf.com,
8600 LaSalle Road, Ste. 301,
Towson, MD 21286, 410-853-7128.

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THE CLASSIFIEDS

NOTICE OF SERVICE OF PROCESS OF PUBLICATION STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA COUNTY OF RANDOLPH

IN THE GENERAL
COURT OF JUSTICE
DISTRICT COURT DIVISION
JUVENILE DEPARTMENT
RANDOLPH COUNTY FILE NO. 21 JT 179, 21 JT 180

IN RE: AMARI NICOLAS WINBORNE and
AKIRA OLIVIA WINBORNE

TO: JOSE JOHNSON, DJ METRO, AND ANY UNKNOWN/
UNNAMED FATHER OF AMARI NICOLAS
WINBORNE [DOB: 05/16/2019] AND AKIRA OLIVIA
WINBORNE [DOB: 05/06/2018]; MINOR CHILDREN
BORN IN FAIRFAX COUNTY, VIRGINIA.

TAKE NOTICE that juvenile petitions with respect to the above-described children have been filed in the above-entitled proceeding on or about November 17, 2021.

You are required and directed to make a defense of such pleading by filing an Answer to the Petitions in these proceedings within forty (40) days after the first publication of this notice, exclusive of such date. The Answer must be filed with the Clerk of Superior Court no later than March 29, 2023.

A Pre-Trial Hearing has been scheduled at 9:00 a.m. on April 5, 2023, and a Motion to Terminate Parental Rights Hearing has been scheduled at 9:00 a.m. on April 5, 2023, at Randolph County District Court, Courtroom #1B, Randolph County Courthouse, 176 East Salisbury Street, Asheboro, North Carolina. You are entitled to attend any hearings affecting your parental rights. If you are indigent, you have a right to appointed counsel. If you request counsel, do so at or before the time of the hearing. You are further noticed that this is a new proceeding and any attorney heretofore appointed to represent you will represent you in this proceeding.

Upon your failure to file an Answer to the Petitions within the time prescribed, the Petitioner, Randolph County Department of Social Services, will apply to the Court for relief sought in the Petition, UP TO AND INCLUDING POSSIBLE TERMINATION OF YOUR PARENTAL RIGHTS with respect to the above-described minor children.

This the 16 th day of February 2023.

Chrystal S. Kay
Staff Attorney, Randolph County Department of Social Services
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Stormwater

Continued from Page 1

us and check the estimated charges for every parcel.)

Efforts to revamp the existing system have been in the works since 2020, but like so many issues, it's likely many property owners are not yet in the loop.

"We want to be thorough" in informing the public, County Board member Matt de Ferranti said.

Most affected will be organizations (such as religious institutions and non-profits) whose property is exempt from taxation, including the current stormwater tax, but would be required to pay the new fees.

"The challenge for us will be [explaining the matter to] those who were formerly exempt," County Board Chairman Christian Dorsey.

Indeed: Some local churches, for instance, would find themselves facing bills of \$10,000 or more under the proposed

arrangement. Current state law does not allow the county government to exempt these properties for the fees as they have been exempted for taxes, county officials said.

Forcing non-profit property owners to pony up may draw brushback, but County Manager Mark Schwartz said the community as a whole needs to share the burden in addressing an overwhelmed stormwater-management system.

County officials estimate that more than \$330 million will be required over the next decade to augment existing efforts, on top of several bond package that already have been put to voters.

"There is just a huge increase in the level of effort that occurred" to address the matter in recent years, Schwartz said. "That's going to be picked up by the rate-payers."

As proposed by county staff and required under state law, there would be some credits allowed for a variety of reasons, which would allow property owners to reduce their overall bills by up to 35 percent.

As the public-education effort ramps up, Arlingtonians – already accustomed to dealing with acronyms – will need to learn another. Stormwater fees in future will be billed based on ERUs (equivalent residential units), which will equate to 2,400 square feet of impervious surface on a lot.

More than 70 percent of single-family lots in the county would be billed at 1 ERU, resulting in charge in the \$230 to \$250 ballpark. Others would pay more or less, depending on what category their homes are placed in.

Since modern imaging systems make it relatively straightforward to determine the impervious surface on any given lot, why not bill homeowners for the exact square footage involved, rather than broader categories that effectively work out to small, medium, large and super-sized?

County officials say dealing with each of the more than 27,000 single-family lots would place a difficult administrative burden on staff. And because no conversation in county government these days is complete until the word "equity" is shoe-

horned into the equation, a staff report noted (without further explanation) that using broad tiers somehow would promote it.

For multi-family units, proposed annual fees are proposed to be based on a flat 0.18 ERUs per dwelling unit. Commercial property would be taxed depending on the actual amount of impervious surface.

Lurking in the discussion was the possibility that county officials, once they get the program up and running, could use it to encourage certain behavior among property owners by using a combination of carrots and sticks.

Board member Takis Karantonis floated the idea that there could be ways, for instance, to financially penalize owners of large parking lots who didn't take steps to reduce their overall impervious surfaces.

While offering some questions to staff, the five County Board members seemed in sync that implementing a change was the best step forward.

"This has been . . . an enormous undertaking," Dorsey said. "Let's move it toward the finish line."

Legislators

Continued from Page 4

expenses that jurors might incur: lunch, Metro fare, parking, bicycle maintenance, etc."

Next up for Ferguson (assuming he seeks and wins re-election this year): Convincing the General Assembly to require employers to pay workers for time away spent on jury duty.

"Most employers pay their employees when serving jury duty and don't make them take vacation time; however, many do not," he said. "I would like to see a law that requires employers to pay their employees without charging vacation leave

when serving jury duty." (He added that jury duty can be especially difficult for those self-employed.)

Despite the financial hardship or inconvenience that some jurors face, "almost all Arlington/Falls Church jurors realize that jury duty is one of our important responsibilities as citizens, and many are even enthusiastic about serving," Ferguson said.

Also getting a bump up in pay are retired justices or judges of the Virginia judicial system, who if recalled to work cases will, starting in July, receive \$400 a day, up from \$200.

The same will be true of those previously serving on the State Corporation Commission and Workers' Compensation Commission, who also will see pay rates rise from \$200 to \$400 if called back into

service.

Retiring Circuit Court Chief Judge Honored by Legislators: Before departing Richmond for the year, members of the General Assembly honored the lifetime of service of Arlington Circuit Court Chief Judge William Newman Jr., who will be retiring at the end of June.

Newman "has served the commonwealth with the utmost dedication, integrity and distinction," noted the resolution, patroned by Del. Patrick Hope and other members of the Arlington and Falls Church delegations in Richmond.

A native Arlingtonian, Newman earned a law degree from Catholic University of America and, while in private practice, founded the Northern Virginia Black Attorneys Association. He was elected to the

Arlington County Board in 1987, serving there until his election by the General Assembly to the 17th Judicial Circuit of Virginia, which comprises Arlington and the city of Falls Church.

As a judge, Newman has "presided over the court with great fairness and wisdom," the resolution noted, adding that he had served on the Virginia Criminal Sentencing Commission, the Virginia Judicial Inquiry and Review Commission and Commission on Virginia Courts in the 21st Century.

The resolution also noted that Newman was instrumental in founding the Arlington Community Foundation, and also is a professional actor with membership in Actors' Equity and the Screen Actors Guild/American Federation of Television and Radio Artists.

Politics

Continued from Page 5

plan to step down, Sullivan confirmed he would be running in the new 6th District, although he has acknowledged that likeli-

hood for months now.

To date, no competition from Democrats, Republicans or independents has bubbled up in the new 6th District, which like most Northern Virginia districts is a Democratic stronghold. Should no other Democrat file by the April 6 primary deadline, Sullivan will advance to the general

election.

Because of redistricting, Arlington's current legislative delegation – four delegates and three senators – will be reduced to three delegates and two senators, with Sullivan, Del. Elizabeth Bennett-Parker and state Sen. Janet Howell no longer representing the county.

Howell is expected to retire this year, but has not yet formally announced a decision.

Other veteran legislators who have announced plans to retire include Senate Majority Leader Richard Saslaw of Springfield and Del. Ken Plum of Reston.

...

STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

Continued from Page 15

for the second phase of the 2023 Collegiate Wind Competition, sponsored by the U.S. Department of Energy.

James Madison is one of just 13 institutions from around the country, and the only one from Virginia, selected to advance.

During the second phase, teams will finalize their design reports for their wind-turbine prototypes. In addition, they will build and test their turbines, finalize their site design for their hypothetical offshore wind farm, and continue to build connections with the wind industry and

their communities.

The selected teams will be given additional funding to complete their projects and to attend the final event May 15-19 at University of Colorado Boulder.

James Madison's 20-member team includes **Nicholas Gartner** and **Peter Fyffe** of Arlington who each are majoring in engineering.

• Five students from Marymount University participated in the Virginia Foundation for Independent Colleges' (VFIC) 23rd annual statewide collegiate Ethics Bowl, deliberating on "Ethics and Digital Media" on the campus of Virginia Wesley-

an University in Virginia Beach.

The Marymount team – featuring senior **Adalie Shotton**, juniors **Natalia Ivanauskas** and **Agnes-Laure Signou** and sophomores **Ella Reither** and **Melody Salguero** – competed head-to-head against other teams from Virginia's leading independent colleges and universities on a variety of case studies.

The Saints were led by faculty coordinator Dr. Daniel Corrigan, assistant professor of philosophy and interim director of the university's Center for Professional Ethics and Social Responsibility.

"While the theme of this year's Ethics Bowl competition was 'Ethics and Digital

Media,' the cases that we debated connected digital media with issues in business, health care and criminal justice, among others," Corrigan said. "Some of our team members have more knowledge in certain areas, depending on whether they are an IT, criminal-justice or business major, and I was delighted to see individual team members step up and draw on their expertise when a particular debate called for it."

Corrigan also credited Marymount's success in the competition to Professor Donald Lavanty, who assisted in coaching and provided feedback.

...

Arlington County government 55+ programs are held indoors at 55+ Centers unless otherwise noted. A membership (starting at \$20 annually) is required to participate.

For information, go to registration.arlingtonva.us or call (703) 228-4747.

• The **“Reading Buddies” program** at Lubber Run Community Center pairs seniors with preschoolers for reading time twice a month, with the next installment Monday, March 6 at 10 a.m. Books are provided by a preschool teacher. [Registration #913301-08]

• The Langston-Brown 55+ Center’s book club will discuss

cuss **“The Girl with Seven Names”** by David Johnson on Tuesday, March 7 at 1:30 p.m. [Drop-in; no registration required]

• A discussion of the **Senior Community Service Employment Program**, which provides work-based job training for low-income, unemployed seniors, will host a forum on Wednesday, March 8 at 10 a.m. at Lubber Run 55+ Center. [Registration #913400-01]

• A **three-part genealogy program** with experienced genealogist Susan Court will begin with a program on research on Wednesday, March 8 at 1 p.m. at Aurora Hills 55+ Center. [Registration #913400-310]

• An online history-roundtable program will discuss **interesting presidential elections** on Wednesday, March 8 at 11:15 a.m. [Registration #913402-10]

• Lubber Run 55+ Center hosts a discussion focusing on the **study of words and the history of the English language** on Wednesday, March 8 at 10:30 a.m. [Registration #913402-23 for in-person, #913402-24 for online]

• Realtor Nancy Murphy presents tips on **getting**

homes ready for the spring sales market on Wednesday, March 8 at 11 a.m. at Langston-Brown 55+ Center. [Registration #913404-01]

• Art historian Joan Hart will discuss **little-known Impressionist artists** on Wednesday, March 8 at 1 p.m. at Aurora Hills 55+ Center. [Registration #913302-01]

• Lubber Run 55+ Center hosts a **karaoke night** on Thursday, March 9 at 6 p.m. [Registration #913304-08]

• An online tour of the **Library of Virginia** will be offered on Thursday, March 9 at 2 p.m. [Registration #913400-35]

• “Tasteful tea parties” is the topic of a **cooking demonstration** presented by Virginia Cooperative Extension Master Food Volunteers on Thursday, March 9 at 11 a.m. at Walter Reed 55+ Center. [Registration #913501-02]

• Dr. Edward Allcock of Virginia Hospital Center Inpatient Rehabilitation Center will discuss **stroke causes, symptoms and prevention** on Friday, March 10 at 11 a.m. at Langston-Brown 55+ Center. [Registration #913500-03]

Calendar Girl

I love calendars and have many, but not the new-fangled phone kind. They’re absolutely NO fun.

I like the good old paper ones, with pictures for each month. I even have vivid calendar memories from “way back when.”

I’ll bet 90 percent of our young people have NO IDEA why they sometimes see a picture of a lion and lamb on a March calendar. Remember how we were told that March “comes in like a lion and goes out like a lamb”?

They also probably think those flowers they see on the April page are because some spring flowers grow then, but they’re only partially right. The saying goes, “April showers bring May flowers.” Bygone calendars had drawings of little kids wearing galoshes and slickers, with open umbrellas.

Or how about why we see cherries in February? We learned that as a boy, George Washington, whose birthday we celebrate that month, chopped down a cherry tree on his father’s land. When his angry dad asked him, George said, “I chopped down the tree. I cannot tell a lie.” Good thing he didn’t want to get elected today . . .

January calendars often showed a picture of a baby and an old man with a beard, a clock and a scythe (Father Time), symbolizing the old and new years. In fact, this may have been the basis for the old-time custom of giving free merchandise to the first baby born after the new year.

The kid (and his or her parents!) got great possible perks: free diaper service for a year, a snazzy crib, enough clothes to be a baby model, and a year’s supply of Gerber baby food, all from local merchants. Soaring prices and competition took care of that custom.

Nowadays there are specialty calendars that have nothing to do with these folk tales. Instead their pictures cater to the buyers’ interests: puppies, tropical sunsets, inspirational sayings, kitty cats, Bible quotes or mouth-watering sweets.

I admit I went with the trend, buying a New York Times Crossword Puzzle-a-Day calendar, among others, and am currently on August 29, 2020. Ok, so I’m a little behind, but I AM making progress. Having the answers on the puzzle back helps me feel less stupid, even though I plan to check only one long entry to “get myself started.” You know the end of that story.

I must go now and check my Old School calendar for the upcoming week. Cue Neil Sedaka.

Reach columnist Carol McEwen at carolwrites4fun@gmail.com.



‘OLD SCHOOL’ Carol McEwen

CROSSWORD

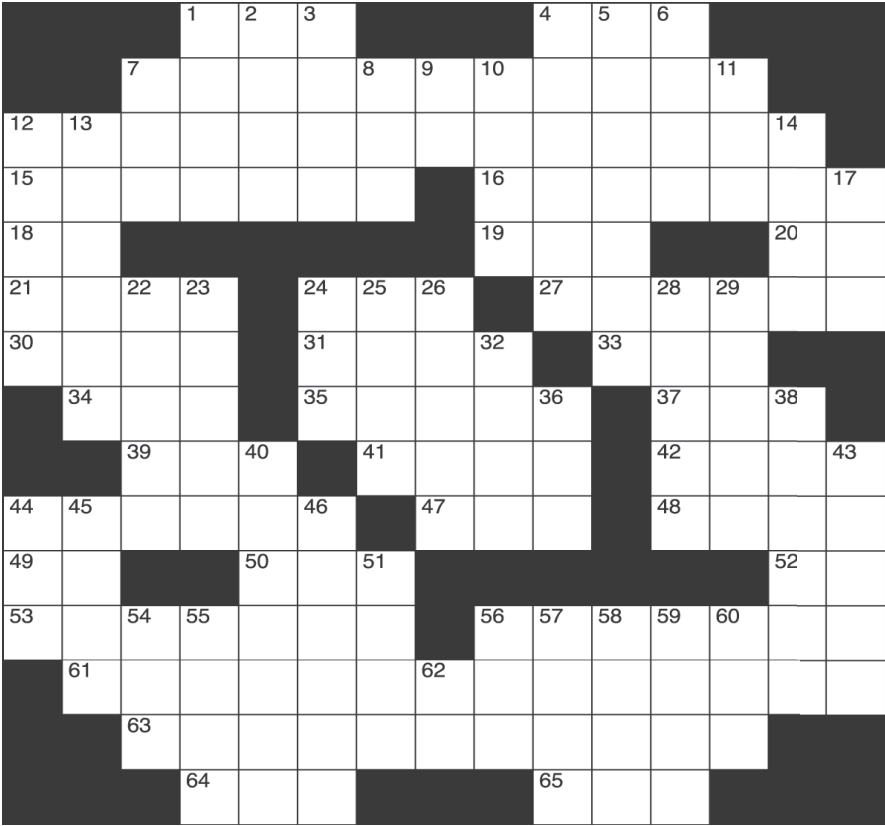
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ACROSS

- 1. Relaxing place
- 4. Plant by scattering
- 7. A type of explorer
- 12. Unique traits
- 15. Lady
- 16. Dismayed
- 18. Railway
- 19. Type of whale
- 20. Sodium
- 21. Manning and Lilly are two
- 24. Where golfers begin
- 27. Entrapped
- 30. Influential punk artist
- 31. Hebrew calendar month
- 33. Car mechanics group
- 34. Undesirable rodent
- 35. Minneapolis suburb
- 37. Witch
- 39. Get free of
- 41. A written proposal or reminder
- 42. British School
- 44. Country on west coast of Africa
- 47. Cool!
- 48. Information
- 49. __ route
- 50. Jim Nantz’s network
- 52. Something to register (abbr.)
- 53. Give cards incorrectly
- 56. One who’s learning on the job
- 61. Stevenson adventure novel
- 63. Taking careful notice
- 64. CNN’s founder
- 65. Speak badly of

DOWN

- 1. A person with unusual powers of foresight
- 2. Single sheet of glass
- 3. Portrays a character
- 4. Expresses happiness
- 5. Acquires
- 6. “The Martian” author
- 7. Degree
- 8. 60-minute intervals



- 9. A detective’s pal
- 10. Group of nations (abbr.)
- 11. Popular Georgia rockers
- 12. Fencing swords
- 13. Basement
- 14. Samoan monetary unit
- 17. Male parent
- 22. Finnish lake
- 23. A smooth fabric
- 24. Arctic explorers (abbr.)
- 25. Mild yellow Dutch cheese
- 26. Very willing
- 28. Expressed pleasure
- 29. Lasso
- 32. Hindu model of ideal man
- 36. Move your head in approval
- 38. Ill-__: gained illegally
- 40. Die
- 43. Accused publicly
- 44. Precious stone
- 45. Individual thing or person
- 46. Behaved in a way that degraded



- 51. Derogatory term
- 54. No seats available
- 55. Liability
- 56. Popular beverage
- 57. Tough outer skin of fruit
- 58. __ Spumante (Italian wine)
- 59. Troubles
- 60. Negative
- 62. Camper

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