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25 CENTS

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PHOTO BY LOUISE KRAFT/CAZETTE PACKET

Reenactment at Fort Ward Park

More than 100 American Revolutionary War reenactors gathered at Fort Ward Park for the annual George Washington Birthday festivities on Sunday, Feb. 19. First graders fall in line with the Hessian guardsmen for drills before the afternoon skirmish.



Jackie Person and Lindsay Swanson dance with Ryan Bailey at the Sock Hop.

PHOTOS BY LOUISE KRAFT/CAZETTE PACKET

At the Sock Hop

Friends and neighbors danced away the evening at the Sock Hop in the Mount Vernon Community Center on Saturday, Feb. 25. Bands performing included The Kate Moran Band, The Irish Breakfast Band, Janna Audey, Mars Rodeo and Bill Mansfield on the banjo.

Food was donated by Del Ray restaurants including Del Ray Pizzeria, Pork Barrel BBQ, FireFlies, Sapore D'Italian, Caboose, Happy Tart and more.

Girls Scouts from Troop 6686 spent the early part of the evening painting faces before hitting the dance floor. The dance was a fundraiser for the ongoing support of the Miracle Field. More than \$7,000 was



Girl Scouts from Troop 6686 take to the dance floor: Maeve Bradley, Anna Paez and Natasha Magellon.

raised. The funds will be presented in the name of Del Ray resident Ryan Bailey. Major sponsors of the event were Jen Walker and Jack Taylor.

Waterfront Limbo

As challenges to small-area plan multiply, upzoning is on hold.

BY MICHAEL LEE POPE
GAZETTE PACKET

Think the waterfront plan passed?

Think again. A series of challenges to the controversial small area plan have unraveled the planning document, postponing the most controversial part of the plan until a series of challenges have been resolved. At stake is the future of three sites slated for redevelopment, which would become much more valuable with the higher density council members approved in January. Despite the preliminary approval City Council members gave on Jan. 21, they were unable to pass an official ordinance formally adopting the zoning change because of pending challenges — two at the Alexandria Circuit Court and two at the Board of Zoning Appeals.

Last weekend, council members approved an amendment to the master plan but declined to take action on the zoning.

"Can you hear it? I can hear it. It's the perfect storm," declared former Old Town Civic Association President Townsend Van Fleet during the public hearing on the master plan amendment. "And it won't crest here until November."

Supporters of the plan have dismissed the challenges as last-ditch efforts to overturn the will of the City Council, which approved increased density along the waterfront in a 5-to-2 vote in January. City Attorney James Banks has described the legal challenges now pending in Circuit Court as failing to properly make a cause for ac-

tion. And Planning Director Faroll Hamer has dismissed the challenges currently before the Board of Zoning Appeals as inapplicable to the course of action taken last month. Ultimately, supporters say, opponents are willing to do anything to delay the inevitable.

"It's perpetual," said Gina Baum, one of the founders of a pro-development group known as Waterfront for All. "Every argument I have heard against this plan is actually an argument in favor of this plan."

THE EFFORT to move forward with the master plan amendment in the absence of a zoning change represents a change of heart at City Hall, which had once argued the two should be inseparable. In a June 13 memorandum to city council members, Hamer and Banks argued that adopting the master plan amendment and the zoning change would be "the best planning practice." Hamer and Banks expressed concern that failing to adopt the two in tandem might lead to complications from citizens who opposed the proposed changes.

"A rezoning action includes additional potential restrictions and procedures for both the applicant and for the Planning Commission and the Council, such as a protest petition and supermajority vote requirements," they wrote in the memorandum.

When opponents of the waterfront plan presented a protest petition in January asking for a supermajority vote, Hamer and

SEE WATERFRONT, PAGE 3

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COUNCIL NOTEBOOK

Beauregard Proverb

Yea, though members of the City Council walk through the valley of the shadow of Beauregard, they seem to fear no evil.

West End resident **Jack Sullivan** thinks that's a problem. So he arrived at Saturday's public hearing with the Old Testament reading for the morning: Proverbs 22:16. "One who oppresses the poor to increase his wealth and one who gives gifts to the rich, both come to poverty." At issue is the Beauregard small-area plan, which critics say will displace 10,000 low-income residents in favor of benefiting wealthy landowners who stand to gain millions in the process.

"Face it," Sullivan told council members. "What this plan does is harm the poor and give to the rich."

Opponents of the small-area plan now under consideration have been critical of the affordable housing part of the plan, which does not make units available until after 2020. They've also raised questions as to how the financing would work because they're skeptical that the funds will be available. Sullivan said that the low-income residents are being targeted for displacement specifically because they are tenants rather than owners, who tend to have more cache in city politics.

"Scripture promises affliction and loss to those who harm the less fortunate in helping the rich," Sullivan preached. "Who knows what may befall us in Alexandria if we take this drastic step?"

Hot Words, Cool Gelato

During the heat of battle on the waterfront small-area plan, Citizens for an Alternative Waterfront Plan co-chairman **Boyd Walker** took aim at city agencies supporting the proposal. This week, those words came back to haunt him.

Wearing his other hat as a businessman, Walker appeared before council members to get a special-use permit to open a gelato shop on Commerce Street. Vice Mayor **Kerry Donley** suggested that Walker take advantage of the services of the Alexandria Economic Development Partnership and the Small Business Development Center — two groups he took aim at in a critical blog post during the heat of battle over the waterfront plan.

"I know that you've made some disparaging comments about those on your blog," said Donley. "But you might want to avail yourself of some of those programs."

"My blog post was probably not appropriate, and I think an apology is appropriate," said Walker after leaving council chambers. "I certainly didn't mean to offend anybody."

Double Offense

Democrats and Republicans are offended. It must be campaign season.

At the end of Tuesday night's City Council meeting, Democratic Councilman **Rob Krupicka** took issue with part of a letter to the editor Republican Councilwoman **Alicia Hughes** wrote recently that criticized the previous council of voting "to knock down hundreds of units of public housing, replacing them with expensive townhomes around the Charles Houston Recreation Center while purportedly advocating for real affordable housing."

"I don't want to comment on why you did it or what your reasons were," said Krupicka. "What troubles me are not only what I can assume are the political objectives of trying to make an allegation like that, which is blatantly untrue, but it also troubles me because this is a city that cares deeply about affordable housing."

Hughes defended her letter, noting that the median household income had increased in the city since 2009.

"To make the statement this evening that the piece or the sentiments expressed therein were motivated by political ambition would be a slightly offensive statement made by you this evening to me," said Hughes. "I don't think it is inaccurate to state that those projects have been torn down, and you drive by there today and what is in place of them?"

— MICHAEL LEE POPE



City officials say the Cummings Turning property would probably be the first development on the waterfront, but until council members approve increased density the developer would be limited to the previous zoning.

Waterfront Upzoning on Hold

FROM PAGE 1

Banks ruled that it did not apply. Because the document under consideration by the City Council was a text amendment to the zoning code rather than a map amendment to the zoning code, they said, a protest petition requiring a supermajority vote was invalid.

"If the individuals properties were coming in for rezoning, of course the protest petition would be applicable under that scenario," said Hamer. "But we made a text amendment to the entire W-1 zone, and so the protest petition does not apply."

HISTORICALLY, THE CITY has adopted changes to the master plan along with zoning changes, so the City Council's decision to move forward with one in the absence of the other is out of step with the standard procedure. When the city was at an im-

passee on the issue earlier this year, Councilman Rob Krupicka suggested the city could move forward with one and not the other. Although Krupicka eventually voted in favor of upzoning the waterfront, he says separating the two won't undermine the vision of the plan.

"The council could easily move forward with implementation of the master plan," said Krupicka. "It does mean that every applicant for any land-use issue would have to come forward for a zoning amendment, but we do that with other small-area plans in the city."

It also means, according to Hamer, that the individual applications for rezoning would be open to the protest petition process. Assuming the same property owners sign again in the future, that would mean a supermajority of six members would be required — unless the challenges are dismissed and council takes the action it intended to take in January.

Safety Tops Play Areas Discussion

City hosts meeting on Holmes Run Trail play areas.

BY NICOLE MACON
GAZETTE PACKET

Alexandria's Department of Recreation, Parks and Cultural Activities hosted a meeting Feb. 23 to discuss proposed improvements to play areas along Holmes Run Trail that would eliminate some play areas while expanding others.

The department's proposal is based on new safety recommendations as well as a Dec. 7 site visit, where staff found failing equipment installed in areas that lacked adequate drainage in the area of Holmes Run Trail in Brookvalley Corridor between Van Dorn and Duke streets.

"What we're trying to do now is correct the situation that was done wrong many years ago," said Jack Browand, acting director for park operations. "The options that we're reviewing are fiscally responsible but also there are areas along [the trail] which we

can do a better job and provide the necessary equipment."

The City is planning a comprehensive renovation to take place over a three-year period that will also involve installing new play equipment.

Any new equipment installed will have to meet 2010 Americans with Disabilities Act standards, landscape architect and certified playground safety inspector Judy Lo said.

Alexandria's 35 city parks are renovated on a schedule based on age and safety measures that need to be addressed, Lo said.

Under this proposal, three out of the six play areas will be eliminated and the equipment will not be replaced. The remaining areas will be expanded to make room for more equipment and to comply with new safety standards that require a minimum of six feet

SEE PLAY AREA, PAGE 5



Polk Elementary School PE teachers Katie Chmura and Nicolas McDonald raise high a check for \$1,000 presented to the school from Fun Run sponsor Sodexo. With them are Sodexo representative Georgia Johnson and MCM race director Rick Nealis.



MCM Fun Run participants from Polk Elementary School celebrate their Healthy School Award Feb. 2. More than 240 Polk students participated in the run, which placed them in the top 5 schools and earned the PE department a check for \$1,000.

PHOTOS BY JEANNE THEISMANN/GAZETTE PACKET

Ooh Rah! Polk students earn MCM Healthy School Award.

BY JEANNE THEISMANN
GAZETTE PACKET

A contingent of Marines from Quantico visited James K. Polk Elementary School Feb. 2 to present the student body with the Marine Corps Marathon Healthy School Award for their record participation in the 2011 Healthy Kids Fun Run.

"This is very exciting," said Principal PreeAnn Johnson. "The students worked so

hard and I am so proud of them."

Polk registered 240 students for this year's race, making it one of the top five selected for the award. Nearly 3,000 students from across the country participated in the one-mile, just for fun race, which took place in the Pentagon North parking lot on Oct. 29, 2011.

"This is our fourth year participating in the race," said PE teacher and race coordinator Katie Chmura. "The kids ran a great race even in the miserable weather."

Students who participated in the race wore their Healthy Fun Run t-shirts to the awards ceremony. MCM race director Rick Nealis and mascot Miles the Bulldog then led the student body in a round of military physical training exercises.

As part of the award, MCM sponsor Sodexo presented a check for \$1,000 to the school and provided healthy snacks for the students.

"We're so excited to be able to buy new PE equipment with this money," Chmura

said "Equipment is so expensive and we desperately need it."

The 2012 Healthy Kids Fun Run, a one-mile run for fun for students ages 5 to 12, will open for online registration at noon April 4 at www.marinemarathon.com. Parents can register children for the event that will be held on Saturday, Oct. 27. Schools or organizations interested in registering groups of students can contact MCM communications coordinator Amy Beaulieu at amy.beaulieu@usmc.mil or 703-784-2357.



MCM mascot Miles the Bulldog greets students at James K. Polk Elementary School.



MCM mascot Miles the Bulldog joins Marines from Quantico in leading Polk elementary students in exercises during the Feb. 2 Healthy School Award ceremony.

OBITUARY

Jack L. London

Jack Leonard "Daddy Jack" London, 86, of Front Royal, Va., died Thursday, Feb. 23, 2012, in a local nursing facility.

Mr. London was born in 1925 in Alexandria, the son of the late Elias Alexander and Olga London. He was a contractor in Virginia. Mr. London was a graduate of George Washington High School. He was a World War II veteran of the United States Navy serving in the Pacific Fleet on the USS Massachusetts.

Surviving are two daughters, Sherri Lynn of Alexandria, Karen K. and husband, Scot of Front Royal; sons, Craig A. London of

Alexandria, Jack L. London and wife Andrea of Virginia Beach; eight grandchildren; six great grandchildren; and sister, Bernice McDonald of Alexandria.

A graveside service with military honors will be conducted at a later date in Arlington National Cemetery, Arlington, Va.

In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made to Disabled American Veterans P.O. Box 14301, Cincinnati, Ohio, 45250-0301. ATTN: Gift Processing or Alzheimer's Association, PO Box 96011, Washington D.C., 20090-6011.

View obituaries and tribute wall at www.ompsfuneralhome.com.

Working To Improve Play Areas

FROM PAGE 3

of a soft surface around equipment to create a safe fall zone. An accessible path for wheelchairs will also need to be installed in all play areas.

Equipment to be removed includes a crawl tube with failing legs and a slide with sharp edges on its hand rail. The department originally planned to renovate the swing set between Brookvalley and Ripley Street, but because the park was awarded an additional \$5,000 Spruce Up grant to add play equipment for pre-school children, the swing set will now be replaced with a newer version.

Some area residents questioned whether some equipment could be repaired rather

than replaced.

"It stretches a little bit [to say] that a piece of equipment is unsafe when certainly a component or one element is not current by today's standards," Holmes Park Committee member Brian Marquis said.

"When there are multiple problems associated with a piece of equipment — the area for which it is in, the maintenance that has to be considered in taking care of it," the equipment has to be removed, Brownard said.

Ideas for new equipment include activity panels, a merry-go-round or a freestanding slide. The city does not yet have an estimate of the total cost of the proposed renovations and new equipment to be installed.




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Police Investigate Assault

Alexandria Police are investigating a burglary and assault that occurred in the 1100 block of Archer Court. Around 8 p.m. on Monday, Feb. 20, a 16 year-old female heard a loud noise at the front door. When she went to investigate, she was confronted by a man who grabbed her and pushed her to the floor. The victim's cell phone rang and the suspect fled the residence. The victim was not seriously injured.

The suspect is described as a Hispanic male in his early twenties, 6'0 to 6'2", weighing approximately 190 to 200 pounds with black hair and a goatee.

Anyone with information about this case is asked to call the Criminal Investigations Section of the Alexandria Police Department at 703-746-6711.

Detectives would like to remind witnesses that they can remain anonymous.

Guilty Plea to Defrauding School

Terence Wilson, 35, of Alexandria, pleaded guilty on Feb. 23 to stealing more than \$250,000 from an Alexandria-based nursing school.

Neil H. MacBride, United States Attorney for the Eastern District of Virginia; David E. Beach, Special Agent in Charge of the United States Secret Service's Washington Field Office; and Earl Cook, Alexandria Chief of Police, made the announcement after the plea was accepted by United States District Judge James C. Cacheris.

Wilson was charged on Feb. 22, 2012, with wire fraud and conspiracy to the commit money laundering, which each carry a maximum penalty of 20 years in prison. Sentencing has been scheduled for May 25, 2012.

In a statement of facts filed with his plea agreement, Wilson admitted to conducting a multi-year scheme to defraud Global Health Nurse Training Services, where he held various financial positions. From August 2008 through May 2011, Wilson caused GHNTS to make at least \$256,000 in unauthorized refund payments to himself and others.

This case was investigated by the U.S. Secret Service and the Alexandria Police Department.

Free Tax Help for Qualifying City Residents

The City of Alexandria is offering free tax preparation assistance to qualifying residents. Taxpayers are eligible if their income is below approximately \$25,000 for individuals and \$42,000 for families. Expert volunteers from Community Tax Aid, Inc. will ensure that taxpayers apply for all applicable credits and deductions; especially the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) and the Child Tax Credit, which people often don't realize they are eligible to receive.

Sessions will be held Saturdays from 9 a.m.-noon and Wednesdays from 6:30 p.m. to 8 p.m., now through April 14 at 2525 Mount Vernon Avenue. Spanish-speaking volunteers are available and electronic filing is available.

The following documentation is required: a picture ID, W-2 forms and other income records, receipts or records for expenses such as child care and education, social security cards or ITIN letters for all family members and if possible, a copy of last year's tax return.

Playground Winners Announced

The Alexandria Childhood Obesity Action Network, Alexandria/Arlington Smart Beginnings, and ACTION Alexandria teamed up to launch the Project Play Spruce Up Grants Competition to help residents improve local playgrounds and ensure that every child in Alexandria has a quality place to play.

Alexandria residents nominated 17 local playgrounds on the ACTION Alexandria website to receive a Project Play Spruce Up Grant to pay for new small equipment, equipment repairs and upgrades, seating and shade trees and other innovative ideas to improve Alexandria playspaces. Two grants of \$5,000 and two

SEE PLAYGROUND, PAGE 8

PEOPLE



Helen Toepffer, Linda and Elliot Blance, Anne Hobbs, Judy Williams and Peter Toepffer.

SOLA's Silver Anniversary Ball

PHOTOS BY LOUISE KRAFFT /
GAZETTE PACKET

Symphony Orchestra League of Alexandria hosted its Silver Anniversary Ball on Saturday, Feb. 25, at the Westin Hotel in Carlyle.
RELATED PHOTOS ON PAGE 9



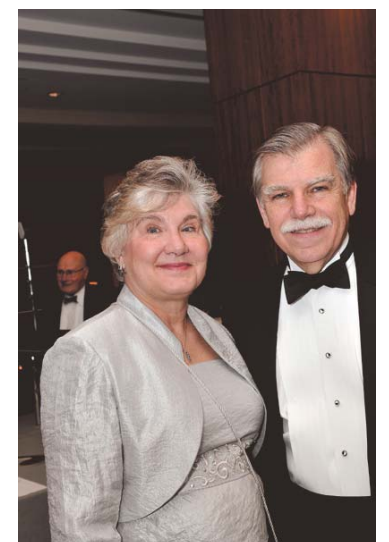
Maestro Kim Allen Kluge, Cassie McLaughlin and Adrian Finley.



Honorary Chair and former state Sen. Patsy Ticer, gala auctioneer Adron Krekeler and Sandrine and Margaret Janowsky.



Gerry Frank and Jeanne Jacob with Joan and John Renner.



Molly Danforth and Steve Colangelo.

Funding in Reverse

Local governments hope state Senate will kill Local Aid to the State Program.

BY MICHAEL LEE POPE
GAZETTE PACKET

In the darkest days of the global financial crisis, leaders in Richmond were willing to do almost anything to balance the budget. So they came up with a creative financing scheme known as Local Aid to the State program. Essentially, it turns the normal flow of money upside down. Instead of sending localities money for schools or social services, the state reaches into the pockets of local governments and extracts millions of dollars.

"It's perverse," said Democratic Arlington County Board member Chris Zimmerman. "It's like the poor stepchild being forced to pay for the wealthy uncle."

This year, the state extracted \$60 million from localities. In the governor's proposed budget, he reduces the program to \$50 million. The House of Delegates passed a budget that reduces the program to \$27.5 million. But the proposal that has local governments all over the commonwealth hopeful has emerged from the Senate, where one proposal eliminates the program altogether. As budget negotiations move toward some kind of resolution at the end of this year's session, a funding level for the Local Aid to the State program must be determined.

"Every level of government is struggling to balance its budget," said Fairfax County Supervisor John Cook (R-Braddock). "At the end of the day, whoever is paying the money gets to make the rules."

UNDER THE BUDGET provision that outlines the program, local governments are given a difficult choice. One option is to elect to take reductions in particular state aid programs such as law enforcement, jail administration, social services or election administration. The other option is for the locality to simply send a check to the state for the amount determined by the Department of Planning and Budget. Critics of the program say local governments don't have the option of refusing to house inmates or asking the state to administer elections.

"These reductions do nothing more than shift state costs to local taxpayers," wrote R. Michael Amyx, executive director of the Virginia Municipal League in a letter to the governor. "There is simply no reason to continue to rely on local governments to fund state mandates and responsibilities."

The budget cuts are not accompanied by any reductions in state-imposed standards or service requirements. And the local governments are not given any kind of additional administrative flexibility to deal with the loss. As the budget negotiations continue this week, local governments across Virginia are hoping to make the case that the state is no longer in an economic freefall. As a result, they'll be argu-



PHOTO BY MICHAEL LEE POPE/GAZETTE PACKET

Local governments from across Virginia send \$60 million a year to Richmond as part of the Local Aid to the State program.

"It's perverse. It's like the poor stepchild being forced to pay for the wealthy uncle."

— Arlington County Board member Chris Zimmerman

ing, the Local Aid to the State program should be reduced or eliminated.

"We have our own needs," said Bernard Caton, legislative director for Alexandria. "If they tell us we have to give money back to the state then all that means is that we have to raise local taxes, so they're just passing the buck."

THE FORMULA for how much money is required from localities is based on how much money is received from the state. Local government leaders across the state say that's a cruel bit of irony. Those localities that have more mental health needs, for example, are required to pay more even though they have more of a need. Whatever the case, it's a way for the state to save money by sending less to the local governments.

"Since fiscal year 2008, Arlington and other localities have contributed toward balancing the state budget through Local Aid to the State," said Patricia Carroll, legislative director for Arlington County. "We applaud the efforts by the governor, House and Senate to reduce those payments and look forward to the time when we are no longer contributing toward balancing the state budget."

The process for creating a budget in Virginia is notoriously murky, a series of deals cut behind closed doors by party leaders in the waning days of the session. This year, however, may be unlike any other in recent memory. The Senate Democrats and

Republicans are at an impasse, unable to find common ground with Republican Lt. Gov. Bill Bolling unable to break the tie. Although the House budget will be considered by the Senate, that's unlikely to pass either.

"The expectation is that the Senate Democrats won't vote in favor of that," said Caton. "So we could go home in another

two weeks with no budget."

One potential silver lining for the localities — if there's no budget this year, there's no Local Aid to the State program because localities haven't received anything. Of course, that also means no money for law enforcement, jail administration, social services or election administration.

"What we're really talking about is budget reductions, but of course they don't want to call it that," said Cook. "So they've created this paper gimmick."

IN SESSION

Hung No More

What happens if a jury finds a murderer guilty but comes to an impasse on sentencing? Virginia is one of the few states that allows juries to sentence criminals, and it's also one of the few states that has this particular problem. The way it works now is that the hung jury in the sentencing phase sends prosecutors back to the square one, calling a new trial and issuing subpoenas to the same witnesses to come back and start all over again.

One bill now making its way through Richmond would change that, allowing courts to impanel a new jury that would consider only the sentencing phase. Introduced by Del. Gregory Habeeb (R-8), the bill has already been signed by the House speaker and the Senate president.

"The difficulties that prompted it are where you have a complicated murder case and it takes you a week to try it and you have all these witnesses who are not particularly happy to testify," said Alexandria Commonwealth's Attorney **Randy Sengel**. "This makes it easier to conclude those cases and having to retry them."

Sengel said the problem has come up in recent years, although it happened in relatively minor property crimes. In other parts of the commonwealth, hung juries have been called in more serious cases such as murder or sexual assault. That's why the Virginia Association of Commonwealth Attorneys threw its support behind the measure this year.

A similar bill passed the General Assembly a few years ago but was vetoed by Democratic Gov. **Tim Kaine**. Republican Gov. **Bob McDonnell** is expected to sign it.

Fighting Traffic

Although he's moved to the other side of the Capitol, state Sen. **Adam Ebbin** (D-30) hasn't given up his fight against human trafficking. As a four-term member of the House of Delegates, Ebbin made the crusade somewhat of a signature issue.

This year, he's back at it — and receiving unanimous support in a fiercely divided General Assembly. Senate Bill 259 requires the Virginia Board of Education to provide awareness and training materials for local school divisions on human trafficking, including strategies for preventing the trafficking of children.

"In other states, there have actually been cases where students have been trafficked on evenings and weekends if you can believe it," said Ebbin. "Sometimes the actual recruiters for this are other girls themselves, hard as that is to believe, and so people like guidance counselors should be made aware of this."

The bill has been passed by the House and Senate and is on the way to the Governor's Mansion.

Guns and Butter

Alexandria Vice Mayor **Kerry Donley** was once the chairman of the Democratic Party of Virginia, and since returning to city politics he hasn't lost his partisan edge. Take this week, for example.

During a discussion of the General Assembly session, Donley took a moment to decry the budget negotiations. Senate Democrats and Republicans are at an impasse, unable to find common ground after a series of high-stakes squabbles about limitations on handgun sales and availability of abortion. As the session winds down, many are starting to believe that legislators will leave Richmond without adopting a budget, a scenario that Donley says will make it difficult for City Hall to calculate its budget without knowing how much state aid it can expect.

"Their inability to do their job makes it harder for us to do our job, and I find that disconcerting," said Donley. "The budget doesn't have anything to do with handguns and it doesn't have anything to do with reproductive rights. Get over it, and get it done."

— MICHAEL LEE POPE

LIVING LEGENDS

A Helping Hand

2012 Living Legend Pat Miller keeps involved.

BY SHERRY WILSON BROWN

If a community is lucky, it includes people who raise their hands when there is work that needs doing. Alexandria Living Legend Pat Miller is the sort of person who raises both hands.

Born in Carroll, Iowa, Pat started life on a farm, the middle child with an older brother and sister and a younger brother and sister. When Pat was in the fourth grade, they moved into “town” where overnight the addition of the seven Millers swelled the existing population of 90. Pat’s father worked at the local farmers’ coop and her mom opened a café. Unlike many youngsters in Alexandria who spend most of their time with children their own age, in Pat’s small town, children of many ages played and studied together. In Pat’s classroom fourth through six graders studied together. This experience may have triggered Pat’s belief in inclusiveness: that bringing everyone together builds a stronger community.

Pat moved to Cedar Falls/Waterloo, Iowa to attend the University of Northern Iowa, the first in her family to go to college. After college, she worked for a television station in Waterloo as the “token” female reporter covering a three-way race for Governor. Eventually she worked in Governor Robert Ray’s re-election campaign and then as Mrs. Ray’s Administrative Assistant and the Assistant to the Governor for Appointments.

Pat then managed various campaigns in the Mid-West, including Ohio statewide issue initiatives, the Mayor’s Race in Kansas City and a Congressional Race in Iowa. These experiences earned her a job at Bailey, Deardourff & Associates political media firm and brought Pat and her husband to Washington, D.C. During this time, she also met Paul Wilson and today works with him at Wilson Grand Communications where a flexible schedule allows her to have a “day job” as his operations director.

While looking for a place to live, Pat and her former husband stayed with Paul and his late wife Kathy, who at the time was Chair of the National Women’s Political Caucus (NWPC). Kathy invited Pat to a NWPC conference and when Kathy mentioned a myriad of tasks that needed doing, Pat, of course, raised her hand to volunteer. Work on issue campaigns followed right up until recently and included Youth e-Vote which set records for national turnout for elections.

Pat’s pick-up truck is a familiar sight in Del Ray. After the death of Kathy, who had become director of the Abracadabra Child Care and Development Center, Pat received one of the strangest requests for using it. Paul’s neighbors had removed two large tree stumps which they offered to Abracadabra’s playground if someone would just move them. Paul and five guys showed up planning to load them into Paul’s car. Eventually, reality set in and Pat got a call asking to borrow her truck. Nothing is too small or strange for Pat to lend a hand.

Another local area for which Pat volunteered was the Avenue Partnership which today sponsors the Del Ray Farmers Market. Given her family background, it is not surprising that Pat took on the role of market manager. She selects the vendors who offer the very best in local produce, flowers, bakery, meats and cheese. Besides offering wonderful shopping, the market is the place to socialize with neighbors and enhances Del Ray’s sense of community.

Pat is an “evolver” who takes an idea to the next level. That is what she did in 1995 with the Del Ray Block Party, now the nationally known Art on the Avenue. A free multicultural art and music festival held on Mt. Vernon Avenue, Art on the Avenue hosts more than 300 artists, food vendors, a children’s stage and three music stages. Pat has included the participation of nonprofit organizations at no cost to staff children’s activities. Pat has made the arts



PHOTO BY JOE BLEACH

2012 Living Legend Pat Miller is an “evolver” who takes an idea to the next level.

an integral part of the music and craft projects. She works tirelessly to raise funds for the event and organizes it each year. Art on the Avenue has brought attention to Del Ray with features on WETA Neighborhoods, in the Washington Post and Washingtonian Magazine.

Another example of Pat’s evolving an idea is the shop created by Pat and her business partner, Maria Wasowski who nominated her for the Living Legend honor. “A Show of Hands” provides a store for local artists who have evolved from selling to acquaintances or traveling to weekend shows and are ready to begin marketing their art professionally. Pat especially enjoys featuring artists who like to come into the store and meet and share with potential customers their enthusiasm for their work.

Pat’s interest in the arts led her to volunteer to serve on the Alexandria Commission for the Arts which she has chaired since 2006. Under her leadership, the Commission has strengthened its emphasis on public art with projects in various stages of creation such as installations at Freedman’s Cemetery, Charles Houston Recreation Center, and the Public Safety Center. She injected a local arts component into the Old Town Festival for the Arts assuring a juried, invitational exhibition of local artists which continued for several years. She also add local performing arts groups to the festival which continues today.

It is not always about the arts. Pat serves on the board of directors for Community Partners for Children, a small nonprofit that conducts Alexandria’s two largest holiday toy and school supply drives for children in need. She joined the board in 2001, was elected co-chair in 2004, and president in 2008. She takes part in all of the organization’s activities from putting out collection boxes, to inventorying items or making deliveries to schools. Her porch has become a popular drop-off point for toys and school supplies.

The Del Ray community has benefited economically from Pat’s dedication. She expanded her work with the Avenue Partnership (TAP) from market master to planning and implementing advertising campaigns and events that attract people to the community and promote its businesses.

Living Legends: The Project

Living Legends of Alexandria is an ongoing 501(c)(3) photo-documentary project to identify, honor and chronicle Alexandria’s Living Legends. The project was conceived by Nina Tisara to create an enduring artistic record of the people whose vision and dedication make a positive, tangible difference to the quality of life in Alexandria.

The 2012 Nominees will be honored at the Meet The Legends receptions on Thursday, March 22 at the Patent & Trademark Office Madison Building. For information and reservations see www.AlexandriaLegends.com or contact AlexandriaLegends@ninatisara.com.

Platinum and Gold sponsors this year are the Alexandria Commission for the Arts, Club Managers Association, Dominion Foundation, Erkiletian Real Estate Development, John McEneaney in memory of Ginny, Renner & Company, CPA, P.C. and the Rotary Club of Alexandria.

This is one of a series of profiles that will appear this year.

In 1996, Pat was named president of TAP. That led to her appointment by City Council as an ex officio member of the Potomac West Alliance Interim Planning Board. When the Potomac West Alliance (now the Del Ray Business Association) was formed, Council unanimously appointed her to an at-large seat and she was elected the first president. She set about setting goals and structuring the new organization which successfully met those goals.

Today, Pat is involved in the Del Ray Business Association’s annual Halloween Parade, the 5K Turkey Trot, and First Thursday. She even finds time to mentor new business owners. One regret is that she sees so many other opportunities for involvement but has to sit on her hands to keep from taking on all of them.

Pat does take a little time for herself. A broken hand has cut down on her time on the tennis courts but she enjoys reading fiction, especially mysteries. She loves country music and finds time for evenings at the Birchmere. To relax, she will tune into the Food Channel but that may be part homework. It helps her keep up with food trends that may show up at the Del Ray Farmers’ Market.

So in gratitude for all the times Pat Miller has raised her hand for Alexandria, Living Legends is pleased to give her a big hand.

Playground Winners Announced

FROM PAGE 6

grants of \$2,500 were awarded based upon the number of votes received on ACTion Alexandria, feasibility, and need and accessibility based upon recommendations from a recent city-wide playspace assessment report conducted by Design Concepts.

The grantees are:

❖ **Sunset Park, 10 Russell Road** — Amount: \$5,000. Improvements: Expand play area at the northwest corner of park and install a minimum of one piece of play equipment appropriate for children ages 2-5 years.

❖ **Brookvalley Park** (Holmes Run Trail at N. Ripley Street) — Amount:

\$5,000. Improvements: Replace swings and install a minimum of one additional piece of play equipment appropriate children ages 2-5 years.

❖ **Lyles Crouch Traditional Academy** (530 South Saint Asaph Street) — Amount: \$2,500. Improvements: Install fence or other barrier type along parking lot. (Note: Fence may require BAR approval or administrative approval). Provide plantings for along the fence that would be community maintained.

❖ **Angel Park, 201 West Taylor Run Parkway** — Amount: \$2,500. Improvements: Install a minimum of two interactive panels appropriate for children ages 2-5 years.

COMMUNITY

Even More Like Home

BY KATHARINE DIXON
REBUILDING TOGETHER ALEXANDRIA

This May will mark Shirley's* 11th year in her Alexandria home. After moving from D.C. to Arlington with her mother and brothers, she found this foreclosed garden condominium and cannot imagine ever leaving the City!

Because Shirley suffers from glaucoma, which leaves her unable to drive, she and her Realtor found a home that was near a bus stop and very convenient to grocery and other shopping stores.

And when the bus route isn't near her destination, she uses the DOT cab service provided by Senior Services of Alexandria. Shirley can easily make her doctors' appointments with this ADA-compliant, door-to-door taxi service.

Before Shirley became vision impaired, she loved to cook and was good at it — the kitchen was her favorite room. Shortly after moving into her condo, one of her sons brought a grill over for a cookout picnic on her balcony. Shirley enjoyed grilling so much that her son bought a grill just for her. As often happens, she hasn't had a cookout since!

Since the years of Shirley's blindness, she doesn't cook as much. Her living room is

now her favorite place to be — it's very cozy, comforting, and has a friendly feel.

Though still spry at the age of 'early 60's,' Shirley can't easily make repairs that her one bedroom condo needs. A few years ago, she applied for free home repairs through Rebuilding Together Alexandria and its core of volunteers. The bathroom and kitchen were updated, and appliances were replaced, some of which had been there since 1965. Improved lighting and safety features were added throughout her home as well, making it more easily for Shirley to navigate.

"It is great that volunteers reach out to help others — that's a wonderful feeling," Shirley states. "I really appreciate the help they give me. The repairs they did make it feel even more like home."

Rebuilding Together Alexandria is an award winning, non-profit organization dedicated to repairing and revitalizing homes at no charge for homeowners in need, including elderly, disabled, military veterans and families. To date, in-kind donations of labor and materials have resulted in \$5.5 million worth of value on more than 1,430 properties. If you would like to volunteer or donate, visit www.rebuildingtogetheralex.org or call 703-836-1021.

** It is Rebuilding Together Alexandria's policy to not disclose full names*



Volunteers distribute Energy Efficient Kits to residents in the Arlandria neighborhood.

Energizing Alexandria

Volunteers from Rebuilding Together Alexandria teamed up with volunteers from the Washington Gas Company and winterized nearly 100 homes in Arlandria and Del Ray back in November. Weather stripping, door sweeps, outlet sealants and caulking air leaks were a few of the tasks undertaken. For clients interested in upgrading their own homes, Energy Efficient Kits were distributed. Supporters of the program included Honeywell, Lowes and Sears.



Washington Gas volunteers Troy Delaney and John Morgan secure weather stripping to an outside doorframe in Arlandria.

PHOTOS BY
LOUISE KRAFFT
GAZETTE PACKET



Washington Gas volunteer John Morgan.



Margherita Woods, ASO Music Director Kim Allen Kluge and his wife Kathryn Kluge.

ASO Ball Patrons Feted

Patrons of the Symphony Orchestra League of Alexandria's (SOLA's) Silver Anniversary Ball were recognized for their generous donations Saturday, Feb. 18 at the home of Arthur Peabody and Lucy Thomson.

SOLA's co-presidents are Sharon Walker and Doris Lindsey.



Ann Corson and husband Jon Jaeger.

PHOTOS BY
SUSAN KNIGHTON CAVANAUGH



Patrons' Party organizer Amy Furr, Roy Snyder and Amy's husband Bill Furr.

NEIGHBORHOOD

Taylor Run

PANCAKE FLIPPING

The first pancake race is said to have been in 1445 in Olney, Buckinghamshire, in England. Apparently Lenten fasting was taken much more seriously in the 15th century and people tried to use up the butter in the house before starting to fast.

Some of the young people at Emmanuel Episcopal Church found out Tuesday night that running a race while flipping pancakes is a lot harder than it looks.

Cappie Stiers organized the cooking of the pancakes by some of the young people of the church — Olivia Barbara, Katherine Conner, Sam Overstreet, and Ian Lloyd. The

church provided carnival-type masks and beads. Present were the Rev. Martha Wallace, the interim rector, the Rev. Bill Doggett, the interim director of Christian education and Linda McGuire, the choir director. Also attending the event were Stewart and Christina Bartley, Ginny and Jim Bradley, Jeanne McMillan, the current seminarian at the parish, Barbara Helsing, George Tuttle and Barbara Harslem. Also enjoying the pancakes and the company were Bucky Mills and Nancy Kuhn, Meredith and Doug Wade, Judy and Tony Brush, the Carpenter family, the Markel family, the Haymes family, the Dresler family, Dakota Kelso Hunt and Lucy Kelso Hunt.

— LOIS KELSO HUNT.

OPINION

Keeping Focused on Economic Issues

BY CHARNIELE HERRING
DELEGATE (D-46)

As Black History Month comes to a close, I believe that we need to reflect on where we are as a Commonwealth and a nation. I am proud to share a slice of black history as the first African American woman elected to represent Northern Virginia in the General Assembly as well as the first woman to serve as Democratic Whip in Richmond. I am honored to support America's first African American president, who is working hard to rebuild the American economy and create jobs in every community.

While Republicans in the General Assembly in Richmond are focused on extreme social issues and are rolling back the hands of time to make it more difficult to vote, Virginians are lucky to have a strong advocate in President Obama. He is committed to lifting up all communities, restoring middle class security, and ensuring that everyone gets a shot at the American dream. We have all benefitted from an economy where everyone does their fair share and everyone plays by the same rules.

I came to Richmond this year with the goal of doing at the state level what President Obama has been fighting for in Washington — helping small business and students. I intro-



RICHMOND REPORT

duced a bill, HB191, which creates an incentive for small businesses to create new jobs by hiring recent graduates of public colleges or universities. Instead, Republicans in Richmond have prioritized invasive medical procedures for women and

talking about their own sex lives.

The 18 small business tax cuts that the President passed put money back in the pockets of nearly two million African American business owners. Over 18 million African American workers have a little extra money in each paycheck thanks to the President's payroll tax cut. We have a Wall Street watchdog cracking down on predatory lending that disproportionately affects minorities in America. And manufacturing, a driving force behind the middle class, has grown under President Obama for the past two years — the first time in over a decade.

Last week, I voted against the Republican-sponsored state budget. It took money from the General Fund, which is supposed to be dedicated to education, public safety, and health programs and put it toward more roads. While I believe in the need to fix our transportation crisis in Virginia, we cannot do so on

the backs of public school children.

On this issue, President Obama's priorities are clear. He has called education equality the "civil rights issue of our time." Education is a critical part of an economy built to last. That's why President Obama expanded childhood education programs like Head Start and doubled the Pell Grant scholarships. He also secured \$850 million in funding for Historically Black Colleges and Universities, which will educate African American students for years to come. A good education made the children and grandchildren of sharecroppers into doctors, lawyers and ministers, and it is necessary to help the next generation continue to prosper.

While my own slice of Black History is just a small piece of the pie, I hope to leave the Commonwealth of Virginia a little better than I have found. It is true that we have more work to do. Minorities were hit especially hard by the recession. But we have come far, and President Obama is making sure everyone has the chance to take part in our recovery. We have leaders like President Obama to thank for our progress as a country.

Charniele Herring (D-46) serves as the House Minority Whip and represents Alexandria City in the Virginia General Assembly. For more information, visit www.charnieleherring.com or on twitter @c_herring.

Inova Leverages Information Technology

BY CHRISTINE CANDIO, FACHE
CEO, INOVA ALEXANDRIA HOSPITAL

Quick — can you name all the medications you've taken in the last six months? How many times a day did you take each medication? How many milligrams was each dose?

Many of us can't rattle off that kind of information at the drop of a hat. However, providing an accurate medication history to a healthcare provider — especially during a medical emergency — is crucial to helping physicians decide on a timely course of treatment that avoids potentially dangerous drug interactions.

For almost a year, Inova Alexandria Hospital has participated in a pilot project with the



COMMENTARY

Northern Virginia Regional Health Information Organization, Inc., (www.novarhio.org) that seeks to eliminate that confusion. Known as MEDS-ED, the project enables our emergency department (ED) personnel to electronically access a patient's medications no matter where in the United States those prescriptions were written. The information is automatically added into the patient's electronic medical record from multiple data sources, then verified with the patient. Armed with timely and accurate information, our ED physicians can

make more effective patient assessments, which may result in faster patient treatment. So far the MEDS-ED project, which is funded by a Commonwealth of Virginia grant, has earned widespread acceptance among our emergency clinicians for its timeliness and improved accuracy, and among our patients whose consent was required for participation. Of the 64,000 patients treated in our ED in the last year, more than 90 percent opted-in to the pilot.

MEDS-ED is the latest example of Inova Alexandria Hospital's long history of setting the standard for emergency medicine. Fifty years ago we were the first hospital in the nation to staff full-time emergency physicians around the clock. Our model, known as the "Alexandria

SEE INOVA, PAGE 12



At its winter luncheon, Board of Lady Managers President Cynthia Puskar presented Inova Alexandria Hospital CEO Christine Candio with a check for \$120,000 to purchase two more anesthesia machines for a total of four new machines from the Board of Lady Managers; \$5010 was also presented for special funds.



At Inova Alexandria

Inova Alexandria nurses Samuel Asamoah and Christine Hortman were presented with scholarships in memory of Vi Saunders, a former Board of Lady Managers member, nurse and volunteer at Inova Alexandria Hospital.

Alexandria
Gazette Packet

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LETTERS

Historic Legacy

To the Editor:

In Washington, D.C., the most famous fresco in America is in the U.S. Capitol rotunda. If you look 180 feet up, you'll see a mural of George Washington rising to the heavens, as if he were a god.

In Alexandria, there is West Point, site of a 1731 tobacco warehouse that was the making of Alexandria. It's where George Washington exported his wheat and tobacco. Occupying that location is Robinson Terminal North and a nearby sign that says "West Point." No mural, no statute, no museum, no history. And coming soon, if the City's waterfront plan is implemented, this location may host a hotel or office building.

West Point is a genuine historical site, surrounded by an authentically historical waterfront—at a time when authenticity is in short supply. The difference between the plan City Council approved on Jan. 25 and the citizens' alternative plan is that the alternative plan celebrates and protects the legacy of George Washington, and the multifaceted waterfront history — as the Capitol building reflects its priorities by showing George Washington ascending to the heavens, in glory, on the dome.

The City Council showed its hand by permitting the development of West Point as a commercial property. The waterfront history and George Washington's legacy deserve

more. Let's go back to the drawing board, and do a better job of stewardship.

Patty Sheetz
Alexandria

Involve More Citizens

To the Editor:

Much has been said about developing a "world-class" waterfront for Alexandria. But what makes a place truly world-class? If one thinks about the types of attractions that stimulate interest in visiting other cities, they tend to be things that are unique to that municipality. It's things like the Liberty Bell and Independence Hall in Philadelphia; or Fort Sumter, the Public Market, and lowcountry cuisine in Charleston; or the Alamo and the River Walk in San Antonio; or cable cars and Fisherman's Wharf in San Francisco.

There is much about Alexandria that is truly unique and already draws visitors from all over the world. We all know this. Alexandria was a major Colonial port; George Washington was a frequent visitor here; our city was once part of the District of Columbia; and we were occupied by Union forces throughout the entire Civil War. And the Torpedo Factory Art Center is a truly visionary repurposing of a waterfront building originally constructed to manufacture armaments. These are the kinds of things that already attract people here. Just watch the crowds following Colonial tours, or visit-

ing Gadsby's Tavern, perhaps to meet with "George Washington," or following "John Carlyle's" funeral procession to the burial ground at the Old Presbyterian Meeting House, or thronging lower King Street during the annual fall art festival. Alexandria can and should do more to capitalize on our unique historic and artistic attractions, and the Potomac River frontage would be a superb place to do this.

Conversely, if one insists on building generic hotels along the river, as the City's plan proposes, our precious waterfront will be condemned to mediocrity. While one does want an attractive hotel as a place to stay when visiting another city, hotels are not generally attractive destinations in themselves. We should not let our city become just another clone like so many other places that have shown no vision in capitalizing on their own natural assets!

The experiences of other cities that have developed their own waterfronts demonstrate conclusively that community support is the key to success. However, Alexandria has singularly failed to enlist citizens in any meaningful way in planning for the Potomac waterfront. If that had actually been the case, the City would not now have a plan that is in limbo because a large number of Alexandrians have signed a petition opposing the City's proposed re-zoning of the W-1 district.

SEE LETTERS, PAGE 13

Inova

FROM PAGE 10

Plan," is now the standard for hospitals nationwide. Today we are also one of the few hospitals in the region to have a full time medication reconciliation technician in the ED.

Now, thanks to NoVaRHIO and its participating organizations, we are laying the groundwork for Northern Virginia's first health information exchange (HIE) in the emergency department setting. The aim is to eventually link all of the nation's budding HIEs in a network for even greater coordination among caregivers. It represents the new paradigm in healthcare, which calls for creating electronic records of all patient data that allows a seamless exchange of patient information for improved outcomes and safety.

Inova Health System is committed to this new model: This year, Inova will launch an integrated electronic medical record system, called EpicCare, that will link a patient's medical information from our five hospitals, outpatient treatment centers and participating community physicians. All sites will go live by July 2013. So no matter which Inova facility you visit, your medical record will follow. It's a strategy that will improve patient care and make us "One Inova" across all of Northern Virginia. It's the future of health! Read more at inovaepiccare.org.



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LETTERS

FROM PAGE 12

Instead of continuing to use taxpayer money to press for development that citizens don't want, the City should send this sorry excuse for a plan back to the drawing board, and this time do the job right. Involve interested citizens in the planning from the outset instead of trying to "tweak" a plan that was fundamentally flawed from the start. Alexandrians care very much about our community and do want to be involved in planning for the future, so the City should give them the opportunity to do so!

Hugh M. Van Horn
Alexandria

What Makes This Vacancy Different?

To the Editor:

An opinion was written by Susan Kellom entitled "Concerned with Vacancy" [Gazette Packet, Feb. 15]. The title is catchy, but the implications of the allegation are inaccurate. It is true that I have not made a formal appointment to BFAAC in 16 months. So what? That's my prerogative as a member of the Alexandria City Council.

According to Mrs. Kellom, BFAAC's budget analysis and yearly report are major vehicles for resident involvement in the budget process." The sound bite implies that members of the public are lining up at BFAAC public hearings to opine on recommendations to give to the City Council on the budget and budget guidance to the City Manager. Untrue. While I appreciate BFAAC's report, BFAAC's work, and my

BFAAC representative's role as a personal advisor on the budget, BFAAC does not control or dictate our budget process and Council hears directly from the public through written communications, in person and at our public hearings. And we each avail ourselves to meet with the City Manager and CFO to discuss budget concerns ... unfiltered.

Mrs. Kellom is entitled to her personal opinion, but she is no more poised to tell me how to run my office as a city councilwoman, including my appointments, than I was to advise her on how to run her affairs as the chair of the Alexandria Democratic Committee, a position that after my election found members of her organization calling publicly for her resignation. When Mrs. Kellom publicly insists that a fellow council colleague of mine, a Democrat mind you, who went without a paid council aide for 10 months or went for months without a BFAAC representative owes the public an explanation, or maybe insists that the tons of unfilled vacancies on other city boards and commissions and even vacancies of city staff that aren't filled ... and for years, once people resign, are filled, then maybe I can take her seriously as an objective concerned citizen.

The fallacy in Mrs. Kellom's opinion is that my voice is missing in the budget process. While not always agreeing, citizens of Alexandria have heard me loud and clear. My voice was loud enough on the first budget in May 2010 that the same resulted, in response to a memo that I crafted questioning a recurring \$30,000,000-plus line item, in a council resolution passed concurrently with the budget that took a hard look on dollars spent on contractual services and consulting. It took more than a year for staff, working

SEE LETTERS, PAGE 14

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LETTERS

FROM PAGE 13

with BFAAC, with my then representative Matt Tallmer, a 15-year BFAAC veteran, leading the charge on the committee and working with staff, to sort out what was being spent. Unsurprisingly, given the media coverage and attention to the matter, everything budgeted in that line item was not spent and we even had a budget surplus. And that is but one example.

Alicia Hughes

Alexandria City Councilwoman

Perfect Storm

To the Editor:

Can you hear it? Can you hear it? I can hear it! It's the perfect storm cascading its way toward Alexandria. You know what? It won't crest here till November as many of the actions "ram-rodged" by this Council over the past several years over the objections of the local citizenry are piling up. In fact the crest may have already arrived with the debacle surrounding the citizens petitions against the waterfront plan. What does a brief look back in history reveal?

It all started in the lame duck session after the 2009 municipal election when a citizen appointed task force led by the most respected Democrat in this city (Dick Hobson) recommended that our municipal election remain in May. Several of the current Council, along with two vindictive lame duckers (Wilson and Lovain), who were soundly defeated in the election, decided to move our municipal election to November.

Citizens in Cameron Station are still complaining about the placing of a Transloading Facility next to a school. All done without an Environmental Impact Statement.

How about the pathetic development taking place in Potomac Yard? Imagine trying to get down

Route 1 with all the new traffic coming out of the Yard.

Needless to say that the BRAC 133 fiasco has caused a real ripple in the west end. The only real winner in that development is Clydes. Everyone else is a loser.

The replacing of the James Bland public housing was the result of the city gaming the system to split the windfall profits with EYA. This has placed the other residents at an economic disadvantage. Wonder why they want out of the historic district?

How about the forcing of BRT and massive development upon the west end residents residing in the Beauregard corridor. Where are all the poorer displaced citizens going to go? Woodbridge?

If all of the aforementioned isn't enough, the city decided to redo the makeup of Arlandria causing a major backlash from its citizens.

The Council has kept the use of eminent domain on the table despite the fact that a citizen-appointed committee recommended no eminent domain be used on the waterfront. After eminent domain is voted upon by the citizens in the November election it will be increasingly difficult to take property for ascetic reasons.

It is very evident that the history of this Council reflects a total disregard for the opinions of the citizenry. Hopefully the citizens throughout the entire city will remember their track record at voting time in November. In the meantime, I had hoped that the Council would have seen the light and voted against the waterfront plan. Unfortunately it didn't happen. The four to five law suits currently lodged against the City reflects a total distrust of the majority of our Council members who unfortunately are advised by a feeble staff.

Townsend A. "Van" Van Fleet

Alexandria

MORE LETTERS, PAGE 24

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Michael Lekas



Louise Devers



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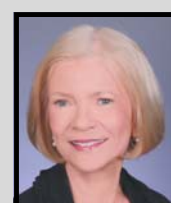
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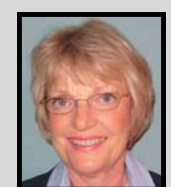


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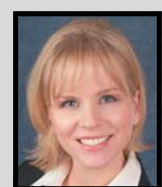
Director's Club \$2-3 Million



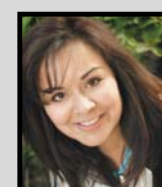
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Georgia McLaughlin &
Patricia Landaeta



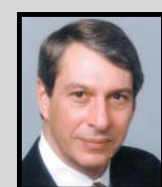
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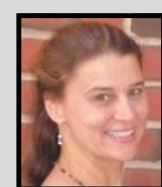
Marcy Covarrubias



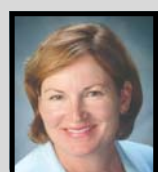
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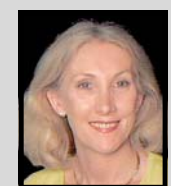
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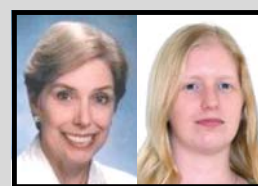
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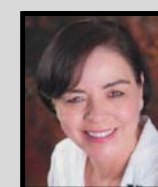
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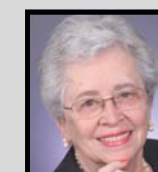
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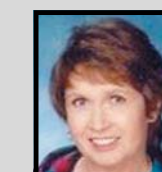
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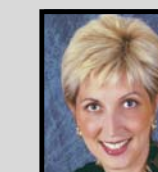
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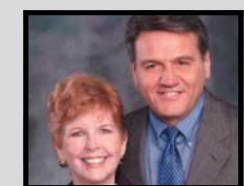
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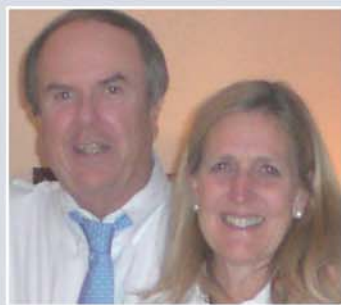
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9020 Old Mount Vernon Rd
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One of the most truly spectacular properties available on market today at any price! Spacious home with top quality renovations from top to bottom. Features amazing open floor plan, dramatic glass walled sun room, brand new gourmet kit, 6 bedrooms, 3 remodeled baths, 2 fireplaces, finished lower level, covered parking for 2, deck. Gorgeous setting! **OPEN SUN 3/4, 1-4! GW Pky S, past Estate; L-Old Mount Vernon Rd.**



OPEN SUN!

JUST LISTED!

9017 Stratford Ln
\$949,000
Totally Expanded and Updated!

Understated elegance - modest front elevation belies stunning expanded interior featuring room sizes and amenities typically associated with new custom homes. Many fabulous features include gourmet kitchen, stunning master suite, hardwood floors, upgraded HVAC system, imported tile and many additional luxurious amenities. No cost was spared in renovation resulting in top of the line brands throughout. **OPEN SUN 3/4, 1-4! GW Pky S, R-Stratford Ln.**



8355 Justin Rd
\$870,000
PERFECTION!

Owner has spared no expense updating this spectacular, spacious Colonial on quiet cul-de-sac in the heart of Mt. Vernon. Fabulous features include: open floor plan, high ceilings, expansive glass window walls, recently updated gourmet kitchen, family room off kitchen, formal living and dining room, office, 2 levels of hardwood floors, stunning master bedroom suite and the list goes on. Truly a remarkable home!



NEW PRICE!

9405 Ludgate Dr
\$2,195,000
Stunning Price Reduction!

Magnificent colonial custom designed to capitalize on views from elevated site overlooking river. Home has approx 10,000 Sq Ft of luxuriously appointed space. Numerous features: 4 finished levels, elegant trim detail, high ceilings, multiple decks & private balconies, fabulous gourmet eat in kitchen, formal dining, 5 fireplaces, elevator. Direct river access.



NEW HOME!

4009 Colonial Ave
\$749,500
New Home - Gorgeous Site!

Pre-construction opportunity - fabulous home by Wakefield Homes on gorgeous half acre level lot on quiet street in the heart of Mt. Vernon. Popular Belle View model with open floor plan, fabulous amenities and quality construction that have made Wakefield Mt. Vernon's leading builder for generations. Exceptional value - priced significantly lower than other new home on street. (Pre-construction picture is of similar house)



8826 Cooper Rd
\$395,000
Country Club Views!

You won't believe this large updated rambler is available for under \$400K! Numerous features include: large 1/2 A + lot, updated kitchen with granite countertops & SS appliances, fully updated baths, thermal windows, large family room w/high ceilings, spacious living and dining rooms, garage & oversize deck. Prime location minutes from Ft. Belvoir.



7006 Stone Mill Pl
\$460,000
Classic

Colonial! - Reasonable Price!

A rare find, reasonably level

CONTRACT!

priced three Colonial in prime location on quiet cul-de-



Colonial!
Custom colonial in enclave of 17 quiet cul-

CONTRACT!

8890 McNair Dr
\$699,000
Pristine Custom

homes on de-sac surrounded by grounds of Mt Vernon



Level!
Builder's own! Exceptionally maintained

SOLD!

2300 Candlewood
\$569,000
Expanded Tri-

large well home for the money! Fabulous property in prime



4200 Kimbree Ct
\$949,000
Updated Custom

Home!
Majestic brick quiet cul-de

CONTRACT!

colonial on -sac in prestigious Oxford the Potomac. Fabulous features include all brick



Exceptionally spacious home - the most largest

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4502 Phylliss St
\$525,000
SUPER VALUE!

Featuring size and room dimensions for the price in the area!



Colonial in pristine cond. & updated throughout! inc: 4 large kit

CONTRACT!

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THEATER

Life's a Beach

Port City shines with 'Dixie Swim Club.'

BY JEANNE THEISMANN
THE GAZETTE

They met long before the phrase “BFF” was part of the American lexicon, but for five college teammates, the comfort and frustrations of “best friends forever” are rays of sunshine in the Port City Playhouse production of “The Dixie Swim Club,” now playing at Alexandria’s Lab Studio Theatre at Convergence.

Written by Jessie Jones, Nicholas Hope and Jamie Wooten, “The Dixie Swim Club” is a glimpse into the lives of the swim team friends as they meet annually at a beach house in the Outer Banks of North Carolina. Over the course of 33 years, babies are born and divorces happen as life’s twists and turns are served up with a heavy dose of Southern hospitality and humor.

“This was a lot of fun to do,” said director Eddie Page following the

Feb. 24 opening night performance. “The playwrights are so talented and the writing so good, although when we first began rehearsals, I did stop and ask myself ‘what have I gotten into with all these women?’”

The colorful cast of characters begins with Sheree (Tina Anderson), the perpetually organized team captain; Lexie (Barbara Hayes), the femme fatale who has been divorced more times than the others have had their nails done; Dinah (Kacie Greenwood), a caustic overachiever who never met a martini she didn’t like; Vernadette (Gayle Nichols-Grimes), the embodiment of every woeful country song ever written; and the perennially sweet and innocent Jeri Neal (Laura Champe Mitchell).

Jones, Hope and Wooten are three of the most widely-produced playwrights in the country and have shaped the script so well its lines would work for radio. Jones



PHOTO BY EDDIE PAGE

Tina Anderson as Sheree Hollinger, Gayle Grimes as Vernadette Simms, Kacie Greenwood as Dinah Grayson and Barbara Hayes as Lexie Richards.

co-authored the Southern-fried funeral comedy “Dearly Departed” while Wooten was a writer and producer on the “Golden Girls” TV series.

But what makes this production shine is its talented cast of actors. As Sheree, Anderson is the glue that holds the group together, while Hayes is spot on in her man-

nerisms and narcissism of the oft-married Lexie.

As Dinah, Greenwood is acerbic with an understated sense of humor and Mitchell is Southern sweetness as eager-to-please Jeri Neal, a nun whose life takes the most surprising turns of the group.

Nichols-Grimes, as the self-deprecating Vernadette, is a riot with

her deadpan delivery of some of the best lines in the show.

“Vernadette is really a lovely character,” said Nichols-Grimes, a WATCH Award-winner most recently seen in the Little Theatre of Alexandria’s production of “Noises Off.” “It’s not often you find a script that makes you laugh out loud and cry at the same time so when Eddie sent this to me, I just knew I had to do it. It was too good to pass up.”

Page, who does double duty as set designer, is assisted by producer Robert Kraus and costume designer Susan Boyd in mounting a funny and poignant production that makes the audience want to dive right in during each of the team’s annual group swims.

With a powerhouse of talent on stage, “The Dixie Swim Club” is a can’t-miss hilarious and touching comedy about BFF friendships that truly last forever.

The Port City Playhouse production of “The Dixie Swim Club” is playing now through March 10 at the Lab Studio Theatre at Convergence, 1819 N. Quaker Lane, Alexandria. For tickets or more information visit www.portcityplayhouse.com.

‘Heaven Can Wait’ Celestial shenanigans at LTA.

BY JEANNE THEISMANN
THE GAZETTE

Joe Pendleton is in for the fight of his life — literally. A professional boxer and pilot, his soul is mistakenly “collected” from his body some 60 years too soon after a plane flight gone awry in the comedy “Heaven Can Wait,” now playing at The Little Theatre of Alexandria.

In playwright Harry Segall’s 1938 classic — the basis for the Academy Award-winning “Here Comes Mr. Jordan” in 1941 and the more recent “Down to Earth” with Chris Rock in 2001 — 23-year-old Joe enlists the help of chief angel Mr. Jordan to find a suitable host body to inhabit for his remaining days on earth.

The hilarious hijinks begin when Joe ends up as Jonathan Farnsworth, a wealthy financier

who has just been murdered by his wife and personal secretary. Even as the devious duo are hell-bent on finishing him off, Joe decides to stick around as Farnsworth long enough to help Bette Logan, a young woman whose father the financier has railroaded into jail.

As Joe, Brandon DeGroat effortlessly maintains the indefatigable pace of a supercharged athlete fond of describing his physical condition as “in the pink.” Cal Whitehurst, meanwhile, is an oasis of calm as the efficient and sophisticated Mr. Jordan and the perfect foil for the spunky Joe.

“There is nothing like a performance here at LTA,” DeGroat said following the Feb. 25 opening night performance. “The community that comes to it, the people that volunteer here and all of the actors make for an incredible experience. This really is my theatre home.”



PHOTO BY DOUG OLMSTED

Colin Davies (Doctor), Brandon DeGroat (Joe Pendleton), Geoffrey Baskir (Passenger), Michael Gerwin (Williams), Geoffrey Brand (Lefty), and John Shackelford (Max Levene).

Shackelford is an engaging jolt of wise-guy panache, playing Joe’s shifty fight manager Max Levene with the dodgy hustle of, well, a fight manager.

“It’s great to be back on stage here,” said Shackelford, who was

last seen in LTA’s “It Runs in the Family.” “This is as professional an experience as you can get in a volunteer organization.”

As Mr. Jordan and his assistant 7013 (Mary Ayala-Bush) struggle to find Joe a body better suited for

his habitation, Joe falls in love with Bette (Melissa Berkowitz) before being finished off as Farnsworth by the murderous duo of his wife Julia (Hanna Wolfe) and her haughty lover Tony Abbott (Steve Lada). Berkowitz in particular effortlessly evokes the innocence of vintage film heroines.

Masterfully directed by Roland Branford Gomez, the production is humorous and employs slapstick and satire to maximum effect. Best at playing with the talking-to-thin-air illusion is Shackelford, who repeatedly steals the show as the understandably befuddled Max.

LTA brings their customary stamp of high production values, talented cast and innovative design to a play that is entertaining for all ages. Heaven may be able to wait but theatre fans only have until March 17 to see this engaging classic.

“Heaven Can Wait” is playing now through March 17 at The Little Theatre of Alexandria, 600 Wolfe St., Alexandria. For tickets or more information call 703-683-0496 or visit www.thelittletheatre.com.

THEATER

MARCH 6 THROUGH APRIL 15

“Brother Russia.” Performances are Tuesday through Sunday evenings, with matinees on Saturdays and Sundays. Tickets are now on sale starting at \$63. Single tickets are available in person at the Signature Box Office or by calling Ticketmaster at 703-573-SEAT. Student discount tickets are \$30 and must be purchased the week of the performance. At Signature Theater, 4200 Campbell Ave. in Shirlington.

FEB. 24 TO MARCH 10

“The Dixie Swim Club.” Port City Playhouse presents a delightful comedy about five women who were on their college swim team and get together for a “girls only” weekend at a cottage on the Outer Banks every summer. Fri.-Sat., Feb. 24-25, March 2-3 and 9-10; Tues., March 6 at 8 p.m.; Sat. matinees March 3 and 10 at 2 p.m. Tickets are \$18 general admission, \$16 seniors & students, \$14 groups of 10+. At The LAB at Convergence, 1819 N. Quaker Lane,

Alexandria. Call 703-838-2880 or www.portcityplayhouse.org.

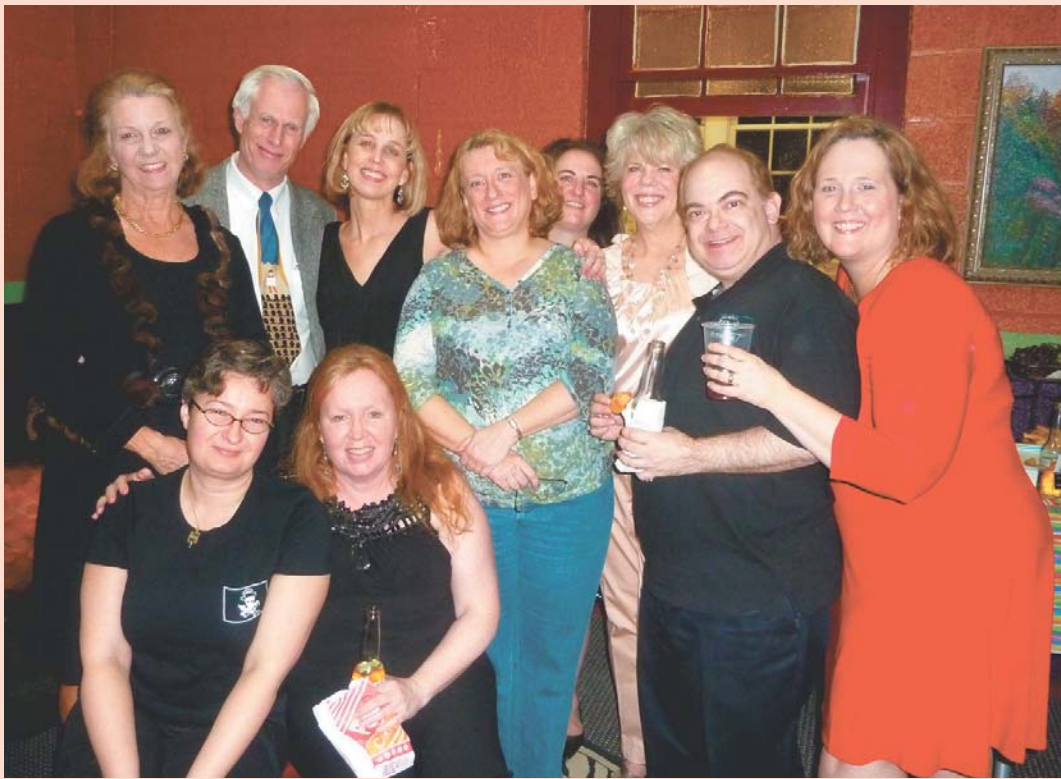
NOW THROUGH MARCH 25

“Really Really.” Showtimes are Tuesdays and Wednesdays at 7:30 p.m., Thursdays and Fridays at 8 p.m., Saturdays at 2 p.m. and 8 p.m., and Sundays at 2 p.m. and 7 p.m. Tickets are \$56 - \$80 and are available by calling Ticketmaster at 703-573-SEAT (7328) or visiting

www.signature-theatre.org. Signature is offering a special “20 Seats for \$20” ticket deal for every performance. At Signature Theatre, 4200 Campbell Ave., Arlington.

FEB. 9 TO MARCH 3

“Genesis Reboot.” Tickets are \$30. Presented by Synetic Theater. Thursdays, Fridays, Saturdays at 8 p.m.; Sundays at 2 p.m. At Crystal City Theater, 1800 South Bell St., Arlington.



PHOTOS BY JEANNE THEISMANN/GAZETTE PACKET
Director Eddie Page (second from left) and producer Robert Kraus (second from right) celebrate with cast and crew from the Port City Playhouse production of "The Dixie Swim Club" following the Feb. 24 opening night performance.

Curtain Up!



Director Eddie Page with Tina Anderson.



Barbara Hayes gets roses from husband Steven at the PCP opening night cast party.



PHOTOS BY JEANNE THEISMANN/GAZETTE PACKET
Mary Ayala-Bush, Brandon DeGroat, Roland Branford Gomez, Cal Whitehurst and John Shackelford celebrate following the Feb. 25 opening night performance of "Heaven Can Wait."



Chanukah Jane Lilburne and Bela Baskir relax in the LTA dressing room minutes before the opening night performance of "Heaven Can Wait."



Brandon DeGroat, center, poses with theater critics Kirsten Obadal and Jordan Wright at the Feb. 25 opening night cast party.

FINE ARTS

NOW THROUGH APRIL 29

Japan's Gift to Nature. Solo exhibit of Oriental Brush Paintings celebrating 100th anniversary of planting of the cherry trees in D.C. Art exhibition at Green Spring Gardens Park, 4603 Green Spring Road, Alexandria. Meet the artist's reception is Sunday, March 25 from 1 to 3:30 p.m. Visit www.Greenspring.org.

NOW THROUGH MARCH 4

Gallery West Presents. The 15th Annual National Juried Fine Arts Competition for 2012. The juror is Edward J. Reed, a critically acclaimed, international-award-winning artist. At Gallery West, 1213 King Street in Old Town Alexandria. Visit www.gallery-west.com.

NOW THROUGH MARCH 23

Artist Raphael G. Nadeem. Artwork of 30 oil paintings and six pencil drawings will be displayed at the 2nd Floor Room 2000, Chet and Sabra Avery Room, City Hall in Old Town. An exhibit opening will be held Friday, March 2 from 6 to 7 p.m. All paintings are for sale. Contact the Alexandria Commission for the Arts, 703-746-5588 or aca@alexandriava.gov.

NOW THROUGH MARCH 22

"A Palette of Paper - the Collages of Megan Coyle." The Center for the Arts, Caton Merchant Family Gallery in Manassas, will feature Alexandria resident Megan Coyle's collage art in a solo exhibition called "A Palette of Paper." Coyle's show will display portraits of people, animals, as well as landscape and cityscape collages.

NOW THROUGH MARCH 18

"City Limits." Featuring acrylic paintings on canvas by Eric Garner of McLean. At The Rachel M. Schlesinger Concert Hall & Arts Center, Margaret W. and Joseph L. Fisher Art Gallery at the Alexandria Campus of Northern Virginia Community College.

NOW THROUGH MARCH 25

Cuba Revisited, 2011. Karen Keating,

member of Multiple Exposures Gallery, will be exhibiting new images from her most recent trip to Cuba, April 2011. Reception is Sunday, March 4 from 12:30 to 2:30 p.m.; Artist's Talk is Thursday, March 15 from 7 to 8 p.m. At Multiple Exposure Gallery, Studio #312.

NOW THROUGH MARCH 4

"An Affair to Remember." Embrace artisan handmade creations made with a little love in February at Scope Gallery in the Torpedo Factory Art Center. Kiln Club show at the Scope Gallery, 106 North Union Street, ground floor, Studio 19, Alexandria. Call the Scope Gallery at 703-548-6288 or visit www.torpedofactory.org/galleries/scope.htm

NOW THROUGH MARCH 11

GA Gardner: Interconnections. Gardner uses the vibrant colors and energy of his native Trinidad and Tobago in his paintings and mixed media works to address our often complicated relationship with mass communication. At The Athenaeum, 201 Prince St., Alexandria.

MARCH 2 TO APRIL 1

20 Years on The Avenue. The 20th Anniversary Committee invites you to celebrate DRA's 20 years on "The Avenue" with past and present masterpieces. This member-only show runs from March 2-April 1, 2012 and will be juried from outside our DRA family of members. Opening Reception for the "XX" show on Friday, March 2, 7-10 p.m. and will feature local jazz band "Veroneau". (www.VeroneauMusic.com). Running March 3- April 1 special exhibits of Del Ray Artisans' history will be featured. Visit www.TheDelRayArtisans.org.

MARCH 5 THROUGH APRIL 4

Winds of Change. Featuring enameled jewelry, wall pieces and bowls. At the Enamelists Gallery at the Torpedo Factory, 105 North Union St., Alexandria. Open daily 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Extended hours on Thursdays til 9 p.m. Call 703-836-1561.

THEATER

Nominees for 2012 Helen Hayes Awards

By JEANNE THEISMANN
THE GAZETTE

Nominees for the 2012 Helen Hayes Awards were announced Feb. 27 with Signature Theatre, Synetic Theatre and MetroStage among the 25 theatre companies nominated in 26 categories.

Signature Theatre received 12 nominations for three productions: "Hairspray," "The Hollow" and "Side By Side By Sondheim." Synetic Theatre's production of "King Lear" received 15 nominations and MetroStage received one nomination for Bernadine Mitchell's performance as Outstanding Lead Actress in a Musical for "His Eye Is On the Sparrow."

Theatre Washington's president and CEO Linda Levy Grossman read the nominations at the National Theatre in Washington and winners will be announced April 23 during the Helen Hayes Awards Ceremony at the Warner Theater.

For a complete listing of the 2012 Helen Hayes Award

nominations, visit
www.theatrewashington.org

SIGNATURE THEATRE

"Hairspray"

- ❖ Outstanding Resident Musical
- ❖ Outstanding Choreography, Resident Production, Brianne Camp, Karma Camp
- ❖ Outstanding Director, Resident Musical, Eric Schaeffer
- ❖ Outstanding Ensemble, Resident Musical
- ❖ Outstanding Lead Actress, Resident Musical, Carolyn Cole
- ❖ Outstanding Musical Direction, Resident Production, Jon Kalbfleisch
- ❖ Outstanding Sound Design, Resident Production, Matt Rowe
- ❖ Outstanding Supporting Actress, Resident Musical, Nova Y. Payton
- ❖ Outstanding Supporting Actress, Resident Musical, Lauren Williams

"The Hollow"

- ❖ Outstanding Lighting Design, Resident Production, Chris Lee

"Side By Side By Sondheim"

- ❖ Outstanding Resident Musical
- ❖ Outstanding Lead Actress, Resident Musical, Nancy Anderson

SYNETIC THEATER

"King Lear"

- ❖ Outstanding Resident Play
- ❖ Outstanding Choreography, Resi-

dent Production, Irina Tsikurishvili, Ben Cunis

❖ Outstanding Costume Design, Resident Production, Georgi Alexi-Meskhishvili

❖ Outstanding Director, Resident Play, Paata Tsikurishvili

❖ Outstanding Ensemble, Resident Play

❖ Outstanding Lead Actress, Resident Play, Ira Koval

❖ Outstanding Lead Actress, Resident Play, Irina Tsikurishvili

❖ Outstanding Lighting Design, Resident Production, Andrew F. Griffin

❖ Outstanding Set Design, Resident Production, Phil Charlwood

❖ Outstanding Sound Design, Resident Production, Irakli Kavsadze,

Konstantine Lortkipanidze

❖ Outstanding Supporting Actor, Resident Play, Ben Cunis

❖ Outstanding Supporting Actor, Resident Play, Chris Dinolfo

❖ Outstanding Supporting Actor, Resident Play, Philip Fletcher

❖ Outstanding Supporting Actress, Resident Play, Mirenka Cechová

❖ The Robert Prosky Award for Outstanding Lead Actor, Resident Play, Irakli

METROSTAGE

"His Eye is On the Sparrow"

- ❖ Outstanding Lead Actress, Resident Musical, Bernadine Mitchell

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ENTERTAINMENT

THURSDAY/MARCH 1

Frank Lloyd Wright Lecture. 7 p.m. at The Lyceum, 201 S. Washington St. Alexandria. Two homeowners discuss the experience of living in Wright-designed houses. Sponsored by Woodlawn/Pope Leighey, Historic Sites of the National Trust for Historic Preservation. Ticket information: popeleighey1940.org.

Gala Benefit. 7 to 10 p.m. Tickets are \$125. Featuring “Mad Men” theme celebrating the style and sophistication of the 1960s. With a Silent Auction, a Mini Raffle, “Be A Star” station where patrons can buy gifts that benefit the Center, and a Cocktail Buffet. Hosted by the Center for Alexandria’s Children, a child-friendly facility that protects children and strengthens families by coordinating the investigation, prosecution, treatment and prevention of child abuse and neglect. At Virtue Feed and Grain, 106 South Union Street, Alexandria. Visit <http://madforalexandriaschildren.eventbrite.com>.

FRIDAY/MARCH 2

David Bromberg Quartet. 8 p.m. **Indie Singer-Songwriter Marye Lobb** will be the opening act. Bromberg will perform from the new CD, Use Me. At The Birchmere, 3701 Mt. Vernon Ave., Alexandria. Call 703-549-7500.

Mardi Growl Gala. 7 to 10 p.m. The Animal Welfare League of Alexandria (AWLA) is hosting its 2012 Mardi Growl Gala and fundraiser at the Terminal A at Reagan National Airport. Last year’s event raised \$80,000 for the League. The proceeds from this event provide for thousands of animals throughout the year. Becky’s Pet Care is giving away two tickets and a parking pass. Anyone is eligible to win. Enter by going to Facebook ([facebook.com/beckyspetcare](https://www.facebook.com/beckyspetcare)) and write on the wall saying you would like to enter the Mardi Growl ticket raffle. Or send an email to Jenny@beckyspetcare.com. For details, visit www.AlexandriaAnimals.org/MardiGrowl.

MARCH 2-3 AND 9-10

“Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat.” Tickets are \$5. Show times are March 2, 9, 10 at 7:30 p.m.; Matinee on March 3 at 2 p.m. At St. Stephen’s & St. Agnes Upper School, Chapel/Performing Arts Center, 1000 St. Stephen’s Road, Alexandria. Visit www.sssas.org/arts.

MARCH 2, 3, 4

“Once Upon a Mattress.” Tickets are \$5. Sandburg Middle School presents the musical version of the fairy tale, “The Princess and the Pea.” Friday, March 2 at 7:30 p.m.; Saturday, March 3 at 7:30 p.m.; Sunday, March 4 at 2:30 p.m. At Carl Sandburg Middle School. Call 703-799-6241.



MARCH 2, 3, 4

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MARCH 2 TO APRIL 1

20 Years on The Avenue. The 20th Anniversary Committee invites you to celebrate DRA’s 20 years on “The Avenue” with past and present masterpieces. This member-only show runs from March 2-April 1, 2012 and will be juried from outside our DRA family of members. Opening Reception for the “XX” show on Friday, March 2, 7-10 p.m. and will feature local jazz band “Veroneau”. (www.VeroneauMusic.com). Running March 3- April 1 special exhibits of Del Ray Artisans’ history will be featured. Visit www.TheDelRayArtisans.org.

SATURDAY/MARCH 3

Used Book Sale. Noon to 4 p.m. At John Marshall Library, 6209 Rose Hill Drive, Alexandria.

Chamber Music Concert. 7:30 p.m. Featuring music of Mozart, Schumann, Ravel and Brahms. At St. Luke’s Episcopal Church, 8009 Fort Hunt Road, Alexandria.

One God Ministry Church Grand Opening. 10 a.m. to noon. At new Alexandria building location at 6318 Grovedale Road, Alexandria. Visit www.onegodministry.org.

Fun Dog Show. Presented by Barkley Square. Email grayson@karingbykristina.com to receive the official sponsorship form. In the Market Square in Old Town Alexandria.

MARCH 3 TO 18

March Madness. Features 200 panels of artwork each \$150, a free kids art activity on March 3 from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m., and the Art Party on March 16, from 7-10 p.m., featuring prizes, music, food drinks and more. The Art Party will be located in the main hall of the Torpedo Factory Art Center, outside of the Target Gallery. Cost is \$15/advance; \$20/door. Visit www.torpedofactory.org/marchmadness.

MARCH 3 AND 4

26th Annual Jazz & Tap Dance Festival. Saturday at 8 p.m.; Sunday at 4 p.m. At Northern Virginia Community College. Tickets are \$20 in advance and \$22 at the door. Performers include Encore Performers, Center Stage Dance, Capitol Movement, Impulse, and MYTE. For tickets and information, visit www.dujdc.org.

SUNDAY/MARCH 4

YoKid Yoga Challenge. 2 to 4 p.m. The challenge is open to kids of all ages, adults, and families. No yoga experience is required. Suggested donation: \$20 for adults; \$5 for kids ages 5-17, or the whole family can participate for a \$20 donation. At the Cora Kelly Recreation Center, 25 West Reed Avenue, Alexandria. Register online at www.yokid.org.

Playing Against Type. 2 p.m. The Marine Chamber



Adhana Reid as the Narrator and Matthew Mirliani as Joseph in St. Stephen’s & St. Agnes School’s upcoming production of “Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat.”

MARCH 2-3 AND 9-10

“Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat.” Tickets are \$5. Show times are March 2, 9, 10 at 7:30 p.m.; Matinee on March 3 at 2 p.m. At St. Stephen’s & St. Agnes Upper School, Chapel/Performing Arts Center, 1000 St. Stephen’s Road, Alexandria. Visit www.sssas.org/arts.

Orchestra performs. At the Rachel M. Schlesinger Concert Hall and Arts Center, NVCC, 3001 North Beauregard St., Alexandria.

BINGO Fundraiser. 1 to 4 p.m. The West Potomac All-Night Graduation Celebration committee is holding a BINGO fundraiser from 1 to 4 p.m. At Belle View Elementary School, 6701 Fort Hunt Road, Alexandria. Email westpoANG2012@gmail.com with questions.

MONDAY/MARCH 5

Dinner Meeting. 6:15 p.m. The R.E. Lee Camp will host its Dinner Meeting at the American Legion Post 24 Hall, 400 Cameron Street at N. Royal St behind Gadsby’s Tavern, Alexandria, and the cost to attend the dinner meeting is \$25 per person. Nicholas Ward will speak on the topic of the battle of the Ironclads, the USN Monitor and the SCN Virginia. RSVP to Mr. J.J. Smith at 703 299-1725. Checks should be made out to R.E. Lee Camp #726 and mailed to 401 Wilkes St., Alexandria. Payments will be accepted at the door. Visit www.leecamp.org.

TUESDAY/MARCH 6

The Peculiar Insurrection. 6 p.m. Free. Morrison House Presents: Michael Lee Pope, Author of “Hidden History of Alexandria, D.C.” He will discuss the days when Alexandria was part of the District of Columbia and the events that led to the eventual return of Alexandria to the Commonwealth of Virginia. At Morrison House, 116 South Alfred Street, Alexandria. Visit www.morrisonhouse.com.

Swing Dancing. 9 to 11 p.m. Admission is \$10. With the Tom Cunningham Orchestra. At the Carlyle Club, 411 John Carlyle St., Alexandria.

WEDNESDAY/MARCH 7

Big Trees All Around Us. 7:30 p.m. A presentation by the Friends of Dyke Marsh, co-sponsored by the American Horticultural Society. Greg Zell, Arlington County’s Natural Resource Specialist, will conduct a visual tour of some of the big trees and discuss tree conservation. At Huntley Meadows Park Visitor Center, 3701 Lockheed Blvd., Alexandria; call 703-768-2525. Visit Friends of Dyke Marsh website: www.fodm.org
National Nutrition Month and You. 10:30 a.m. Presented by the Senior Citizens’ Resource Center. At Inova Alexandria Hospital, 4320 Seminary Road, Alexandria. Visit www.seniorservicesalex.org or call 703-836-4414.
Musician Ruthie Foster. Will celebrate the release of her new CD, Let It Burn. At the Birchmere, 3701 Mount Vernon Ave., Alexandria. Tickets are available at www.ticketmaster.com or call 800-745-3000 or call 703-549-3701.

THURSDAY/MARCH 8

Ten Thousand Villages Celebrates Women in March. The store at 915 King Street in Old Town Alexandria will donate 15 percent of its sales to the Alexandria Domestic Violence Program. In honor of International Women’s Day. The store is

opened 11 a.m. to 7 p.m.

2nd Thursday Art Night: Child’s Play. 6 to 9 p.m. The Torpedo Factory hosts the launch of Minds Wide Open: Virginia Celebrates Children and the Arts with an evening of gallery receptions, fun activities, live music by local teen Keira Moran, and more. At the torpedo Factory Art Center, 105 N. Union St., Alexandria. Visit www.torpedofactory.org or call 703-838-4565.

Bob Sima. 7 p.m. Poet, observer, scribe, and sometimes reluctant healer all bundled up into one singing/songwriting bundle of energy. At the Athenaeum, 201 Prince St., Alexandria. Call 703-548-0035 or visit nvfaa.org.

FRIDAY/MARCH 9

Artisan Beer Tasting and Silent Auction. 6:30 to 9 p.m. Tickets are \$50. At the Campagna Center. If you wish to pay by check, mail to: The Campagna Center, Attn: Lee Stenberg/NN Event, 418 S. Washington St., Alexandria, VA 22314. All proceeds benefit New Neighbor’s ESL and Family Literacy Programs.

Wine and History. 6:30 p.m. The Mount Vernon Inn’s inaugural wine dinner, A Well-Stocked Cellar: Dinner and Wine Tasting at Mount Vernon, begins with a private reception and remarks from Mount Vernon staff. Following the reception, guest will move up to the Mansion for a private tour that includes Washington’s cellar. Concludes with a special four-course dinner at the Mount Vernon Inn with historic commentary between courses from Mount Vernon staff. Tickets are \$110 and include tax and gratuity. Available beginning Feb. 1 through www.MountVernon.org or 703-780-2000.

SATURDAY/MARCH 10

House Storybook. 11 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. The Alexandria Black History Museum is offering a fun activity to help kids tell stories about a favorite house or building. Local artist and writer Sushmita Mazumdar will hold a workshop for children ages 6 through 12; adult family members are welcome to join in. Sushmita will show how she makes books that are houses for all kinds of creatures and all kinds of stories. Then kids will learn how to make their own “House Storybook.” At the Alexandria Black History Museum, 902 Wythe Street, Alexandria. Visit www.alexblackhistory.org. Call 703-746-4356.

Art Auction. 8 p.m. Free. The Art Auction features original works of art by Rob Vander Zee and twenty-five local Washington, D.C. artists known as the Vander Zee Gallery Painters. At Vander Zee Gallery, 105 S. Lee St., 3rd Floor, Old Town Alexandria. Visit www.vanderzeeart.com/artauction.

Trace Your Civil War Ancestor. 1 p.m. Cost is \$10. Learn how when experts from the National Archives and Records Administration present “Tracing Your Civil War Ancestor” at Fort Ward Museum, 4301 West Braddock Road, Alexandria. Call 703-746-4848 to make reservations. Visit www.fortward.org.



The St. Patrick's Day Parade will be Saturday, March 3 at 12:30 p.m.

Alexandria St. Patrick's Day Parade

The 31st Annual Alexandria St. Patrick's Day Parade will take place on Saturday, March 3 at 12:30 p.m. in the heart of Old Town Alexandria. The parade will start at the corner of King St. and Alfred St., and proceed East down King St. to the corner of King St. and Lee St.

"Our Alexandria St. Patrick's Day Parade falls very early in March this year, and we know it will be a wonderful way for the thousands of spectators who view the parade every year to kick off their celebrations of Irish American Heritage Month," said Pat Troy, Ballyshaners Chairman and Parade Master of Ceremonies.

This year's parade will be lead by co-Grand Marshals Tom and Melinda Mooney, who are the proprietors of the Murphy's Grand Irish Pubs in Alexandria, Washington, D.C., and Virginia Beach. The Mooneys are long-time supporters of Irish-American activities in the Northern Virginia area.

As always, the parade will feature more than 100 units, including groups celebrating their Irish heritage, marchers from the military services, Irish dancing schools, bagpipe bands and other Alexandria community groups.

In addition to the parade, festivities will include a Classic Car Show, held on Pitt St. between King and Cameron Streets beginning at 10 a.m., and a Fun Dog Show held in Market Square, beginning at 10:30 a.m.

All events are free to the public. Parade organizers suggest using Metrorail to the King Street Metro stop, and walking 10 minutes East on King Street to the Parade Route.

All events are sponsored by the Ballyshaners – Gaelic for "Old Towners". A not-for-profit group, the Ballyshaners' goal is to promote and preserve Irish heritage through sponsorship of the Alexandria St. Patrick's Day Parade and the Alexandria Irish Festival, held every summer.

NOW THROUGH MARCH 23

Artist **Raphael G. Nadeem.**

Artwork of 30 oil paintings and six pencil drawings will be displayed at the 2nd Floor Room 2000, Chet and Sabra Avery Room, City Hall in Old Town. An exhibit opening will be held Friday, March 2 from 6 to 7 p.m. All paintings are for sale. Contact the Alexandria Commission for the Arts, 703-746-5588 or aca@alexandriavirg.org.

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LETTERS

Just Want Fair Elections

To the Editor:

We all agree that a secure system to protect the integrity of the voting process is essential to maintain our republic. Those who oppose requiring a photo ID at the poll as the best means must suggest effective ways to protect our right to a fair election. A photo ID is not expensive; even Alexandria high school students on welfare manage to find the money for a driver's license with a photo ID. With minimal planning, civic and charitable groups/volunteers can take the elderly to get photo IDs. No new bureaucracy needs to be created.

A provisional ballot is not less legitimate than one immediately cast; it just needs to be validated. It will be counted when it is shown to be legitimate. The alternative would be to allow questionable ballots to be counted and violate any balloting security procedures.

Is there a need for improved voting security procedures?

A new Pew study found more than 1.8 million dead people registered to vote, but Democrats fiercely oppose new laws to tighten voting requirements. The Pew report found 51 million people who are eligible to vote are unregistered, and 24 million registrations are "no longer valid" or are "significantly inaccurate."

Other pertinent facts: The U.S. Supreme Court in 2008 found no evidence of voter suppression in a ruling upholding Indiana's photo-ID law. A federal judge in Georgia appointed by Jimmy Carter also found no evidence of voter suppression under Georgia's photo-ID law. In fact, minority participation actually rose sharply in subsequent elections.

A Chicago community organizer in the 1980s and early '90s, Barack Obama litigated cases and conducted training sessions for the Association of Community Organizations for Reform Now (ACORN). It hatched the 1993 Motor Voter law, which has significantly weakened accountability and invited voter fraud. Many voters remember that 70 ACORN officials have been convicted of voter registration fraud in a dozen states since the 2008 election, and a 2009 House committee report suggested that as many as one-third of the registrations the group generated were fraudulent. Remember the prostitute and the pimp episode in an ACORN office caught on film?

Mr. Obama even put a hold on former Justice Department attorney Hans von Spakovsky's nomination to the Federal Election Commission over Mr. von Spakovsky's "quixotic attempts to attack voter fraud" in defense of Georgia's photo-ID law.

To those who say trouble couldn't happen here, I offer the following. When I was a volunteer at Fire House #3 in Alexandria, Democrat partisans body blocked me and other Republicans who tried to offer voters pouring off chartered buses a copy of a Republican sample ballot. To those who reached for one, the Democrats said, "If you take a Republican ballot, you cannot come to our party." The result was that no one took our sample ballots. When I reported this,

party officials said it was useless to complain because the Democrats controlled City Hall.

I repeat: We all want a fair and efficient registration process and secure elections. What constructive suggestions do folks who oppose using a photo ID have?

Ellen Latane Tabb
Alexandria

Dense and Impervious

To the Editor:

Normally, the terms "dense" and "impervious" refer to inanimate objects — things that are dead. However, they can also refer, entirely accurately, to human beings who are dead to what surrounds them. This strange phenomenon has made its full-fledged appearance at City Hall, where it has chiefly characterized the waterfront development fiasco. I would like to be kinder, but that luxury is not supported by the verifiable track record of a cynical public process, ramped up misinformation campaigns, and as Bert Ely has so accurately put it "a plan that is nothing but a marketing plan for hotels on the river."

From the start the Democratic machine has been as densely wound and impervious as its city representatives. The nuts, screws, and balls are winging right along on a pathway strewn with platitudes, sound bites, serious gaps in key information and a group of people who abandon the dais and pop peanuts while constituents speak. One was noticed to glance up with a look in his eye that seemed to say "haven't they gone home, yet." In fact, the mayor scheduled a business trip that coincided with an important vote on the contentious waterfront issue. In a stunning display of power one councilman, after the "rules on expanding a Montessori school" were handed down by the City, told the group of earnest parents that should there be any disagreements on street blockage etc. — they should work it out among themselves sans cite.

President Obama and Secretary of State Clinton make sure we spend hundreds of millions of dollar a year bringing democratic process, dialogue, and equity in crafting policy positions to countries around the world. Given the amazing show of arrogance, bullying, fact twisting, and simple incompetent in the once in a century development of the waterfront, you would think President Obama's example would be one we strive to emulate. Perhaps we need a grant for a refresher course in governance and democratic ideals. Right now city irregularities are being taken care of through a system of internal monitoring — this bears resemblance to the already too tight network of committees and commissions that are city appointed to "oversee" and ensure that city recommended programs and procedures might be rocketed past citizens. Hmmm.

Given today's very low level of public trust of the city, as evidenced by the number of lawsuits, can we really afford to trust multi-million dollar projects to a tightly wound, well-oiled city machine? Riding on President Obama's coattails in the Fall elections won't save those whose decisions clearly run against their constituents' opinions. Personally, I will

once again work on the Obama election campaign ... but I will not mark my ballot for those local officials who have so cavalierly treated those who entrusted them with good governance of the City of Alexandria ... regardless of party. The waterfront is my guide.

Kathryn Papp

Critical Traffic Data Needed

To the Editor:

Alexandria has a charming historical ambience where every remaining cobblestone has a tale to tell. In 1748, a young surveyor, George Washington, made an unofficial map of this very neighborhood. A year later another surveyor John West, Jr. was hired to lay out the town. There were originally 60 acres in this hamlet of Alexandria which were divided into 84 one-half acre lots. Three streets were oriented north-south along the Potomac and seven streets running east and west. While the city has expanded greatly, the 18th century street grid layout has basically remained unchanged.

Our 21st century lifestyle has placed serious demands on our narrow streets designed for the horse and buggy. Traffic congestion has been unbearable at times particularly at the intersection of King and Union Streets. Parking in the core area along the waterfront and many blocks inland is often extremely limited and frustrating to visitors and residents. We are already at the tipping point of urban traffic gridlock.

If the maximum density development described in the waterfront plan becomes a reality, with the two 150-room hotels, restaurants, retail establishments and residences, there will be daily influx of an additional several thousand vehicles on our already clogged streets. Where will they park? How will they arrive? This will definitely impact our quality of life in a negative way not to mention the deleterious effect on neighboring property values.

I am deeply disappointed that a Union Street traffic analysis with an integrated comprehensive parking study weren't completed well in advance of the decisions on the Alexandria Waterfront Plan. Not knowing this critical information has exacerbated an already contentious situation.

Al Kalvaitis
Alexandria

Consider Easy Fixes

To the Editor:

As a practical matter, the much promoted waterfront plan passed by City Council in January and reaffirmed by a second reading vote on Feb. 25, is on the shelf until legal issues are resolved. The question of whether the Council actually took a legally binding vote in January must be decided either at an upcoming Board of Zoning Appeals hearing in April or in Circuit Court.

I want to suggest some things the city government could do now to make the waterfront more vibrant and attractive. I attended the first meeting of the planning

process, the one held in the cafeteria of T.C. Williams. At that meeting, we were given equal numbers of red and green dots to place on a waterfront map. Red dots stood for dislike. By far the largest number of red dots was affixed to the food court.

Despite this clearly stated preference to do something about the food court, city staff did not discuss this at the next meeting or any subsequent meetings. I know because I attended all of them. Planning staff has said there are ways to improve the connectivity, non-existent today, between the plaza behind the Torpedo Factory and Founders' Park. I am not clear what those might be.

If the food court were entirely demolished, the more open plaza would provide a view of Founder's Park and easy connectivity to it. Alternatively, the food court could be remodeled in ways that would make it more inviting and open. Instead of a building with four walls, it could become a pavilion with stalls selling prepared food, crafts or even vegetables and flowers. Either alternative would be better than what we have today.

The city owns the food court building. Negotiating with the long-term leaseholder should be easier than negotiating with the Old Dominion Boat Club, whose property the city does not own. Something can and should be done about that building now while it is standing there empty and useless to everyone.

Then there is the matter of the one truly derelict building on the waterfront — the Beachcomber, right at the river's edge at the foot of Prince Street. This property is owned by the city. The history plan recommends saving it and a structural evaluation of the building determined that it is sound. Yet there it sits looking really awful and surrounded by a chain link fence — the property of the city.

The city could start tomorrow to restore the exterior of that building. It could have the façade it had when it was a popular dining choice with a river view in the 1940s. After that, it could be leased to a restaurant and the lessee could redo the interior or it could become the home of a public use such as a small museum. Either plan would greatly improve the ambience of the waterfront. Of course, the chain-link fence should be removed at once along with the asphalt parking lot it encloses. That area could be replanted with a simple lawn — a big improvement at a relatively small cost.

These projects could have come before rezoning the waterfront for higher density. Instead of looking first to simple fixes for underused or unattractive city-owned properties, the Council majority insisted on an unpopular course of action, which may in the end come to nothing. This was a very unfortunate choice for the city. We need to turn away from that and start thinking about doing things on the waterfront that residents and tourists could enjoy at little cost to the taxpayers and with no harm to the quality of life of nearby residents.

Katy Cannady
Alexandria

LETTERS

What's Best For All Residents?

To the Editor:

Recently I was struck by a comment from Al Cox, Alexandria's preservationist concerning the rebuilding of the historic chapel at the Virginia Theological Seminary. His quote: "The board has been bending over backward to respect the needs and the goals of the seminary and seminary is trying to respect the board's charge and authority," Cox said. "I do think [the project] is a good example of a different way to experience preservation in Alexandria. You don't have to restore it and have it try and be what it was before if what it was before doesn't serve you today. Preservation is not supposed to be putting things under a bell jar. We're not a museum; we're a living city."

I am mentioning this, in relation to the City's Waterfront Plan and to the opponents of that plan. We're a living city, not a museum. The waterfront is a valuable asset to the entire community, one that all Alexandrians should be able to enjoy. The City has obligations to follow the law in providing services for the community. These services and laws have been built in place over a long period of time, with constant review to see if they fit current demand. Of course, demand for city services is not uniform across the jurisdiction. That is why we elect Council members, requiring that they have the ability to process all of the input, distill it and make a decision as to what city government will provide the citizenry, at an acceptable cost. The duty of elected officials is to listen to citizens, then vote on the appropriate use of resources to respond to those requests. They also use their position to distill staff analysis to craft where they feel the all citizens want and what will be the best City contribution to their lives. In order to accomplish this effectively, inputs from outside Alexandria are also important, and analysis of these inputs are critical to the decision process. Council and staff have done this effectively for many years. We do not live on a remote island.

The Feb. 25 Council meeting, which should have been a procedural vote to move the already decided Waterfront Plan along, turned into a session of re-litigating the Plan. Now, some of the members of the opposition group have an appeal pending to the Zoning Board and Circuit Court, which is their right and properly so. When this decision is made, we will all know what the next steps will be. But Saturdays' Council session was also illuminating on clarifying just what the opposing citizens want. It appears that they have given up on the idea of the City purchasing these properties for parks. The expense is entirely out of the question. They are now faced with by-right under current zoning producing residential and/or offices, or losing the battle against the zoning issue allowing hotels. Even though many studies show that hotels result in less traffic and parking than residential or offices, it appears, even though they rail against potential parking and traffic issues, they prefer the office and residential to hotels. This has to leads to the conclusion that they would rather have parking

and traffic issues as opposed to more visitors to the parks along the riverfront. One can see that if Harborside and Fords Landing are duplicated at the disputed sites, the riverfront would be a private area and not a welcoming place for Alexandrians to visit. In other words, what would function like a gated community is preferable to them.

Is this in the best interests of all Alexandrians? No. The waterfront is a unique area that cannot be gated from all Alexandrians. I realize that the citizens living near the waterfront deal with issues most other neighborhoods do not, just like citizens in other urban areas. Addressing their concerns on parking and the behavior of a few is something all will support, but not at the expense of a viable waterfront for all Alexandrians. As one of the speakers said on the Council meeting, why do we need a world class waterfront?. I'll give you two reasons. First in order for Alexandria to be economically viable in the future, revenue producing assets need to be looked at and incorporated into our plans along with preserving what is best in our City. Second, the waterfront is a unique area for all Alexandrians, not a gated community for the few citizens that live close by.

Dennis Auld
Alexandria

Matter of Humanity

To the Editor:

In a recent edition of your newspaper, reader Dino Drudi took Del. David Englin to task for referring to an unborn child as a "baby" rather than as a "fetus" because "fetuses have no legal standing."

We all should hope that no amount of Orwellian social engineering by big government and its enthusiasts will ever be enough to cause us, politicians included, to check our humanity at the door.

Imagine, if you will, a grieving mother-to-be who has miscarried and her equally distraught husband informing their family and friends, "We lost our fetus." Would anyone even want to know such people?

Jack Lichtenstein
Alexandria

Contributing \$148 Million

To the Editor:

Recently, in haste to approve another redevelopment proposal, the City Planning Staff briefed both the Alexandria City Council and Planning Commission on the Beauregard Small Area Plan Working Draft. The 161-page working draft had been released three weeks earlier and public comments were only beginning to trickle in. The Beauregard Small Area Plan continues to be fast-tracked raising the possibility of being approved by this City Council prior to the November City Council elections. Support for the plan is partially based on developers paying for a laundry list of items that will entice support and appease citizens.

The City's argument for approving the

plan is that developers are willing to contribute \$148 million for project approval. They argue without an area plan, redevelopment could occur haphazardly, "existing open space, parks, schools and neighborhoods will lack design connections," and dedicated affordable housing would not be guaranteed. In the absence of a plan, the City also suggests there would be less chance for a new retail, grocery or restaurants.

The City's proposed plan centers on major road and transit construction in the Beauregard Corridor. Already approved by the City Council is a new high capacity rapid transit corridor (Corridor "C") that inexplicably connects the Southern Towers, Mark Center area to the Van Dorn Metro Station.

The Beauregard Small Area Plan Working Draft envisions transforming the apartment communities in the plan area to a larger, urban, mixed use, transit-oriented development with more streets, offices, hotels, new retail, grocery stores and parking garages. The staff presentation included maps advocating two 9-10 story (maximum 130' height) buildings near the current Shops at Mark Center, with several blocks of 6-8 stories (110' max height) buildings. Six to eight story office buildings would replace the 3-story professional buildings built in the 1990s near the Clyde's Restaurant.

The working draft presented to the City Council and Planning Commission included four new hotels 6-8 stories (maximum height of 110') for the plan area, two of which would frame the proposed traffic ellipse.

The City's working draft would also add new apartment units within the plan area. The 3-story garden style apartments, mostly 2 and 3 bedroom units, near Beauregard Street and Sanger Avenue (former Hamlets) would be replaced with 4-5 story apartments and 3-4 story townhouses near the project boundaries. Garden style apartments at Seminary Hill east of I-395 off of Kenmore Avenue would be torn down and replaced with 4-5 story (maximum 70') apartments. A mixed use development would replace the residential subdivision on Seminary Road and Beauregard near the Hermitage Retirement Community.

This is an all or none approach intended to speed the approval process and stifle community involvement.

This approach by City officials and staff infuriates residents and short circuits reasonable discussion and potential resolution of outstanding issues. A more deliberate and conciliatory approach would lessen public outcry and foster general public support for revitalizing the plan area.

During the joint City Council/Planning Commission meeting, a point was raised regarding the proposal for \$148 million in developer contributions.

Agreeing to fund construction of new public facilities increases the cost of redevelopment. To offset the added costs, developers seek more buildable square footage, requiring larger buildings, displacing more people and having a greater impact on the environment and loss of trees. These trade-off and costs can potentially be rebalanced by realigning the developer's contributions and

producing a plan that is more compatible with the natural environment and surrounding area.

As an example, the City Planning staff included a proposed athletic field at Ramsey Elementary School in the Beauregard Small Area Plan Working Draft. The price tag for the athletic field and recreation other enhancements was estimated to be \$8,150,500. Agreeing to have developers pay for an artificial turf athletic field does not mean the City should overlook consideration of its impact on the school, the playground, neighborhood parking, and the environmental conditions of the Dora Kelley Preserve or find other more suitable locations for an athletic field.

Dave Cavanaugh

Scattering Public Housing?

To the Editor:

Michael Lee Pope's Feb. 23 article "A Scattered Dream" regarding the redevelopment of the James Bland public housing project is riddled with errors and puffier than a French soufflé.

For example, Mr. Pope states the old Bland project was "densely packed" with "garden apartments." One of the features of the Bland site was the significant amount of open space surrounding the 1940s row houses. That's why ARHA offered it up for redevelopment in the first place.

Essentially Bland was the open space cash cow that was milked for high-density market rate construction to bootstrap not only its own redevelopment but also the demolition and replacement of the financially troubled Glebe Park project in Arlandria, which ARHA was forced to deal with because HUD was about to foreclose on the mortgage.

Mr. Pope claims City leaders have "embraced the concept of scattered site public housing." The public record flatly contradicts this. When the John Roberts project at Braddock Metro was redeveloped as Colecroft in the 1980s, all of the existing public housing units were dispersed. In 2003, the Berg — now reborn as Chatham Square — had 48 percent of its units scattered to other locations in the City. Today, the Bland redevelopment plan off-sites only 60 units (30 percent) of its original 194 units. This is a retreat, not an embrace.

Furthermore, 44 of the 60 off-sited Bland units went back to Glebe Park. That means only 16 units or 8 percent of Bland's 197 total units will be relocated to places in the City without significant existing concentrations of public housing. As the story notes, all of the off-sited Bland units would have been transferred to Glebe Park if Planning & Zoning had permitted higher density there.

What respect does that show for former City Councilman Ira Robinson's aspirations for integration?

Mr. Pope's math is not only faulty — he writes the number of Bland units retained on site was "about half" instead of nearly

SEE LETTERS, PAGE 26

Legal Notices

VIRGINIA: IN THE CIRCUIT COURT FOR THE COUNTY OF ALBEMARLE

In the matter of the adoption of a child to be known as KAIA GRACE PRITCHETT (Birth Certificate Registration Number 2005 120102, State of Florida) a minor, born on July 7, 2005 by Robert Wesley Pritchett and Jamie Anne Pritchett,

PETITIONERS

ORDER OF PUBLICATION

The object of the above-styled suit is an adoption action. An affidavit having been filed that due diligence has been used by the plaintiff to ascertain the address of the Defendant, Kenneth James White, without success. **ORDERED** that the defendant appear on or before the 23rd day of March at 9:00am, 2012 in the Clerk's office of this Court and do what is necessary to protect his interest.

OBITUARY



ESTHER ELIZABETH ELLIS GRIMES-MULLIGAN,

a native of Georgetown, passed away peacefully in her Old Towne Alexandria home on Wednesday, Feb. 22, 2012. She was a remarkably vibrant and caring woman who never met a stranger. Esther was well loved and respected throughout Old Towne and will be sorely missed. She was known for her trips around Old Towne with her precious dog, Abby.

Ms. Grimes-Mulligan graduated from Eastern High School and went on to Wilson Teachers College and then Strayers Business School. She worked early on as a school teacher but held various careers afterward. Esther worked for the Miller Furniture Company, President Harry S. Truman through the Democratic National Committee, The Foundation Endowment, India Benoit Real Estate Company, Unemployment Benefit Advisors and a stock brokerage company.

Esther was a member of St. Mary's Catholic Church, Catholic Daughters of America, Christ Church Bible Study, Christ Church SAVVY Social Group, Alexandria Citizens Association, and her sorority, Phi Pi Epsilon.

Ms. Grimes-Mulligan was preceded in death by her first husband, Milton L. Grimes and by her second husband, James E. Mulligan. She is survived by her daughter, Gayle Schroeder; two granddaughters, Kristen Finkelstein and Karin Sadler; and three great grandchildren, Ben Finkelstein, Adam Finkelstein and Collin Sadler.

Family and friends gathered at Demaine Funeral Home on Tuesday, Feb. 28, for visitation. Memorial services were held at St. Mary's Catholic Church on Wednesday, Feb. 29.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made in her name to the American Lung Association

OBITUARY Jack L. London

Jack Leonard "Daddy Jack" London, 86, of Front Royal, Virginia, died Thursday, February 23, 2012, in a local nursing facility.

Mr. London was born in 1925 in Alexandria, Virginia the son of the late Elias

Alexander and Olga London. He was a contractor in Virginia. Mr. London was a graduate of George Washington High School. He was a World War II Veteran of the United States Navy serving in the Pacific Fleet on the USS Massachusetts.

Surviving are two daughters, Sherri Lynn of Alexandria, Karen K. and husband, Scot of Front Royal; sons, Craig A London of Alexandria, Jack L. London and wife Andrea of Virginia Beach; eight grandchildren; six great grandchildren; and sister, Bernice McDonald of Alexandria.

A graveside service with military honors will be conducted at a later date in Arlington National Cemetery, Arlington, Virginia.

In Lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made to Disabled American Veterans P.O. Box 14301. Cincinnati, Ohio, 45250-0301. ATTN: Gift Processing or Alzheimer's Association, P.O. Box 96011, Washington D.C. 20090-6011.

Please view obituaries and tribute wall at www.ompsfuneralhome.com.

PUBLIC NOTICE

PROPOSAL TO CLEANUP DISCHARGE OF OIL

There has been a discharge of oil at:

1135 Colonial Avenue
Alexandria, Virginia 22314-1324

The Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) is requiring Griffith Energy Services, Inc. to develop a Corrective Action Plan to address cleanup of an oil spill at the site. If you have any questions regarding the cleanup, please contact:

Charlie Raines
Safety Director
Griffith Energy Services, Inc.
2510 Schuster Drive
Cheverly, Maryland 20781
(301) 322-6691

The Corrective Action Plan has been submitted to the Northern Regional Office of DEQ on February 10, 2012. If you would like to review or discuss the proposed Corrective Action Plan with the staff of DEQ, please feel free to contact Jay Green at (703) 583-3812 or james.green@deq.virginia.gov after the date of the Corrective Action Plan submittal. DEQ Northern Regional Office will consider written comments regarding the proposed Corrective Action Plan until March 29, 2012 and may decide to hold a public meeting if there is significant public interest. Written comments should be sent to DEQ at the address listed below. DEQ requests that all written comments reference the tracking number for this case; PC #2011-3038.

Department of Environmental Quality
Storage Tank Program
13901 Crown Court
Woodbridge, Virginia 22193

LETTERS

FROM PAGE 25

70 percent — but his journalistic instincts also seem to have lost their sharpness. He fails to ask the big question, which is why in the first decades of the 21st century have Alexandria leaders retreated from their resolve to break up the last remnants of segregation and Jim Crow?

Perhaps Mr. Pope isn't familiar with the City's Braddock East planning effort. Why else would he let Mr. Miller's comments pass about the multi-family units planned for Bland's Patrick Street side? The City's formal Braddock East Plan called for redeveloping public housing units so that they are indistinguishable from market rate units.

Those of us who served on the Planning Department's Braddock East work group were shown Quaker Hill as a model, a model where market rate and subsidized units were built together in the same buildings. No one expected the City, ARHA and EYA to ignore the plan and approve separate buildings for market rate and public housing residents.

Given ARHA's management track record, the neighborhood is betting on how soon a casual passerby will be able to tell which multi-family buildings are which.

Finally, Mr. Pope appears to be consciously or unconsciously permitting Mr. Miller to redefine for public consumption the notion of "scattered site" housing." What Mr. Miller is promoting is critically different: it is dilution, which means keeping most or all of the old units in place but pouring in more market rate density around these units so that the impoverished are outnumbered.

The crime records for the 16th Census tract speak for themselves: concentrated low-income housing acts as a magnet for criminal activity, with crime rates rising block by block as one approaches Bland, Andrew Adkins or Samuel Madden Uptown. Three decades of dense new development around Braddock Metro — including the Meridian, the Braddock Lofts, the Braddock Place condos, and the Madison Street townhomes — hasn't halted criminal activity or even homicides from occurring at or around Adkins or Bland. We have had fugitives from Pennsylvania murdered in broad daylight, 40-year-old men being slain by teenagers, and a double homicide with bodies left on Route 1 by a perpetrator who lived in Chatham Square and had a long juvenile record. (So much for screening.) There is no similar level of crime associated with ARHA's scattered sites.

At the November 2011 West Old Town Citizens Association meeting neighbors heard startling information from Commonwealth Attorney Randy Sengel that increasing residential density can contribute to the growth of crime by offering more targets of opportunity. Will Mr. Sengel be seen as a pessimist or prophet in a few years' time? Dare we remind Mr. Pope that the city's residential community policing program began with Bland?

Leslie Zupan
Alexandria

Changes Needed At City Hall

To the Editor:

Yes, Del Pepper, things have changed in Alexandria. In [Feb. 15 Gazette Packet] it was reported that "Pepper also said council members once had offices at City Hall, but city officials complained because the elected officials were always pestering them about pet projects. "Been there, done that," said Pepper, who was first elected in 1985. "That was more than 30 years ago," responded Hughes. "Yes," Pepper shot back. "And the reasons haven't changed." Well, things have changed, and it is time that we look differently at how our city council members serve.

I think most members of city council have a very good working relationship with staff, and since city council sets the policy for the city, they should lobby for the priorities they feel are important. But citizens should also have access to council members, and their aides to lobby for the things they think are important. We have grown in the past 27 years, since Del was first elected, and we have a lot of critical issues facing the city. I think Council members and aides should have individual offices where constituents can meet with them. Perhaps they should even be required to have a certain number of open office hours during the week. Instead, currently, council members must schedule a meeting, often outside of city hall, at their convenience, and if it is not convenient they may not meet with you at all. In other words, offices are not just about convenience but access, and who gets it.

I understand that we have a tradition of part time legislators in Alexandria, and that might have been OK in the past, but we have too many issues facing the city for our representatives not to be able to afford to spend as much time as they need on an issue, meet with constituents. Aides can sometimes fill in for a city council mem-

ber, and this is appropriate, but they should then be compensated for this extra time. We can't continually ask for more and more time from our council members and aides without compensation. And we need council members who are paying attention to the issues and taking the time to listen to citizens.

I also call it a living wage for council members, because I know that many council members spend 30 to 40 hours, sometimes more on council business. Who can afford to do this, if they can't leave their day job, or take time away from their day job. This excludes people who may not be wealthy or have independent means of even considering a run for city council, so it is a matter of fairness. We need continued diversity on city council, and a low salary that barely compensates for the time spent may not give enough incentive to activists and citizens to run, if they don't feel like they can afford it.

Lastly, we also need to broaden our perspectives. Council members have the opportunity to participate in the National League of Cities, National Conference of Mayors, and other organizations, but in the past, they have had to pay their own way to these conferences. These are opportunities to learn what other cities around the nation our doing, and bring back the best practices to Alexandria. We can learn from other localities, but as long as we short-change our expectations for council members, we are living in a bubble, and hence we did not look far afield enough on the waterfront and other issues to see other solutions.

I will work full time at city council, and will have open office hours whether it is required or not. I am scheduling meetings with other leaders around the region to get their perspective and learn how we can work together regionally. I have also traveled to conferences around the country and seen great examples of work being done in other cities. Open offices and fair compensation would be a good place to start to change the culture of city hall.

Boyd Walker
Alexandria

Write

The Gazette Packet welcomes views on any public issue. Send to:

Letters to the Editor
The Gazette Packet
1606 King St.
Alexandria VA 22314
Call: 703-917-6444.

By e-mail:
gazette@connectionnewspapers.com

WWW.CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM

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St. Stephen's & St. Agnes' Alexis Sargent (00) and Dhyamond Crenshaw, right, go after the ball, which is controlled by Bishop Ireton's Isabelle Kendall on Feb. 28.



PHOTOS BY LOUISE KRAFT/GAZETTE PACKET

Bishop Ireton senior Laura Hart scored 10 points and grabbed 12 rebounds against St. Stephen's & St. Agnes on Feb. 28 in the opening round of the VISAA state tournament.

Ireton Beats SSSAS in Battle of Rebuilding Programs

Hart's double-double pushes Cardinals past Saints in playoffs.

BY JON ROETMAN
GAZETTE PACKET

Bishop Ireton senior Laura Hart had to watch the final pressure-packed moments of the Cardinals' VISAA state playoff game against St. Stephen's & St. Agnes from the bench. But prior to fouling out, it was Hart's double-double and presence in the paint that helped bring the Cardinals stability in an otherwise sloppy contest.

Hart's offensive rebounding and strong defensive effort helped Ireton survive 31 turnovers as the 12th-seeded Cardinals

knocked off No. 5 St. Stephen's 45-43 at SSSAS on Feb. 28. Hart finished with a team-high 10 points and 12 rebounds, including five offensive boards. Three times Hart grabbed an offensive rebound and scored on a putback.

"Laura's been this way for the last four games straight," second-year Ireton head coach Derek Campbell said. "She's been the catalyst. She's been the one to set the tone. Defensively, she's started out on their best player. She's one of our best defenders."

Defensively, Ireton forced 32 turnovers and thwarted a Saints in-bounds play in the game's closing seconds. Leading 44-43 with 7 seconds remaining, the Cardinals forced a held ball under their basket. The possession arrow pointed Ireton's way and the Cardinals added a free throw before the

Saints' final desperation heave fell short.

Ireton also limited St. Stephen's standout Dhyamond Crenshaw to 12 points. Crenshaw scored 17 in the teams' first meeting and entered the game averaging more

"Knowing that we're leading the school in a positive direction in basketball, it feels really good."

— Bishop Ireton senior Laura Hart

than 20 per contest.

Ireton lost to St. Stephen's 52-51 on Dec. 2 during the Saints' tournament — a loss that Campbell said motivated the Cardinals.

"We came in with a chip on our shoulder losing to those guys in the beginning of the year in their tournament," he said. "...

[Pressure defense is] what we wanted to do. Initially we knew their ball handlers were kind of shaky."

The victory was another feather in the cap of a rebuilding Ireton program that earlier this season earned its first Washington Catholic Athletic Conference victory since the 2007-08 season, beating Bishop O'Connell 59-50 on Jan. 16. The Cardinals also beat Bishop McNamara 49-42 on Feb. 23 in a WCAC tournament play-in game.

"Knowing that we're leading the school in a positive direction in basketball, it feels really good," Hart said. "To know we had a positive influence, we didn't just keep the school standard of losing. We broke the [conference] losing streak, it's a really good feeling that we'll all remember."

Mara Celis-Copelotti and Camille Weber
SEE REBUILDING, PAGE 30

SPORTS BRIEFS

TC Garners All-State Indoor Track Honors

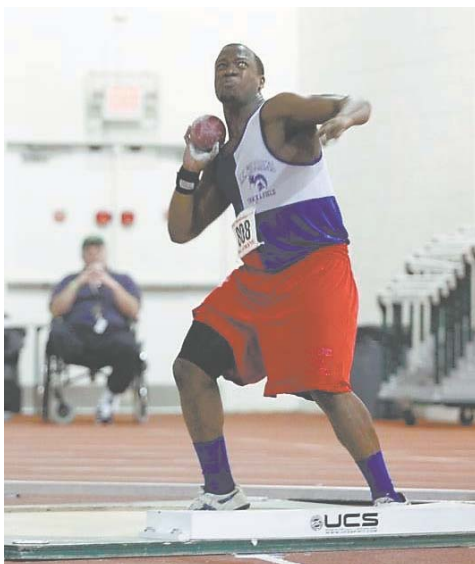
The T.C. Williams indoor track and field team earned four all-state awards and broke two school records during the state championships on Feb. 24-25 in Hampton.

Sydney Schaedel took home all-state honors in two events, placing fifth in pole vault with a clearance of 9 feet, 6 inches, and placing sixth in the 1000 meters with a personal-best time of 2 minutes, 58.39 seconds.

Jonathan Anderson finished third in the shot put with a personal-best mark of 53 feet, 1 inch. Kahron Lee placed third in the high jump with a school-record clearance of 6 feet, 6 inches.

Shannon Smythe finished 11th in the 1600, falling short of all-state honors, but set a new school record with a time of 5:09.74.

SEE SPORTS BRIEFS, PAGE 30



T.C. Williams' Jonathan Anderson earned all-state with a third-place finish in the shot put at the state championships last weekend in Hampton.



PHOTOS BY RYAN KELLY

T.C. Williams' Kahron Lee earned all-state and set a school record with a 6-foot, 6-inch clearance in the high jump at the state championships last weekend in Hampton.

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RECREATION



Dancers perform at the Nannie J. Lee Memorial Recreation Center in celebration of Black History month.

'Black History Is American History'

BY MCKENYA
DILWORTH-ABDALLA
CENTER DIRECTOR
NANNIE J. LEE MEMORIAL
RECREATION CENTER

Nannie J. Lee Memorial Recreation Center celebrated along with other neighborhood centers, our collective American story with the annual "Black History is American History" program. It is important to point out that all Americans benefit from knowing each other's accomplishments and contributions. It is that much needed lesson in diversity, moving toward a day where we will be talking confidently about American history from all perspectives, without missing chapters. I guess the other end of the continuum would be acceptance, tolerance sounds so, well, painful.



Under the direction of Ms. Shenika Farmer, the youth at Nannie Lee really put on a performance that told stories of courage, perseverance and triumph of a marginalized people determined to do more than merely survive. There was dancing, singing, musical tributes (Bring Da Noize & MUSE), oratory and even a play. There were also guest performers



Youths recreate history when Rosa Parks said no to segregation.

from Hot Topics All Stars, Therapeutic Recreation and Charles Houston. Kudos to you Ms. Farmer and the staff at Nannie Lee: Mr. Bates, Mr. Franklin, Mr. Biggs, Ms. Turner and Mrs. Resurreccion.

Please come by to see our Black History is American History Museum with replicas of the bus that Rosa Parks said softly, but firmly, "No" to segregation, Birmingham Jail where Dr. King wrote the Letter from the Birmingham Jail, a cotton plant and a slave cabin/hospital. Our resident artists are Mr. Bates and Mr. Franklin. They are responsible for most of the museum exhibits. They did a fantastic job.

History is a wonderful opportunity to reflect on our achievements. It is also a chance to learn from the mistakes of the past, so that we are not doomed to repeat them.

History is less about rehearsing pain and more about embracing the joy of today. We would like to share that with all of you. Next month we are featuring Kathy Holt in the one-woman production of Nannie Live! The Story of Nannie Helen Burroughs on March 17 at the Lee Center for the Performing Arts. If you would like to bring a group of people to support this play please contact me at 703-746-5533.



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-Thomas Fuller

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21 Announcements

21 Announcements

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Cricket Communications, Inc. is proposing to install new wireless telecommunications antennas on a building at 4600 Duke Street, Alexandria, VA 22304. 3 new panel antennas will be mounted on the penthouse at a centerline height of 179 feet above ground level. Support equipment will be installed on the roof. Any interested party wishing to submit comments regarding the potential effects the proposed facility may have on any historic property may do so by sending such comments to: Project 61120315-SLF c/o EBI Consulting, 6876 Susquehanna Trail South, York, PA 17403 or via telephone at 717-449-4085.

21 Announcements

21 Announcements

OBITUARY

MORAN, C.M.F., REV. THOMAS

Rev. Thomas D. Moran, died on Thursday, February 23, 2012 at Resurrection Medical Center in Chicago, IL, after complications from pneumonia. Father Moran was born on January 27, 1928, in Chicago, Illinois. The son of Thomas and Mary (nee Roach) Moran, he grew up in a family of four children on the south side of Chicago. Fr. Moran is survived by his two remaining living sisters, Joan McGoldrick and Marie Tarpey; beloved uncle of many. The fourth sibling, his brother Roger is also deceased. Father made his first profession as a Claretian Missionary in 1947, perpetual profession in 1950 and was ordained a priest on June 9, 1955.

After his ordination, Fr. Moran served as a teacher and Principal at the Saint Jude High School Seminary in Mokena, Illinois from 1955-1967. At the suggestion of his then Superior, Fr. Moran was assigned to mission in Guatemala, where he spent approximately 25 years of his religious life as a missionary. During his time in Central America, he constantly championed for the rights of the indigenous and working people of the towns of El Estor and Livingston. Fr. Moran says his ministry on behalf of the impoverished Indian families encompassed "the happiest and some of the saddest years of my life as a priest." He was instrumental in helping to establish and promote an elementary school for children who could not write or speak in Spanish, the country's native language. His work in advancing the cause of education resulted in a new Indian school being named in his honor in Livingston.

After returning from Guatemala in 1982, and taking a 2 year sabbatical, Fr. Moran was then assigned to St. Mary of Sorrows Church in Fairfax, Virginia as parish priest from 1984-1990. In 1990, he returned to Guatemala for a second tour of duty for nine years. In 1999 when he returned to the United States, he was assigned as an associate pastor at Our Lady of Guadalupe Church on the south side of Chicago, where he served up until December of 2011. Visitation on Tuesday, February 27 from 2-9pm at Our Lady of Guadalupe Church 3200 E. 91st Street, Chicago, IL 60617 with a prayer service at 8pm. On Wednesday, February 28 viewing at 9:00 a.m. until time of Mass of the Resurrection at 9:30 a.m. Interment Queen of Heaven Cemetery – Hillside, IL. Elmwood Chapel Chicago, IL in charge of arrangement. 773-731-2749. www.elmwoodchapel.com

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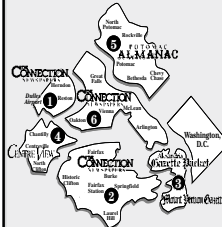
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SPORTS

Rebuilding

FROM PAGE 27

each scored seven points against SSSAS. Celis-Copelotti is the team's leading scorer at 8.4 points per game and Weber is second at 7.4.

Bianca Ojiegbe scored four points, grabbed eight rebounds and totaled six blocks against the Saints.

While Ireton won the game, St. Stephen's finished the season with its own feel-good story. The Saints won 20 games and captured the regular season ISL A championship, the program's first in 15 years. They also finished runner-up in the ISL A tournament.

"We came in with the idea this would be a rebuilding year," eighth-year St. Stephen's head coach Calvin Crenshaw said. "So after winning 20 games in a rebuilding year ... I commend the kids. I'd say 70 percent of my kids are going to college for another sport."

The play of Dhyamond Crenshaw was one reason for the Saints' success. The 6-foot junior transferred from Robinson and averaged 22.9 points while playing for her father, Calvin. She scored at least 30 points in three straight games against Highland, Potomac School and Madeira in late January and early February, including a season-high 35 against Highland on Jan. 27.

Basketball is Crenshaw's primary sport. She said it took time to get used to playing with her St. Stephen's teammates, many of whom aren't basketball-first athletes.

"It was difficult," she said. "At Robinson, you have people who mostly just play basketball. But here, everyone plays every different sport that there is, like lacrosse. To just come in and play basketball, they have done a terrific job. ... It was a huge transformation just to come here and be a captain and to be a leader and have everybody look up to me. It was a big role."

Lizzie Zulauf led the Saints with 18 points against Ireton. The junior guard knocked down four 3-pointers.

SPORTS BRIEFS

FROM PAGE 27

TC Boys, Girls Fall in Region Quarterfinals

The T.C. Williams boys' and girls' basketball teams ended their respective seasons in the Northern Region quarterfinals.

The TC boys lost at home to Westfield, 43-38, on Feb. 22. The girls traveled to Oakton and lost 62-50 on Feb. 22.

Ireton, SSSAS Place At Wrestling States

The Bishop Ireton wrestling team placed fourth and St. Stephen's & St. Agnes took sixth at the state championships on Feb. 17-18 in Richmond.

Ireton's Andrew Lutterloh won the 220-pound state championship, defeating St. Christopher's grappler Marshall Hollerith 6-3 in the final.

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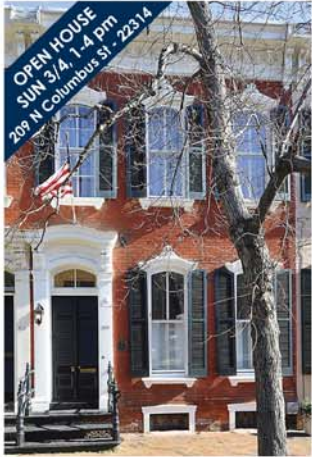
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