

The Arlington Connection

How to Feed Hungry People In Arlington?

PAGE 3-4

Crystal City Hilton General Manager Charles Hill and Rosemary Hughes with UPS Community Relations finish their 160-foot descent down the side of the Hilton May 5 as part of the Over the Edge fundraiser for New Hope Housing.

Taking the Leap to End Homelessness

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100 Years, Thousands of Rugs

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ArPets: Lovely Dogs

PAGE 7

JEANNE THEISMANN/THE CONNECTION ENTERTAINMENT, PAGE 9 ❖ CLASSIFIED, PAGE 10

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Date: 3-23-22
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55+ Programs are virtual, indoors at 55+ Centers and outdoors. A 55+ Pass is required to participate (starting at a \$20 annual fee). To join or register, go to registration.arlingtonva.us or call 703-228-4747.

Arlington's 55+ Centers will be closed Monday, May 30 in observance of Memorial Day

Yarn crafters of Aurora Hills 55+ Center knit and crochet items for Arlington charities, Mondays, 10 a.m. - 12 p.m. Instruction available. Drop-in.

Pinochle games, Mondays and Fridays, 12:30 p.m., Langston-Brown 55+ Center. Drop-in.

Social bridge with different partners weekly, Mondays, noon, Thursdays, 10 a.m., Fridays, noon, Lubber Run 55+ Center. Drop-in.

Food allergies and recipes that are allergen free, Thursday, May 19, 4 p.m., presented by Virginia Cooperative Extension. Registration # 913501-07.

The search for extraterrestrial life, presented by astronomer Jennifer Lynn Bartlett, Thursday, May 19, 11 a.m., Langston-Brown 55+ Center. Registration # 913400-22.

Paint along with community arts programmers in the comfort of home, Thursday, May 19, 10 a.m. Registration # 913303-08.

Beyond words, two-part course sharing personal stories using various forms of artistic expression, Thursday, May 19 and Thursday, May 26, 6 p.m., Lubber Run 55+ Center. Registration # 913300-14.

Uber, Lyft and other ride-sharing apps, reviewed by Tech Guru Nick Englund, Thursday, May 19, 1:30 p.m., Langston-Brown 55+ Center. Registration # 913403-08.

Mah Jongg, American Style, Mondays, noon, Thursdays, noon, Saturdays, noon, Walter Reed 55+ Center. Drop-in. Chinese Style, Thursdays, 9:30 a.m., Langston-Brown 55+ Center. Drop-in.

Smartphone photography features explained by Tech Guru Nick Englund, Friday, May 20, 11 a.m., Lubber Run 55+ Center. Registration # 913403-09.

Just beneath the surface and behind the scenes of three artists, Friday, May 20, 10 a.m. Presented by Community Arts Programmer Jim Halloran. Registration # 913302-03.

Acoustic Hour in Virginia Highlands Park, live music by Ed Girovasi and Phil Rosen, Friday, May 20, 1 p.m. Registration # 913301-08.

Aurora Hills 55+ Center's book club members will discuss "A Giver of Stars" by Jojo Moyes, Monday, May 23, 11:30 a.m. Drop-in.



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Families line up at AFAC headquarters on S. Nelson Street for free supplemental groceries.



Charles Meng, CEO of Arlington Food Assistance Center (AFAC) in front of new warehouse.

How to Help Hungry People as Costs Rise

Arlington Food Security Task Force: “The need persists.”

BY SHIRLEY RUHE
THE CONNECTION

Lurking beneath the Arlington that ranks as one of the most preeminent places to live in the nation are the nearly 8 percent of households experiencing food insecurity. Arlington County just released a new report, “Improving Food Security and Access in Arlington, Virginia.”

The report, prepared by the Arlington Food Security’s Task Force of 28 stakeholders in partnership with the Urban Institute, found that Arlington County had many resources available for residents to meet their food needs, but the residents reported cost pressures in purchasing food and balancing household finances and bills. The

report found 7.8 percent of Arlington households were experiencing food insecurity in 2019.

The study is part of the Food Security Task Force’s strategic plan, which is expected to be released in the fall. The Arlington County Department of Human Services and the Arlington Food Assistance Center funded the report. The Committee has been meeting for the past 12 months to gather information, produce a needs assessment and come up with a strategic plan.

The report looked at geography of food distribution sites, hours of

are many organizations and individuals doing great work to close the gap, but the need persists.”

The report found that there was substantial variability on food insecurity ranging from 2 percent to 15 percent of households in different parts of the County with the concentration in south and east Arlington County. The areas most affected include Glencarlyn, Buckingham/Ashton Heights, Pentagon City, Crystal City south, Forest Glen/Arlington Mill and Crystal City North neighborhoods.

In general, twenty percent of food insecure survey respondents said they could rarely afford food they found nutritious and healthy,

and fifteen percent said they could rarely find food that was culturally appropriate. The report found that Asian households with low incomes living in the Crystal City neighborhood had low access to charitable food and had to travel further to access charitable sites. This area of high-rise apartments had not been a primary target of food access interventions.

Stephanie Hopkins, Food Assis-

availability, transportation and accessibility of healthy and culturally

Food insecurity ranges from 2 percent to 15 percent of households in different parts of Arlington.

appropriate foods as well as experience of residents. It stated “There

Report: “There are many organizations and individuals doing great work to close the gap, but the need persists.”



Volunteers pack vegetables contributed by local gardeners for low-income food programs.

tance Coordinator at the Department of Human Services, coordinated the report. She said this finding about Crystal City was the biggest surprise in the report for her. “I have to be honest. We had to do outreach and dig into the concentration.” She said she thinks in this high-income area of Crystal City it may be more difficult for the food insecure families to come forward. “Stigma and pride may be a barrier, that they shouldn’t have to take charity.”

Sally Diaz-Wells, Social Justice and Outreach Ministry at Our Lady Queen of Peace Catholic Church, says the level of need in Crystal City also surprised her as well as the need for charitable services to be open nights and weekends when people can access them.

The report found that there are over 50 charitable food distribution sites in Arlington. Although most are open year round, fewer than 1 in 5 offered weekly service

SEE HOW TO HELP, PAGE 4

How to Help Hungry People as Costs Rise

FROM PAGE 3

or evening and weekend hours. Our Lady Queen of Peace operates a weekly food distribution that grew from 500 families a week to 700 last year.

Diaz-Wells says one of the most valuable parts for her of serving on the Committee was the information sharing. "Having contact with who is getting what, listening to the problems everyone has. It helps me adjust what OLQP does." She explains, "We started

buying more soy sauce. And Latino cultures don't all like the same kind of dried beans so we offer choices." Diaz-Wells said there used to be 80 percent Latinos but not anymore. There are Afghans and "I have seen more Asians in the last six months. When schools don't have enough coverage for Easter week, we will have more."

Robin Broder, Friends of Urban Agriculture and also a Committee member says, "It's a little early to say how Friends of Urban Agriculture would fit in but I think that we need to think creatively to meet the needs of our residents who are food insecure. I think our demonstration garden Project HUG could be a model duplicated at other sites to help meet the needs of specific communities and grow culturally specific produce. Plot Against Hunger could partner with AFAC to provide produce for a mobile pantry as well."

Charles Meng, CEO of AFAC, said nothing in the report surprised him. "This is the world I deal with. But there are 28 people on

the committee and a number of them aren't as familiar with the situation." In addition, he thinks this finding is overblown. "A lot of these people in Crystal City are already coming to AFAC and the report is using data from 2019 before the pandemic." He says that actually AFAC is already serving a higher percent of families in Crystal City than in other parts of the County.

The report also found that food insecurity is part of a bigger issue that resulted in difficulty paying expenses and with families having no backup to buffer in case of an emergency. Food budgets were often the first



Sally Diaz-Wells, Our Lady Queen of Peace Social Justice and Outreach Ministry.

to be cut as the families faced the challenge of balancing food and rent and utilities.

The report looked at the households' access to SNAP, and charitable groceries or meals. They found that most residents had access to a SNAP retailer. They prioritized cost of groceries in deciding where to shop but encountered obstacles in finding healthy or culturally appropriate food; some struggled with transportation. Diaz-Wells said that many of the people who come to their site at Our Lady Queen of Peace carpool with their cousins or neighbors or walk, and some ride bikes.

Meng says, "All of a sudden food insecurity is about transportation. But it's really about why people can't find food." He says it's a more structural issue, a symptom of something else — low wages, lack of affordable housing, high prices."

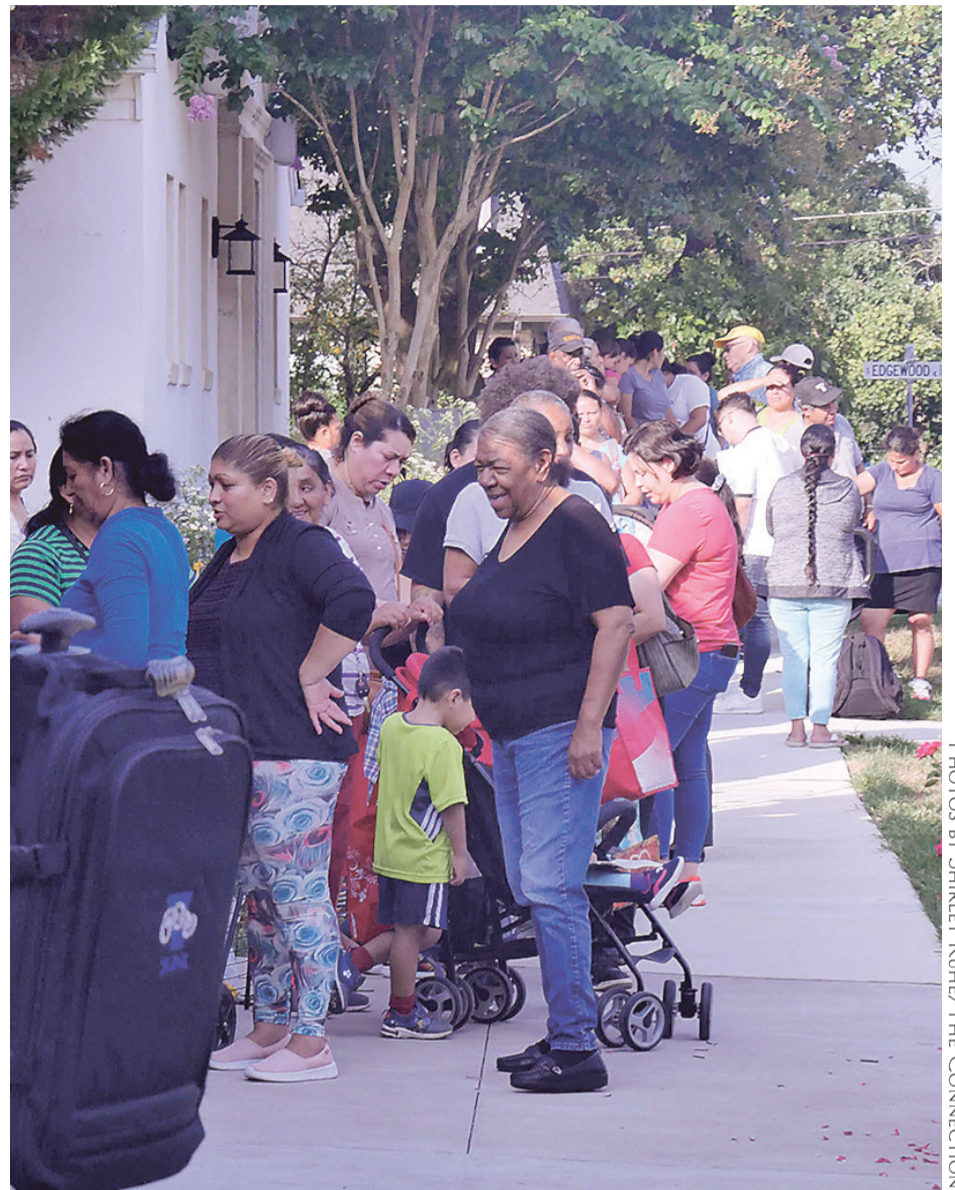
Meng says, "We did a food insecurity report seven or eight years ago. We needed a new one." AFAC and the Urban Institute funded the recent report. He said that Matt de Ferranti was the County Board chair at the time they funded this recent report and interested in this issue. "In fact, he is the only Board member who has been interested." De Ferranti, who is currently the Board liaison to the Task Force, adds this is one of his top priorities and when COVID kicked in. "We needed to step up to keep people fed and prevent evictions."

The report indicates that AFAC provided 57% of the total amount provided by food pantries and meals with schools providing 4 percent, Capital Area food bank 9 percent, senior 6 percent and other non-profits 9 percent. Meng said these numbers aren't entirely accurate because they include double counting. For instance, someone may be coming to AFAC but

also getting food from the Capital Area food bank or another local distribution site. Meng, sitting with a thick notebook of AFAC statistics on his desk, says, "I had really hoped we would get this kind of information from this report. But most of the sites don't collect data in a way that is usable. They don't collect addresses that would allow cross referencing."

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The line outside Our Lady Queen of Peace for their weekly food distribution.

What comes next?

The report recommendations cover transportation, food delivery and accessibility as well as communication and it would necessitate a number of different players to make them happen.

Meng says five or six of the recommendations involved AFAC, "and we have already addressed them midstream. We have expanded AFAC hours again to add evening hours." He adds there is a new site at Arlington Mills Community Center, one of the areas identified in the report, and they are looking at another site at the West end of Columbia Pike. "We do offer culturally appropriate foods like halal meats and masa and a rotation of bean varieties," and he pointed out, "We do it with our own dollars."

"The AFAC budget is \$8 million a year and the county contributes only \$555,000." Meng says that the establishment of AFAC as a supplemental provider of groceries for Arlington residents is extremely different the funding mechanisms used by most counties funding mechanisms. He explains two committed individuals and six congregations in 1988 founded the non-profit and "it wasn't until 2005 that the County decided to give us a minor amount."

Meng says the other recommendations are directed at the County and "my question

to them is do they have the funds or desire to make changes. I can decide what AFAC will do. I will make the appropriate changes at AFAC but I asked the County what they plan to do."

Hopkins says the recommendations are scheduled to come out in the fall. The next step will be to set up focus groups in the summer and to ask the community what they think and then adjust the recommendations based on feedback. The recommendations will be based on what's realistic, what makes sense.

Hopkins says the strategies proposed in the plan will build on the report's recommendations, including implementing a coordinated SNAP outreach plan and making charitable food resources and government food assistance programs more accessible to residents. "Implementation of those strategies will be shared between Arlington County, AFAC, APS and other organizations and will be directed by Arlington's Food Security Coordinator."

Hopkins says some of the Urban Institute recommendations are not as realistic for Arlington. There are a lot of recommendations and it won't all happen at once. Hopkins says, "We've got to be realistic. Every inch we get closer to helping, that's great. Every little piece helps."

PHOTOS BY SHIRLEY RUIHE/THE CONNECTION

Fill a Bag-Help Feed Families

BY SHIRLEY RUHE
ARLINGTON CONNECTION

Stephanie Ellis stands on the loading dock of Arlington N Post Office late Saturday afternoon waiting for the mail trucks to return with their donated food. Ellis is the coordinator of the postal AFAC food drive for the 22207 zip code. She says she has been doing this for 15-20 years. "This is my passion."

Brittany Davis pulls in. She has route T-6 which means she fills in for the regular carriers with a different route each day. She says she has brought back five bags. "They were heavy; a lot of people put in canned goods." She says her strategy is to deliver the mail and pick up the food at the same time if the residence is on a corner but if it is in the middle of the block, she has to deliver the mail and come back to pick up the food because it is too heavy to carry down the block. She is doing double duty.

The carrier for Route 737 backs up and opens the back mail truck doors. He has been participating in the food drive for decades. The back of his truck seems to be filled with bags of pasta, frosted flakes, chicken noodle soup and tuna. But he says it is light this year. "I think it is inflation; people aren't donating as much."

Ellis adds that she thinks the low-



Stephanie Ellis, coordinator of the Arlington N. Post Office location food drive.



Carrier for route 737 unloads back of his mail truck.

PHOTOS BY SHIRLEY RUHE/THE CONNECTION

er contributions may also be related to the change of date this year.

"We have always held this the Saturday before Mother's Day but this year was different. I don't know why they changed it but people didn't get the word. People were putting out food last week but we picked it up anyway." The food drive is traditionally held on the second Saturday in May, which generally falls right before Mother's Day but Mother's Day fell ear-

lier than usual this year.

Nicole Waldron arrives and slowly carries a box to the dock. "This one is heavy." She says it is her first year as a carrier and on the food drive.

Ellis says Waldron has done Route 54 today, which is Ellis's usual route, but Ellis had to be at the post office all day making sure the carriers know what to do. "I tell them how important it is to give food to the needy."

Professor Honored at Marymount University's Commencement Ceremony

Criminal Justice Professor wins the Robert A. Draghi Outstanding Faculty Award for teaching excellence.

BY MARILYN CAMPBELL
THE CONNECTION

During Marymount University's commencement ceremony on Saturday, a select group of students and faculty members were recognized for their exemplary achievements.

Among the most prestigious honors is the Robert A. Draghi Outstanding Faculty Award, which is presented by graduating seniors to a faculty member who exemplifies the university's "Students Come First" philosophy and demonstrates teaching excellence.

This year's winner was Sarah F. Fischer, Ph.D. Assistant Professor, Criminal Justice. "I am honored to have won," she said. "Working with students is the best part of being a professor."



Criminal Justice professor Sarah F. Fischer received the Robert A. Draghi Outstanding Faculty Award during Marymount University's Commencement Ceremony.

Graduating seniors nominate the professor who has had a significantly positive impact on their education. Tatjana Arnold, who graduat-

ed with a degree in Criminal Justice and Psychology, introduced Fischer during the ceremony.

"Dr. Fischer is an absolutely amazing professor and mentor," said Arnold. "She checked in with us at every step of the semester, opened her office doors for us and made sure we always knew how to reach her. I don't think I've ever had a professor root for me like Dr. Fischer did." When describing her approach to education, Fischer said, "Probably, more than anything, I push my students beyond what they think they can achieve. My teaching is focused on ensuring that what students learn in the classroom can help them when they graduate. That starts with allowing them to research what they are interested in, and there's a lot of variation in my students' interests."

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Manoukians Celebrate 100 Years and Thousands of Rugs

BY SHIRLEY RUHE
ARLINGTON CONNECTION

One hundred years ago Manouk, Noury, Moses and Mishel Manoukian were escaping from S. Anatolia near the Syrian border into Armenia and then the United States to avoid the genocide. Today the business they started in America, Manoukian Brothers Oriental Rugs, is celebrating 100 years in the fine carpet business with their friends, relatives and long-time customers.

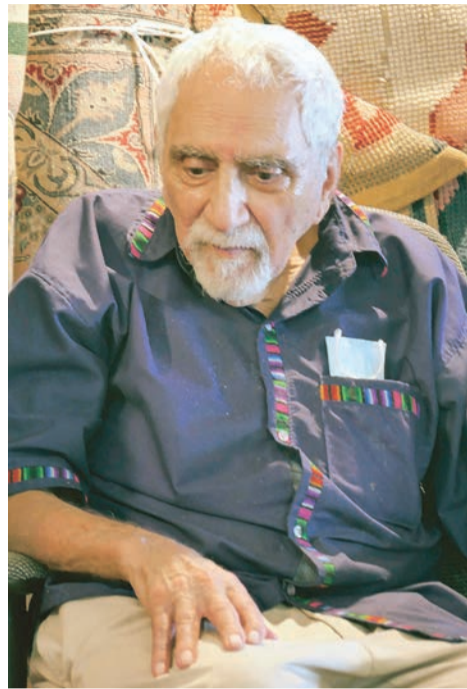
It is Sunday, May 15 and the rugs have been rolled against the wall of the showroom on Columbia Pike to make room for the festivities. Platters of hummus, stuffed vine leaves and cheese borek welcome the visitors as musicians from the Arlington Symphony warm up the crowd.

Mikael Manoukian, who has taken over the day-to-day-operations of the three-generational business with his mother Dona, looks around the room at the name tags marked with the year when the person first encountered Manoukian Brothers. "I see some 50s and 60s out there," he says. Mikael invited several long-time customers to share stories "fresh off the loom." Mikael started by remembering a Chinese tufted rug where a baby had been born right on the rug.

Paul Manoukian is retired now but sits by the podium watching the crowd and remembering. He thanks his son and wife who went over the top in preparing today's event. Paul says as he looks at the faces surrounding him that he tries to remember which rug they bought. "Excuse me but when I look at a face, I see your rug."

Paul, son of Moses, the youngest Manoukian brother, took over the business after retiring from the Washington Area Transit Authority and ran the business with his wife Dona for 25 years. During that time their customers included rugs and service to the U.S. Congress, Supreme Court, the National Cathedral, Blair House and the Smithsonian Institution as well as their everyday customers.

Del. Alfonso Lopez, who he says he represents 22204, the best zip code in Arlington, is on hand to present a copy of H.J.Res 362 which he introduced and which passed



Paul Manoukian sits remembering the customers and their rugs at the 100th anniversary of Manoukian Brothers Oriental Rugs.

the House March 8 and was agreed to by the Senate March 9, "highly commending the Manoukian Brothers Oriental Rugs on the occasion of its 100th anniversary." He presents a copy of the resolution as an expression of the General Assembly's admiration for the business contributions to the Commonwealth.

Lopez says the Manoukians took their hopes and dreams as immigrants and turned it into a business. Lopez says they represent the best of S. Arlington where 108 languages are spoken with 67 at Wakefield High School. Lopez is the son of a formerly undocumented immigrant from Venezuela. He says he lives three blocks from their business on Columbia Pike and he often walks by with his kids. They stop and his kids always tell him the carpets are beautiful—first his older and then his younger son over the years.

Manoukian granddaughters Lily and Zoe are here from Columbus, Ohio. They pull out a white slip from a glass bowl full of numbers, and lucky 41 takes home a carpet.



From left: State Delegate Alfonso Lopez, Paul Manoukian, his wife Dona and son Mikael with a picture of grandfather Moses framed on the table nearby.

PHOTOS BY SHIRLEY RUHE/THE CONNECTION



Granddaughters Zoe and Lily have come from Columbus, Ohio to Manoukian Rugs Sunday, May 15 to celebrate the 100 years in business.



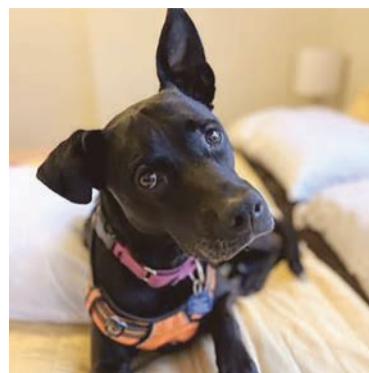
Mikael Manoukian displays certificate of commendation presented by Delegate Alfonso Lopez on Sunday, May 15.



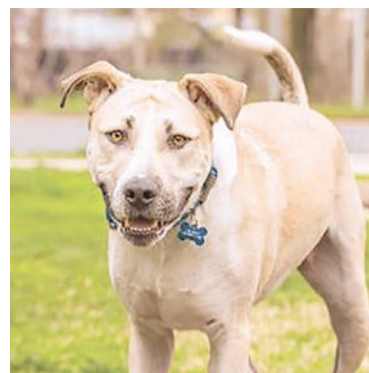
Mikael Manoukian, Rep. Lopez, and Dona Manoukian, enjoy stories from long-time customers of Manoukian Brothers Oriental Rugs.



Adoptable, adorable Sydney.



Cute Cali, ready to go.



Adoptable, endearing Orlando.



Fun-loving, affectionate Merlin.

Dogs Who Have been at Shelter ‘Long Term’ are Gems

Long term means more than a month; there are only marvelous pups at AWLA.

BY ASHLEY SIMPSON
ARLINGTON CONNECTION

If you were to ever spend any quality time with Kobe, there’s a good chance you’d never want to part ways. You may even insist on bringing him home ... forever.

With Kobe, we’re talking about a handsome mixed-breed adult dog with soulful brown eyes and a soft tan coat. He’s an uncomplicated soul who enjoys the simple things in life: car rides, cuddles, and snoozing in the sunshine. A smart one, Kobe is also house-trained and picks up new tricks with ease.

Then, we introduce you to Sydney – another fully grown mixed breed dog. This affable lady has a black and white coat, and she’s never met a human who doesn’t excite her.

Case in point: According to her foster parent, who works with football players, Sydney “won over a group of 300-pound offensive linemen and worked the room, making sure they all gave her plenty of pets ... They’ve been asking for her to come back ever since.”

Kobe and Sydney are two of millions of dogs across the United States who have found themselves living either at a shelter or within other animal rescue organization setups.

However, unlike other dogs

in their shoes — or paws — who on average only spend about two weeks in shelter (or shelter-like) care, Kobe and Sydney have been with the Animal Welfare League of Arlington (AWLA) for many months.

Kobe has been with the AWLA – shuffling between the shelter and foster families – since November of 2021. Sydney’s stint hasn’t been much shorter: she has been with the AWLA since January of this year.

“Kobe is our longest resident,” Chelsea Jones, AWLA Senior Communications Specialist, said. “He was originally adopted in June of 2021 and then returned in November because the owner didn’t end up having enough time to take on the responsibilities of dog ownership. Since November, he’s one of our ‘long-term stays’ ... and there’s no reason at all why he wouldn’t be a great candidate for a forever home.”

When Jones says “long-term stays,” she is referring to the more-than-a-handful of dogs who have currently been with the nonprofit rescue organization for longer than a month.

“A couple times a year, we will find that we have a whole lot of long-term stays – animals that have been in the shelter for what we consider a long time,” Jones said. “The national average time that a dog stays in a shelter is two weeks, so, any time a dog is with us for more

than a month, they get on our radar.”

Currently, the dogs on this radar aren’t just Kobe and Sydney. The others who are patiently waiting for their turn at permanent home happiness are Orlando, Buddy, Egypt, Merlin, and Cali.

And, what can be mind-boggling is that there’s no reason why AWLA dogs like Kobe, Sydney, and their other long-term stay counterparts don’t pique peoples’ interests the way other dogs do.

“It’s not like people meet dogs like Kobe and Sydney and decide they aren’t interested,” Jones explained. “It’s that people don’t even ask about these long-term residents at all. It’s just guesswork, but the assumption is that people must think there is a reason why a dog has been up on our website, with the AWLA for so long – that something must be wrong with them. But that’s categorically false.”

Just like all the dogs that the AWLA deems adoptable, every single one of its long-term canine residents are more than ready to take on the role of someone’s permanent companion.

“All of our long-term stays are lovely dogs,” Jones said. “If a dog is unfit to be put into the community, they would never be put up for adoption. If they posed any threat to other animals or humans, we would not show them to the public.”

There is especially no reason for these dogs to be without permanent homes because general demand for dogs in Arlington is not low.

There are, in fact, multiple reasons why potential adopters should consider every single dog – including the long-timers – that animal rescues like the AWLA have to offer.

First of all, the AWLA typically tries to find foster homes for dogs who have been with the organization for a month or longer. And, generally speaking, dogs who stay in the AWLA shelter (which can comfortably fit up to 30 dogs) tend to get adopted faster than those in foster homes.

Why?

Because they are simply more accessible.

Don’t write off dogs in foster care, though: AWLA foster families are always more than willing to coordinate visits. Instructions for getting in touch with these foster owners are listed on the individual pet pages on the ‘Adoptable Dogs’ section of the AWLA’s website.

Also, when it comes to dogs in the shelter — both the longer and the shorter term stays — potential adopters must remember that animals aren’t always at their best when they are confined in the small spaces designated for them. And, understandably so.

“Some dogs don’t ‘show well’ at the shelter — they are naturally

anxious for interaction — so people don’t want to meet them, but once they get into a foster home – or any home at all – they are the loveliest and friendliest dogs ever,” Jones said. “Especially big dogs get so frustrated in the shelter environment. And you can’t blame them for not wanting to be there. As much as we try to make it nice for them, there are still times – depending on dog volume and volunteer availability – when these dogs will be in a kennel for up to 23 hours.”

Most of AWLA’s dogs are either transferred from an out-of-area shelter, or — like Kobe — they have been surrendered by their owners. Naturally, the circumstances surrounding them being in their new “homes” lend these dogs to being distressed in the shelter.

“You can imagine, if you are a young, active dog who was once living with a family for a really a long time, or if you just got off a plane or transport van from another state, and then you have to be there in another kennel... of course you are going to be stressed,” Jones said.

The moral of the story?

“Long-term stay” is not a synonym for a “difficult” or “unworthy” pet. With a little empathy, these dogs who yearn for love could be exactly what you and your family need.

Learn About Repairs to South Abingdon Street Bridge over 395

The Virginia Department of Transportation is providing a virtual public involvement opportunity on plans to rehabilitate the South Abingdon Street bridge over I-395 to improve safety for drivers, bicyclists and pedestrians and extend the overall life of the bridge. The bridge was originally built in 1970 and rehabilitated in 1994.

https://www.virginiadot.org/projects/northern_virginia/

Presentation available online at [virginiadot.org/Abingdon395](https://www.virginiadot.org/Abingdon395); Give feedback on project plans through June 1

[south_abingdon_street_over_i-395_bridge_rehabilitation-virtual_public_involvement.asp](https://www.virginiadot.org/Abingdon395)

The project includes:

- ❖ Resurfacing the concrete bridge deck and closing deck joints
- ❖ Repairing concrete piers and abutments
- ❖ Adding protective concrete barriers

- ❖ Adjacent to piers
- ❖ Extending and adding concrete in-fill walls between piers
- ❖ Replacing bearings and reconstructing bearing seats

The existing sidewalks on both sides of the bridge will remain and the bridge bicycle lanes will be restriped as part of the project.

The bridge averages 8,300 vehi-

cles a day based on 2019 data.

The project is financed with federal and state funding.

Get Involved

Watch the virtual presentation (presentation also available in Chinese and Spanish) at [virginiadot.org/Abingdon395](https://www.virginiadot.org/Abingdon395).

❖ Provide comments via the online survey or by email to meeting-comments@vdot.virginia.gov.

❖ Mail comments to Mr. Sharif

Ramsis, P.E., Virginia Department of Transportation, 4975 Alliance Drive, Fairfax, VA 22030.

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Over the Edge

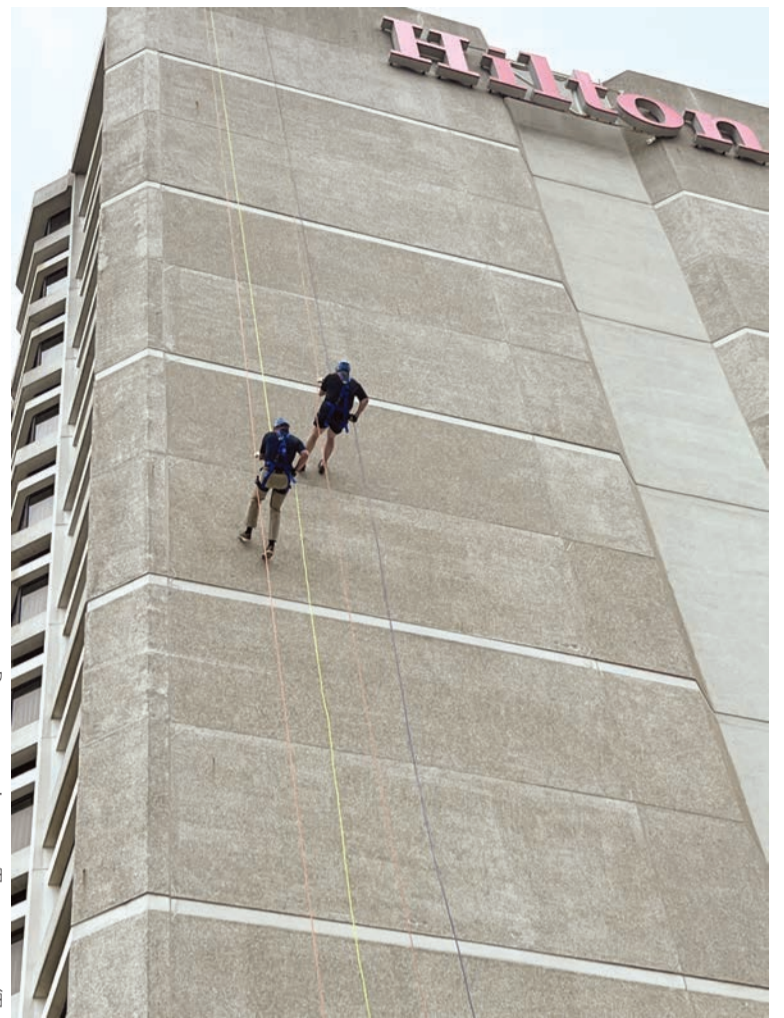
Rappellers raise funds for New Hope Housing.



Crystal City Hilton General Manager Charles Hill and Rosemary Hughes with UPS Community Relations finish their 160-foot descent down the side of the Hilton May 5 as part of the Over the Edge fundraiser for New Hope Housing.



Lois Cook, vice president and wide receiver for the D.C. Divas, rappels down the Crystal City Hilton May 6 to support New Hope Housing.



Arlington County Board member Matt de Ferranti, on right, rappels down the side of the Crystal City Hilton with Fairfax County Board of Supervisors chair Jeff McKay May 5 in support of New Hope Housing.



The KW Metro Center team poses for a photo at the New Hope Housing welcome reception for the Over the Edge fundraiser May 5 at the Crystal City Hilton.

BY JEANNE THEISMANN
THE CONNECTION

Excitement was mixed with tinges of fear as more than 80 volunteers rappelled down the 14-story Crystal City Hilton as part of the Over the Edge fundraiser for New Hope Housing.

Held May 5 and 6, rappellers included Arlington County Board member Matt de Ferranti, who descended side by side with Fairfax County Board of Supervisors chair Jeff McKay.

"I did not look down from the top," de Ferranti said. "I was a little too eager out of the gate but then I just slowed down and was happy to get down."

De Ferranti, who has rappelled before, was eager to raise awareness for homelessness.

"The cause is what it's all about," de Ferranti said. "Homelessness is a fixable condition. We can end chronic homelessness, but we need people to believe that we can do it and invest in doing it."

New Hope Housing is a non-profit operating homeless shelters and housing programs across Northern Virginia. The event was an alternative to a traditional gala in the wake of the uncertainties of the pandemic.

"This was a COVID-friendly way to raise funds that are des-

Amazon employee John Bordner celebrates after rappelling down the Crystal City Hilton May 6 for New Hope Housing.



"The cause is what it's all about. Homelessness is a fixable condition."

— Arlington County Board member Matt de Ferranti

perately needed to support our mission," said Jan-Michael Sacharko, Director of Development for New Hope Housing. "Because of our partnerships with the Crystal City Hilton, Keller Williams Metro

Center, sponsors and volunteers we were able to raise more than \$200,000."

Crystal City Hilton General Manager Charles Hill was among those descending the 160-feet

down the side of the hotel.

"It was a little scary but exciting," Hill said. "But this is an important cause and we are happy to partner with New Hope and support the community."

McKay admitted he was hesitant but wanted to draw attention to the homeless situation throughout Northern Virginia.

"I was terrified when we started but as we went down it went a little bit easier," McKay said. "But even as scared as I was at the top of the building, it wasn't as scary as sleeping outside in the freezing cold dead of winter like too many of our homeless people have to each night. So if I can raise aware-

ness and overcome a fear of my own here today it is worth it. Most importantly I wanted to support New Hope and what they are doing."

Lois Cook, vice president and wide receiver of the D.C. Divas football team, also took the challenge.

"The adrenaline was pumping and I was nervous at first," Cook said. "But I felt safe and secure although once you get on top of the edge, that's when I knew it was getting real."

De Ferranti added, "My wife said politely, 'Next time you decide to do something like this, let's talk about it first.'"

CALENDAR

NOW THRU SEPTEMBER

Witness the Changing of the Guard. At the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, at Arlington National Cemetery, Arlington. From April-September, the ceremony occurs every 30 minutes, on the hour and half-hour. For more information, visit: <https://arlingtoncemetery.mil/Explore/Changing-of-the-Guard>

NOW THRU MAY 31

Jane Franklin Dance Presents Forty+ Project. 11:45 a.m.-1 p.m. At 3700 S. Four Mile Run Drive, Arlington. Featuring: Choreographer Emily Crews. Enroll: \$160. Forty+ Projects explore movement and performance technique within a creative premise. Get invaluable health benefits from exercise including improved strength, physical function. Each project celebrates the collective creativity of people past the age of 40 and each project is directed by a different choreographer. This project culminates with performances at Theatre on the Run in June. Call 703-933-1111.

NOW THRU MAY 27

Dancing Diamonds. 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. At Gallery Underground, 2100 Crystal Drive, Arlington. Gallery Underground's Focus Gallery in May presents Dancing Diamonds, a solo show by Jean Offutt Lewis. Jean Offutt Lewis' exploration of light on water was inspired after her move to the Northern Neck of Virginia. There, at a certain time of year, dependent on the Earth's relationship to the Sun, "Dancing Diamonds" appear; single points of light, each a tiny reflection of the sun or the full moon, create kinetic light shows atop windswept water. Using acrylics, a water-based medium, Offutt Lewis reduces this natural phenomenon into an interplay of color, line, and circles in a series of abstracted waterscape paintings.

THURSDAY/MAY 19

Death Cafe. 6:30-7:45 p.m. At Arlington Public Library, Central Library, 1015 N. Quincy Street, Arlington. A Death Cafe is a group-directed discussion about death with no agenda, objectives, or themes. The purpose is to increase awareness of death with a view to helping people make the most of our (finite) lives. It is a discussion group rather than a grief support or counseling session. Visit the website: <https://arlingtonva.libcal.com/event/9060520>

FRIDAY/MAY 20

"Puppio" Adoption Event. 5-7 p.m. At The Commentary Social House, 801 N. Glebe Road, Arlington. The Commentary Arlington will introduce "Doggy Dishes," a made from scratch in-house dog-friendly menu on National Rescue Dog Day Friday, May 20th. Guests are welcome to bring their own dogs to enjoy happy hour, knowing whatever they spend goes to supporting animals in need. The event will launch the restaurant's new "Doggy Dishes" dog-friendly patio menu and will feature adoptable dogs from A Forever Home Animal Rescue. 20% percent of the proceeds going to A Forever Home Animal Rescue.

FRIDAY/MAY 20

Controlling Mosquitoes and Ticks in Your Yard Without Pesticides. 10 - 11:30 a.m. Online. Learn

pesticide-free best management practices to control mosquitoes and ticks in your yard and keep them away from you and your family. Extension Master Gardener Joan McIntyre will explain how to identify mosquitoes and ticks prevalent in this area, their life cycle, how they reproduce, and where they go in the winter. Free. RSVP at <https://mgvnv.org/events/> to receive link to participate.

SATURDAY/MAY 21

Festival Argentino 2022. 3:30-10:30 p.m. At Kenmore Middle School Auditorium, 200 South Carlin Springs Road, Arlington. A day-long celebration of Argentine culture, featuring celebrated musicians from the U.S. and abroad. This year's headliner is "Fabricio Rodriguez", the top vocalist and World Music Band from Argentina and over 30 artists in the program. The other performers include Javier Colli: Chamarrita and Cháma-me, Ceibo: Revelation Folk21; Omar "El Chimpa" Núñez: Folklore Music of Santiago del Estero, "Alexandra Marie," Argentina's finest tango soprano and the winner of several awards. Also performing are "Matias Natale" - Argentina's best pop nominee 2019; "Ballet Sol Cuyano" and "Adriana Argentino" - the top folk and ballet Argentino. Tickets: <https://www.tickeri.com/> or visit www.ArgentineFestival.org.

SATURDAY/MAY 21

Capital City Showcase. 7 p.m. At Highline RxR, 2100 Crystal Drive, Arlington. The Capital City Showcase, the variety show that features the DMV's best performing artists and hosted by Christian Hunt, returns with its new one-of-a-kind blend of entertainment. Bring a team or fly solo and win prizes by dropping knowledge in a trivia competition, then duking it out in a karaoke battle.

SATURDAY/MAY 21

Quarterfest Crawl. Noon to 8 p.m. In the Ballston neighborhood of Arlington. Attendees of this free neighborhood-wide event are invited to visit participating restaurants to enjoy live entertainment and food and drink specials. Ballston Quarter, the main event hub, will kick off the fun and feature DJ Ricky all day as well as the Encanto movie characters and Bobby McKeys Dueling Piano Road Show. SER, Salt Line, Ballston Local and World of Beer will host live music from local performers throughout the day. Guests are invited to enjoy the following events for Quarterfest Crawl:
Ballston Quarter Lineup
12 - 7 p.m. DJ Ricky
12:30- 1 p.m. Official Event Kickoff
1 - 4 p.m. Encanto Sisters
3 - 5 p.m. Intern John and the HOT 99.5 Street Team
6 - 8 p.m. Bobby McKeys Dueling Piano Show
Crawl Lineup
1 - 2:30 p.m. Uncle Jesse at World of Beer
2:30 - 4 p.m. Kara and Matty D. at Ballston Local
4 - 5:30 p.m. The Crista Trio at SER
5:30 - 7 p.m. Ache Harvest at Salt Line
Attendees are encouraged to share photos of their experience on social media using #Quarterfest and #QuarterfestBallston. For more

SEE CALENDAR, PAGE 11

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CALENDAR

FROM PAGE 9

information about Quarterfest 2022 visit quarterfestballston.org, or follow the event on Facebook and Instagram using @BallstonBID. Visit www.ballstonva.org.

SATURDAY/MAY 21

Marvelous Mozart and Mendelssohn. 7:30 p.m. At Gunston Arts Center, Theater 1, 2700 S. Lang Street, Arlington. Featuring the Piano Trio in C major K.548, Piano Quartet in E Flat Major K.493 by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart and the exciting Piano Quartet No. 2 in F Minor by Felix Mendelssohn.

SATURDAY/MAY 21

Plot Against Hunger 2022 Spring Garden Kick-Off. 10 a.m. - 2 p.m., Arlington Central Library, 1015 N. Quincy Street, Arlington. Learn how you can participate in growing food for your neighbors in Arlington. Extension Master Gardeners will staff a plant clinic to provide advice on planting, growing, and harvesting vegetable crops. The program will feature multiple speakers on how climate change is affecting our home gardens. There will be seed and seedling giveaways and a talk and tour on native plants. Visit the website: <https://arlingtonurbanag.org/>

SATURDAY/MAY 21

Grand Re-Opening of Jennie Park and Playground. At 3630 27th St., Arlington. The park was a place where the Green Valley community made their own fun. In the early part of the 20th century, they played baseball and football on fields at Peyton Field, a property owned by the Peyton family, but open to the

community. Peyton Field had a dance hall, motorcycle races, baseball, and football games. Arlington County acquired the property in the 1940s and changed the name to Jennie Dean Park & Playground and retained the sports fields. In 1950, it fell under the Negro Recreation League of Arlington County. Today it is a park for all to use and is located near the best dog park near Shirlington, in Green Valley.

WEDNESDAY/MAY 25

Author Talk: Allison Finkelstein. 6:30-7:30 p.m. At Central Library - Barbara M. Donnellan Auditorium, 1015 N. Quincy Street, Arlington. Allison Finkelstein will discuss her book, "Forgotten Veterans, Invisible Memorials". Learn more about the pioneering American women who commemorated World War I through action-based memorial projects and who advocated for women to be recognized for their wartime service. Visit the website: <https://arlingtonva.libcal.com/event/8906253>

THURSDAY/MAY 26

Encore Stage and Studio Benefit Breakfast. 8:30 a.m. At Washington Golf & Country Club, 3017 N. Glebe Rd. Arlington. Encore invites you for breakfast and performances by students as we celebrate the magic of "theatre by kids, for kids!" Come and learn more about the mission to provide high-quality theatre experiences for all young people in our community. They will honor Susan A. Keady with the Celeste Groves Award. For over 30 years, Susan has served children, youth and families of our community with her inspired artistic direction and dedication to Encore's mission.

BULLETIN BOARD

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

FRIDAY/MAY 20

The Arlington County Police Department's Community Engagement Division is conducting the 3rd Annual Fill the Cruiser drive in support of the Arlington Food Assistance Center (AFAC) and Doorways. This year, in addition to non-perishable food items, officers will also be collecting diapers of all sizes.

Officers will be collecting donated items on Friday, May 20, 2022, from 4 p.m. to 6 p.m. at the below locations:

Giant Food - 2901 S. Glebe Road
Harris Teeter - 2425 N. Harrison Street
AFAC accepts most unopened, unexpired, and unprepared foods, including perishable items. AFAC is most in need of the following low sodium, low fat and low sugar items:

- Low sodium canned tomatoes
- Low sodium canned tuna
- Low sodium canned soups
- Canned vegetables
- Peanut butter (in plastic jars)
- Low sugar cereal

Those wishing to donate, but unable to attend the Fill the Cruiser events should visit the AFAC website and/or the Doorways website for additional donation options.

FRIDAY/MAY 20

Controlling Mosquitoes and Ticks in Your Yard Without Pesticides. 10 - 11:30 a.m. Online. Learn pesticide-free best management practices to control mosquitoes and ticks in your yard and keep them away from you and your family. Extension Master Gardener Joan McIntyre will explain how to identify mosquitoes and ticks prevalent in this area, their life cycle, how they reproduce, and where they go in the winter. Free. RSVP at <https://mgnv.org/events/> to receive link

to participate.

SATURDAY/MAY 21

Plot Against Hunger 2022 Spring Garden Kick-Off. 10 a.m. - 2 p.m. At Arlington Central Library, 1015 N. Quincy Street, Arlington. Learn how you can participate in growing food for your neighbors in Arlington. Extension Master Gardeners will staff a plant clinic to provide advice on planting, growing, and harvesting vegetable crops. The program will feature multiple speakers on how climate change is affecting our home gardens. There will be seed and seedling giveaways and a talk and tour on native plants. For more information on this event, see the Friends of Urban Agriculture website: <https://arlingtonurbanag.org/>

NOW THRU NOV. 17

The Ballston Farmer's Market returns to Welburn Square near the Ballston Metro stop. 3 - 7 p.m. Visit the Mega Markets on the first Thursday of each month with live music, local vendors, and the return of the beer and wine garden. The market offers conventional and certified organic fruits and vegetables, grass-fed meats and pastured eggs, organic milk, yogurt, ice cream, sweet and savory baked goods, Virginia-made wines, cold-pressed juices, handmade soaps and lotions, wood-fired pizza, hot-pressed sandwiches, and more.

DONATIONS NEEDED

Pet Food Bank. AWLA has established a Pet Food Bank to serve qualifying residents of Arlington County and the City of Falls Church. In consideration of the effect financial obstacles have on a pet owner's ability to afford pet care, the AWLA Pet Food Bank program's goal is to keep family pets out of shelters. If you are an Arlington County or City of Falls Church resident and are in need of assistance in feeding your pet, follow this link and fill out a pre-registration form. Visit goo.gl/forms/s2FuFdaYwDz4tPw2.

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A Little Perspective



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

Last week's column addressed the issue of uncertainty which, as a long-surviving and still-undergoing-treatment cancer patient, I am very familiar. In fact, 'uncertainty' becomes my daily bread whether I'm hungry or not. I learned early on in my cancer life that there are no guarantees. Instead, there are ups and downs all-around. If life in the cancer lane were an amusement ride, it would be the most feared, gut-wrenching, life-altering roller coaster you ever had the misfortune of experiencing. The significant difference being that roller coasters don't kill you. They scare you certainly, but, when the ride is finished so too is your involvement. Unfortunately, for a cancer patient, the ride is never over.

And it's some ride, too. A ride where your life really is at risk, and one that constantly changes direction and takes you places emotionally and spiritually you likely never imagined. Moreover, nothing really prepares you for the diagnosis and it's only the prognosis that might provide a little relief if you're lucky. Many cancers are survivable now compared to the previous generation. Nevertheless, cancer remains the most feared word in any conversation, especially when it's directed at you by an oncologist with whom an appointment has been set after you have taken multiple diagnostic steps to confirm your diagnosis.

For me, the process took about six weeks from when I first went to an emergency room complaining of migrating pain in my right rib cage area (after it being on the left side a few days earlier) and having difficulty breathing and catching my breath to two sets of chest X-Rays, one CT scan, one PET scan and finally a surgical biopsy. I visited multiple doctors in multiple locations until the diagnosis was confirmed and the initial appointment with an oncologist was arranged.

A week or so prior to meeting the oncologist, my internal medicine doctor had called me at work with the results of the previous week's biopsy. When he asked me if I wanted to meet at his office to discuss the results, I figured the news was bad, but I never imagined how bad it would be: non-small cell lung cancer, stage IV. How bad you ask? "13 month to two years" prognosis, that's how. I was age 54 and half.

Much has changed in the past 13-plus years since that late February 2009 shock. For one thing, and most significantly, my diagnosis. I am now a papillary thyroid cancer patient and have had a thyroidectomy to surgically remove both my thyroid glands. My prognosis however is not exactly "terminal" as it was when I was diagnosed with lung cancer, but it's precarious nonetheless as previous columns have explained (the one medication that's effective has a three-year window: I'm nearing the end of year two) and at present, there's no new options. Still, I can't worry about things for which I have no control (another lesson). As concerns what happens to my life when the 10 mg lenvima is no longer effective? To invoke Scarlett O'Hara at the end of "Gone with the Wind": "I'll worry about that tomorrow."

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

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