

NEWS

PHOTOS BY SHIRLEY RUHE/THE CONNECTION



Heather Sheire (front) and Wendy MacCallum roll out pie dough that is full of butter, the secret ingredient.



Sheire places a wooden stick at the ends of each cookie sheet, her invention to allow stacking cookie sheets with pie crusts.



Owners of Livin' the Pie Life Wendy MacCallum (left) and Heather Sheire take a break mid- afternoon on the patio outside.



The glass case inside the door of Livin' the Pie Life is filled with scones, savory and sweet pies and cookies with the overflow on racks behind the counter.

Let Them Eat Pie

Wendy MacCallum and Heather Sheire find a winning formula at Livin' the Pie Life.

BY SHIRLEY RUHE
ARLINGTON CONNECTION

The secret to the famous crust at Livin' the Pie Life in Arlington won't be entirely divulged here but there are a few hints. "Butter," Heather Sheire, co-owner, says. "There is a lot of butter. It tastes delicious and is easy to work with. Everyone loves butter."

Then there is the three-day process. First the flour and salt get blended with a high ratio of butter and a little shortening. Then it rests. The next day the flour and butter get mixed with ice water. Then it rests again. The third day the dough gets rolled out into a crust for the pies and quiches that fill the glass compartment inside the door five days a week.

"I think all that resting makes a difference," Sheire says.

Today is Thursday, often the busiest day of the week preparing for the weekend rush. The dedicated baker has arrived at 5:30 a.m. to bake the quiches and the cinnamon rolls made the night before. In half an hour, three more staff will arrive with another shift in the afternoon who will prepare the quiches, make the brownies, ice the cakes, cut the apples and precook them, measure out the berries. "Then we are ready to grab a tin, roll out the pie dough and plop in the filling."

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Apple pie is the all time customer favorite, and today they have made nine full-size apple, 12 mini and four 8-inch pies. In the beginning it was difficult to predict quantities to have available for customers but as time has passed, the weeks have taken on a rhythm and a certain predictability. But you never know.

Wendy MacCallum, co-owner, says in the summer we couldn't make enough key lime. Then for two weeks we didn't sell any."

Sheire adds, "And people love peach pie the first few weeks but as time goes by they get tired of it."

Sheire says, "When we have leftovers we donate them to the firefighters, the police officers, the schools. Recently when our power went out and we couldn't bake our already assembled quiches we donated them to a school for the teachers' lunch." Also on the selection list today are four different scones including blueberry and chive with jack cheese as well as two savory quiches including the most popular quiche Lorraine, 10 pie choices including pumpkin chiffon with gingersnap crust, salted chocolate caramel chess, triple berry and mile high chocolate.

Three large size cookie choices include chocolate chip, peanut butter and ginger molasses, the latest addition. "I spent a lot of time tinkering with the molasses cookie until I was happy with it. With the peanut butter,

too," Sheire says.

MacCallum says they have a talented staff who have mostly been with them since the beginning. "We give them latitude and add things that they suggest to the choices for customers." MacCallum says most of the pie recipes came from Sheire. "She grew up in Seattle where there is a lot of pie. I grew up in Florida. Pies aren't big down there except maybe key lime in the summer. That recipe is mine. My mother probably never baked a pie in her life. I baked with my grandmother."

MacCallum says she and Sheire first met in 2011 at a Barcroft Elementary PTA auction where MacCallum was in charge of the food. But it wasn't until later in 2012 that they got together to make and sell pies when Sheire put out a query on a neighborhood listserv inquiring if anyone would want to join her in baking pies.

Sheire and MacCallum started selling baked goods at the Clarendon Farmers Market on Wednesdays. Sheire says, "We cooked in the commercial kitchen at the Unitarian Universalist Church on Route 50 and George Mason."

MacCallum remembers, "We went in the kitchen and started laughing and singing show tunes. We had such a good time."

Sheire says, "We got up on market days, went to the church kitchen and baked our pies, put them in boxes, loaded up for the market and set up our tent. We sold them still warm from the oven. Then we had to take everything down and pack it back up."

"We gave out a lot of samples at the market. The samples made us." Sheire says people would grab a sample and walk away, then head back after they had tasted it and buy a pie. "We were loud. We made a lot of friends there." They also sold cookies and cake. Sheire says she likes to bake cakes and, "who doesn't like cake?"

The two partners say they offered a lot of variety even early on but couldn't sell cold pies without refrigeration. "Apple was big and pumpkin and pecan. It was very seasonal." Sheire says they have a great relationship with Twin Springs Farm where they get their fresh fruit in season for their rotating selection of pies.

Blackberry is Sheire's favorite pie although they only sell it in August. Peaches, pears and plums as well as some herbs come from the farm as well as tomatoes for the savory tomato gruyere quiche. "Sometimes we just ask the farmer 'What do you have this week?'"

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Hot Day, Hot Cars and Hot Ribs

Green Valley Antique Car Show, hottest ticket in town.

BY SHIRLEY RUHE
THE CONNECTION

It is 12 noon, and already 15 antique cars sit side by side in the Dr. Charles R. Drew Elementary School parking lot for the 9th annual Green Valley Antique & Classic Car Show on Saturday. A volunteer gives each car a number for the People's Choice Award "and they will win that big trophy over there. Oh, look, here come some more cars."

Dr. Alfred O. Taylor, a long-time Arlington leader, sits with Gail Adams Hunter at the Civic Association table with the shiny People's Choice Award which will be handed out at the end of the day to the most popular car.

Bob and Debbie Strauss stand between their red 1968 GT Ford Mustang and their red 2018 Ford Mustang produced for the 50-year anniversary. "I am the original owner of the 1968 car; not too many people have held on to their cars for so long."

Both Bob and Debbie have spent their careers at Wakefield High School. Bob just retired two years ago as assistant director for student activities, and Debbie is still a special ed assistant for math. "These cars need to be driven, but not to work," Debbie says. Both of the Strausses grew up around cars.

"I like classic cars and I like classic men," Debbie explains.

A 2020 Chevy C8 Corvette sits down the row with the rear engine compartment open. Clyde Pelzer says, "Take a look at the engine. This is first year they moved the motor from the front to the rear. It's a whole different car with the latest technology—WIFI, lane indicators, and of course it's fast." Pelzer explains he has owned five Corvettes. "I've always been a Corvette guy since I was 12-years-old with my go-cart. I called it my first Corvette."

Number 17 is a 1972 yellow Volkswagen which was purchased in September 2001. "I've been a bug man all my life. I've owned at least 21 VWs. I buy them and then turn them around." Sitting side by side is a gray 1966 VW rebuilt from scratch. It took Richard Green 2-1/2 years to turn the burned out hulk into a new car. He says he had a VW as a kid and has always grown up with them. "I had a little extra money one day so I just did it. I don't know how much it all cost; I think I don't want to know."

Across the schoolyard several stands are set up offering snow cones, information about the Green Valley Civic Association and homemade lemonade made on the spot by Portia Clark, President of the Civic Association. Smoke wafts down the sidewalk from First Impression Soul and Seafood Carryout located on Shirlington Rd. The team has been smoking ribs for four hours over oak logs alongside half smokes and fish sandwiches.



Five-year-old Cherish and four-year-old Karleigh enjoy their snow cones while their grandmother, Portia Clark, makes homemade lemonade at the table nearby. Clark is a community organizer and the President of the Green Valley Civic Association.

Bob and Debbie Strauss stand between their 1968 Ford GT Mustang and their 2018 50-year anniversary GT Mustang.



Moe A. Flava (left), owner of First Impression Soul and Seafood Carryout with his team Moe A. Flava and Curtis Johnson have been smoking baby back ribs for four hours at the Antique Car Show Saturday.



Dr. Alfred O. Taylor Jr., a local legend and community leader, and Gail Adams Hunter sit at the Green Valley Civic Association information table where the trophy for People's Choice Award is on display.



Nine-year-old Tahira Gaye and her sister Harmony try out Bob Strauss's 1968 Ford GT Mustang at the Green Valley Annual Antique & Classic Car Show Saturday, June 17.



The owner of this 2020 C8 Corvette shows off the engine, the first year the Corvette engine had been moved from front to rear.

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THE CONNECTION

Pig & Oysters & Twirling Around

What's not to like at the Doorways barbecue?

It was a sell out crowd for the 14th annual Doorways Pig and Oyster Roast fundraiser held at Rocklands Barbeque and Grilling Company on Thursday, May 4. The 90-pound roast pig had been smoking for 12 hours, and Joel Robinson was first in line to taste his shredded meat basted with barbecue sauce and served up by Rigo Marques.

Others lined up for a few of the

800 oysters smoked for five minutes over hickory chips and doused with champagne, butter, tarragon leaf and red onion. Attendees grabbed a pale ale, and loaded up on all of the Rocklands trimmings—cornbread, coleslaw and baked beans and found a seat at an outdoor picnic table.

Maddie Faires grabbed Caroline Porras and swung her around in circles until they both got dizzy and needed a break before starting all over again. The event raised \$7,500 to support Doorways programs including shelter, housing and services for victims of domestic and sexual violence. Their services include families and individual survivors of all genders as well as youth.



Sell out crowd for Rocklands fundraiser Thursday night.



Doorways Pig and Oyster Roast fundraiser May 4 at Rocklands Barbeque and Grilling Company on Washington Blvd.

PHOTOS BY SHIRLEY RUHE THE CONNECTION



Maddie Faires and Caroline Porras say who needs barbecue when you can spin until you are dizzy instead?



Take your pick—smoked oysters or pork barbecue (or both).

