

CONNECTION NEWSPAPERS

2011 AWARDS

FROM

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PART 2

Alexandria Gazette Packet



MICHAEL LEE POPE

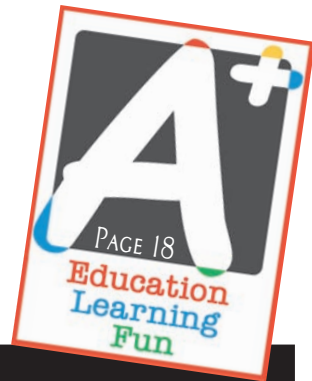
First Place in Government Writing

Judges comments: Excellent depth of reporting on multiple engaging topics. Readers were well informed by these articles.

Alexandria Gazette Packet



THE SHOPS AT
BELLE VIEW
INSIDE



SERVING ALEXANDRIA FOR OVER 200 YEARS • A CONNECTION NEWSPAPER

25 CENTS

DECEMBER 15, 2011



PHOTO BY LOUISE KRAFFT/GAZETTE PACKET

Early Visit By Santa

Fifty-four preschoolers at Child and Family Network Center in Cora Kelly were entertained on Thursday, Dec. 8, by the Blue Sky Puppet Theatre and a special visit from Santa. The Blue Sky Puppet Theatre, based in the Baltimore/Washington metropolitan area, has been performing exclusively for children and their families since 1980. Santa and his elves were sponsored by the Santa We Believe Foundation.

The Child and Family Network Centers, based in Alexandria, provides free bilingual preschool and social services.

**Preschooler
Kreilys
Flores meets
Santa.**

Arlandria Dilemma

Will improving neighborhood push out Latino residents, businesses?

BY MICHAEL LEE POPE
GAZETTE PACKET

This weekend, members of the Alexandria City Council will be presented with a dilemma that could radically transform Arlandria — a working-class neighborhood of poor and Latino residents straddling Alexandria and Arlington.

At issue is a proposal to redevelop the Mount Vernon Village Center on Mount Vernon Avenue, demolishing an old 1940s-era strip mall to construct a 600,000-square-foot mixed-use development with two six-story towers. Supporters of the proposal say redeveloping the blighted strip mall will transform the neighborhood and create new vitality. Opponents say the proposal would gentrify the neighborhood and displace the existing community.

“There is a great concern about what might be referred to as

gentrification, the change in the character of the neighborhood,” said Planning Commission member Stuart Dunn. “That’s a real issue, and an issue that is troubling.”

Planning Commission members approved the development last week, sending the issue to the City Council for public hearing on Dec. 17 — but not without some heart-

ache. Dunn offered the motion that eventually approved the proposal, but he added that he was “reluctant” to do so. Commissioner Donna Fossum said the project had “tepid approval.” Commissioner Eric Wagner said he “lived in fear” that new development could be stimulus pushing out the existing community.

“It’s a reaction to gentrification, which is real,” said Wagner. “We have to move with due speed to figure out ways to keep that preserved as the market-rate affordable housing that it is.”

“Our market is the Hispanic community that lives around here. I assume it won’t be the Hispanic community that is going to live in the new development.”

— Roberto Perez, small-business owner

NEIGHBORS ARE DIVIDED on the proposal. Many residents and small-business owners worry about what will happen once the massive six-story towers are erected. Although the project itself won’t displace anyone, opponents say, it could have a ripple effect that could upend the community. They say the rising tide

wouldn’t lift all boats. Rather, it could create a tsunami that would destroy one of the last remaining low-income communities in the Washington metropolitan region.

“This development is going to cause a chain reaction,” said Gabriel Rojo, executive director of Tenants and Workers United. “The

SEE ARLANDRIA, PAGE 26

Waterfront Group: Mission Impossible

Plan to increase density and allow hotels divides a panel created to find consensus.

BY MICHAEL LEE POPE
GAZETTE PACKET

The plan has divided Alexandria for a year. Now members of a work group are divided, even as they are poised to present a final report to City Council members during a Jan. 10 work session. Four members agree with city planners, who have proposed overturning a longstanding ban on hotels and increasing density at three sites slated for redevelopment. Three members oppose rezoning the waterfront, setting up a four-to-three split on a panel created to find consensus on the controversial plan.

“I’d be very careful when using the word ‘consen-

sus,” said David Olinger, a member of the minority who represents the Old Town Civic Association. “A four to three split is not consensus.”

Next week, the work group will circulate a final report that hopes to capture the disagreement over major sticking points — allowing hotels, changing zoning and what happens at the foot of King Street. City Council members have scheduled a Jan. 10 work session to consider the work group’s report, which will be worded in a way that expresses the will of the five-vote majority and the four-vote minority. Two members have been given the task of distilling both sides of the argument.

“I agree that it’s a tedious format,” said Nate Macek, one of the two members who will author the final report. “But this has been a tedious process.”

“There was a lot of contention, but there was not consensus.”

— Bob Wood, member of the Waterfront Plan Work Group

THE PANEL was created in the spring, when council members became deadlocked on differences of opinion about allowing hotels and increasing density. Before adjourning for the summer recess, council members appointed a group officially known as the Waterfront Plan Work Group.

SEE WATERFRONT GROUP, PAGE 26

SEE WATERFRONT GROUP, PAGE 26

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Will Improving Arlandria Neighborhood Displace Poor?

FROM PAGE 1

rents across the street in this huge apartment complex are going to go up. The rents on all the small businesses are going to go up.”

Up and down the Arlandria section of Mount Vernon Avenue, Christmas shoppers dart in and out of small markets and Latino-owned shops.

Many of the business owners look toward the current version of the Mount Vernon Village Center, a 50,000-square-foot retail center, and wonder what will happen when the high-end rental units open and new neighbors begin moving in.

“Our market is the Hispanic community that lives around here,” said Roberto Perez, owner of FPP Communications, which sells cell phones and accessories. “I assume it won’t be the Hispanic community that is going to live in the new development.”

SUPPORTERS of the proposal cheer the development as a transformation of a blighted area. They say demolishing the old 1940s-era strip mall and replacing it with a

ALEXANDRIA DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND ZONING



The new Mount Vernon Village Center will have two mixed-use buildings with 53,000 square feet of retail space and five floors of multi-family residential units.

gleaming new development is exactly what the neighborhood needs. Although the Planning Commission’s public hearing was dominated by those opposing the plan, several spoke in favor of the plan as offering a needed change to a long-suffering neighborhood.

“I hear a lot of comments this evening about diversity,” says Jacob Cuomo, who

lives in nearby Hume Springs. “I challenge anyone to ride down Mount Vernon Avenue and see diversity of races.”

Arlandria is a predominantly Hispanic neighborhood. But it has small businesses owned by immigrants from all over the world. Sopha May is an immigrant from Cambodia who owns a market on the avenue. She says she’s concerned

gentrification could push her out of the neighborhood. “I don’t like it,” said May. “I’m worried about it closing my business down.”

A recent survey of 48 businesses in Arlandria by the Alexandria Economic Development Partnership revealed a number of lingering problems in the neighborhood that borders with Arlington. Dirty streets, unkempt facades and unattractive signage were the major source of concern.

That was followed by concern about poor living conditions and pest-control problems. Other businesses complained about frequent crime, attempted break-ins and insufficient police presence.

Then there’s the drug dealing and gang activity that persists in the neighborhood despite ongoing efforts to curtail the neighborhood’s underworld.

“We absolutely have gangs,” said Police Chief Earl Cook earlier this year. “We do not pretend we don’t have gangs.”

Waterfront Plan Work Group Fails To Reach Consensus

FROM PAGE 1

Its members were charged with narrowing differences and finding points of agreement. Some were hoping for the group to broker some sort of compromise. Now, after 16 weeks of meetings, neither of those goals have been accomplished.

“I challenge the characterization that we are approving the plan,” said Bob Wood, a member of the minority. “There was a lot of contention, but there was not consensus.”

Perhaps the most important action of the work group was a four-to-three vote in favor of increasing the zoning. The split indicates the deep divisions that have lingered over the course of the last year. Many residents, mostly Old Town residents, oppose increasing density because they fear it would lead to increasing traffic and parking problems as well as a diminished quality of life for people who live near the waterfront. The split within the work group reflected that divide, with the three members living closest to the waterfront standing in opposition to rezoning the waterfront. The farther away members lived from the waterfront, the more they tend to support the idea.

“More density would add to the waterfront,” said Mindy Lyle, a member of the majority who lives in Cameron Station. “I think that hotels, retail and things that bring vibrancy and add to the use of green spaces are what is important.”

IN SOME WAYS, the debate about the waterfront plan is reminiscent of a family feud. The participants are emotional and unwilling to back down. And the anxiety grows with each passing argument. The final meeting of the work group, for example,

became heated when Bert Ely suggested he was going to write his own report. He initially suggested that his report be attached as an amendment to the work group’s final report, but other members of the panel vehemently objected.

“This is like a cartel,” observed work group member Christopher Ballard at one point. “It works until it breaks down.”

Clearly, the work group broke down toward the end — arguing over the same battlefield that divided City Council members earlier this year. After hearing several pointed arguments against a dissenting report being included in the final report, Ely said he was going to release it himself and circulate it throughout the city.

“You are a part of a group,” Lyle scolded Ely. “And as such, you should act accordingly.”

“Does this mean we are not all going to get WPWG tattoos?” asked Ballard, easing the tension in the council work room.

“That’s a generational thing,” Wood interjected. “I was thinking of a jacket or a hat.”

“We’ll bring T-shirts,” added Planning Director Faroll Hamer.

WHEN THE FINAL moments of the Waterfront Work Group arrived Wednesday as the clock struck noon, the effort fizzled without much fanfare. No T-shirts were distributed and no music filled the air. Work group members went about their separate ways, and City Council members are now in roughly the same position it was in before the panel was created — facing down the barrel of a controversial vote that could define their public career.

“The atmosphere is tense, the dialogue is intractable and this is rapidly evolving into

a stalemate,” said Kathryn Papp during the final public comment period of the work group. “It will either endure as heritage or it will be a blot on our name.”

A draft of the work group’s final report obtained by the Gazette Packet indicates how tenuous the recommendations will be, straddling the line between the five members in support and the four in opposition. The Planning Department’s recommendation that the city “create a new public park” where the Old Dominion Boat Club is now

located has been replaced by a suggestion in the passive voice that “there should be a significant public space on King Street between Union Street and the river.” Much of the draft report has conflicting ideas with panel members’ names appearing in parentheses.

“This group is essentially punting,” said Boyd Walker, co-chairman of the Citizens for an Alternative Waterfront Plan. “I’m not sure the council will like what you are punting or not.”

OBITUARY

Saleh H. Farah Dirir

Saleh H. Farah Dirir of Alexandria died on Oct. 13, 2011 of a heart attack. He was 74 years old.

He received his master’s degree in physical science from Kansas State Teachers College in 1969. He went on to teach at University of Somalia, Lafoole, Somalia and National Teacher Training Center, Afgoi. Eventually becoming the dean of the college (1974-77).

Six months later he crossed the border to the newly independent Republic of Djibouti, and was appointed as the first Ambassador of Djibouti to the United States of America and Permanent Representative to the UN. He left the United States in 1987 and went on to represent the Republic of Djibouti in Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates, Kenya and Uganda. After which period he retired and settled with his beloved family of eight in Alexandria.

While in retirement he was a substi-



Saleh H. Farah Dirir

tute teacher at the local high school his children attended, T.C. Williams, and other various public schools in the surrounding area. In his spare time he was a writer and poet, with four yet to be

published books.

He is survived by his wife of 37 years, Fatoum Assowe, his four daughters, Marian Farah-Beck and husband Ed Beck, Obah Farah Walker and husband Zachary Walker, Ayan Farah and husband Sherif Ismail, and Saada Farah; one son, Ali Farah, and two adoring grandchildren, Laila and Aden Walker. He was preceded in death by his eldest son Farah S. Farah. He will be greatly missed by his family, friends and many students.

Alexandria Gazette Packet



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JUNE 16, 2011



Home Life Style

Ready for summer house guests? The Holland House carriage house in Old Town is surrounded on three sides by gardens.

PHOTO BY LOUISE KRAFFT/GAZETTE PACKET

TIPS AND MORE PHOTOS, PAGE 32.

More Time

Zoning changes for waterfront are delayed again as standoff lingers.

BY MICHAEL LEE POPE
GAZETTE PACKET

Sometimes the best decision is no decision at all. Especially when the votes aren't there to make something happen.

That's the situation City Council members are facing as the clock winds down before summer recess. Supporters of the controversial small-area plan for the waterfront desperately wanted a vote before council members take their annual two-month vacation from public business. A last-minute plan was even floated by Councilman Rob Krupicka that would have removed the zoning changes from

the small-area plan, rendering the effort little more than an outline for an art walk with historical interpretation.

"I would say that's not likely to happen now," Krupicka said after Tuesday night's City Council meeting.

Although Councilman Paul Smedberg called the Krupicka compromise "elegant," Vice Mayor Kerry Donley warned that the situation in Landmark illustrated the perils of creating planning documents that don't address zoning changes. Councilwoman Del Pepper liked Krupicka's idea and praised it as the only way forward,

SEE WATERFRONT, PAGE 5

Going Hungry

Patchwork of services leaves thousands of children malnourished in Alexandria.

BY MICHAEL LEE POPE
GAZETTE PACKET

There's no such thing as a free lunch. Sometimes that's especially true even for those who deserve one the most.

According to the Washington Area Boards of Education, Alexandria has more than 6,000 students who meet the federal poverty guidelines. Some are fed in the city's schools. Others are fed at

recreation centers. The city also has a patchwork of churches and social-service organizations. But city and school records can't account for what happens to all 6,000, leaving as many as 2,000 children hungry each summer.

"I would find it hard to believe that some of these children aren't falling through the cracks," said Mary Anne Weber, chairwoman of the Alexandria Community Ser

SEE PATCHWORK, PAGE 6

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Patchwork of Services Leaves Children Hungry

FROM PAGE 1

vices Board. “How are the kids going to get to the program? Who is providing transportation? There are a lot of factors to consider.”

Poverty has gripped Alexandria for many years. Since 1979, the high rate of poverty in the city has qualified the city for federal money through the Summer Food Service Program. Currently scattered across 25 sites throughout the city, the program offers meals to those in need at recreation centers and churches. But even if the program was operating at maximum capacity, the city’s recreation program would be able to serve 1,800 youths. Considering that only a fraction of the students receive nutritional assistance during summer school, that leaves thousands of the city’s neediest kids underfed and malnourished.

“The reality is that child hunger isn’t just an educational issue or a health issue, it’s a moral issue,” said Republican Gov. Bob McDonnell. “We must do everything we can to make sure our most vulnerable children are getting regular, nutritious meals, especially during the summer when they are most at risk.”

LAST WEEK, McDonnell joined forces with Academy Award winner Jeff Bridges and Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack to announce a new campaign against child hunger in Arlington. Dubbed the Virginia No Kid Hungry campaign, the VIPs assembled at Barcroft Elementary School on South Wakefield Street. The public-private partnership hopes to connect low-income children to nutrition programs, including the Virginia Summer Meals for Kids Program.

The idea is simple — parents can simply call 211 to find summer meals sites near them.

“Our children are hungry because we have lacked a big-picture strategy to con-

Students In Poverty

Division	Students eligible	Percent of enrollment
Alexandria City	6,264	54 percent
Arlington County	6,515	32 percent
Fairfax County	45,276	26 percent

SOURCE: Washington Area Boards of Education

nect them to the nutritious food they need to grow and thrive,” said Bridges, star of “Tron: Legacy.” “The No Kid Hungry Campaign provides that strategy.”

But implementing the strategy won’t be easy. A review of city and school records shows that feeding all those children will be an operational challenge, even with the help of Hollywood and Richmond. Enrollment records show that a small percentage of students attend summer school, about one quarter of the high school population and a much smaller fraction of elementary school students. That means thousands of children who would otherwise receive free or reduced-price lunch do not receive services at city schools or recreation centers. School officials don’t keep records of how many summer school students qualify for free or reduced-price lunch, but the total amount is likely to be less than half the demand.

“We don’t get everybody,” said Becky Domokos-Bays, director of Food and Nutrition Services at Alexandria City Public Schools. “We know that.”

A NEW STUDY published last week by the Food Research and Action Center shows that jurisdictions across America have been letting children fall between the cracks for years. The report concludes that only one in seven students who have access to the National School Lunch Program during the school year has access during the summer.



COURTESY PHOTO

Republican Gov. Bob McDonnell, center, speaks with Academy Award winning actor Jeff Bridges, right, at Barcroft Elementary School in Arlington to launch the Virginia No Kid Hungry Campaign.

“Our children are hungry because we have lacked a big-picture strategy to connect them to the nutritious food they need to grow and thrive.”

— Academy Award winner Jeff Bridges

And despite record numbers of children being eligible for free and reduced-price lunches during the 2009-2010 school year, participation in summer nutrition programs fell in 2010 nationally.

“If low-income children are going to have access to the healthy food they need during the summer months,” the report concluded, “aggressive steps must be taken.”

A slumping economy drove increased de-

mand for services across Virginia just as state officials were looking to slash budgets, leaving many children caught in the middle. Nationwide, according to the Food Research and Action Center’s analysis, 83,000 fewer students were served by the program in the summer of 2010 than the previous year. That’s why Kaiser Permanente of the Mid-Atlantic States, the Sodexo Foundation, the Walmart Foundation and Dominion Resources have committed to offer more than \$300,000 for the Share Our Strength Program, which operates in 12 other states and will launch in five more next year.

“Our hope is that no Virginian ever has to worry about where they’ll get their next meal,” said Leslie Van Horn, executive director of the Federation of Virginia Food Banks. “These programs are in place to protect our most vulnerable children, and we’re thrilled to be working with our partners to make sure that families know these programs exist year round.”

BULLETIN BOARD

To have a notice listed, e-mail gazette@connectionnewspapers.com. Call Steve Hibbard at 703-778-9412 with questions.

EVERY SUNDAY

West End Farmers Market. 9 a.m. to 1 p.m., rain or shine, in Ben Brenman Park. Primarily producer-only, every week offers fresh, locally grown fruits, vegetables and herbs; freshly baked breads, pastries and desserts; artisanal cheeses and yogurt; free range chicken, pork, beef and buffalo; handmade, fresh pasta and oven-ready meals; sweet, savory and smoky nuts; jams, jellies, salsas and sauces; beautiful fresh cut flowers and potted plants. Visit www.westendfarmersmarket.org.

EVERY THURSDAY

Environmental Activists Needed. 6 to 9 p.m. Clean up the community, the country, the planet — meet with the Sierra Club at its new NOVA Hub in Del Ray, 2312 Mount Vernon Ave., Suite 206, Alexandria. RSVP to Phillip Ellis, Sierra Club Field Organizer at 571-970-0257 or phillip.ellis@sierraclub.org.

ONGOING

Job opportunities for the summer 2011 are available at the City of Alexandria Department of Recreation, Parks and Cultural Activities. Positions offer flexible schedules, competitive wages, and range from camp leaders to lifeguards, and cashiers to pool managers. To see what the Department offers, visit www.alexandriava.gov/recreation. Positions are open until filled. Call Wendy Irving, Human Resources Technician, at 703-746-5513.

THURSDAY/JUNE 16

Aquatic Master Planning Consultants. 7 p.m. The Alexandria Park and Recreation Commission will host the City’s Aquatic Master Planning consultants and receive an update on their progress. At Samuel Tucker Elementary School, 435 Ferdinand Day Drive, Alexandria. Contact Laura Durham, Open Space Coordinator, at 703-746-5493 or email laura.durham@alexandriava.gov.

Commission for the Arts - Youth Arts Festival. 10 a.m. to 11 a.m. Regular meeting in collaboration with the Redevelopment and Housing Authority. At the Dr. Oswald Durant

Memorial Center, 1605 Cameron St., Alexandria. Contact Cheryl Anne Colton at 703-746-5565.

Public Health Advisory Commission. 5:30 to 6:30 p.m. At the Alexandria Health Department, 4480 King St., Alexandria. Contact Dean Bryant, 703-746-4956.

Alexandria Housing Development Corp. 6 to 7 p.m. Regular monthly meeting with anticipated executive session as part of meeting. At the Alexandria Housing Development Corp., 801 N. Pitt St., Alexandria. Contact Mildrilyn Davis, 703-746-4990.

Park and Recreation Commission Meeting. 7 to 9 p.m. At Samuel W. Tucker Elementary School, 435 Ferdinand Day Dr., Alexandria. Contact William Chesley, william.chesley@alexandriava.gov, 703-746-5426.

Commission for the Arts - Film Festival Exec. Comm. 7 to 9 p.m. Meets at the Dr. Oswald Durant Memorial Center, 1605 Cameron St., Alexandria. Contact Cheryl Anne Colton, 703-746-5565.

SATURDAY/JUNE 18

Dedication of Ruby Tucker Park. 8:30 a.m.

The Honorable Mayor and members of City Council invite the public to the dedication ceremony of Ruby Tucker Park, 3500 Jefferson Davis Highway, Alexandria. The Lynhaven Citizens Association will sponsor a community celebration following the dedication. Contact Jack Browand, Division Chief, at 703-746-5504 or email jack.browand@alexandriava.gov.

SUNDAY/JUNE 19

Fairfax Elderhostel Alumni Assoc.

Meeting. 2 to 4 p.m. Ambassador David Newton will speak on “Yemen: The Middle East’s Latest Hotspot.” At George Mason Public Library, 7001 Little River Turnpike, Annandale.

TUESDAY/JUNE 21

Lupus Support Group. 7 p.m. The session is led by a trained professional who understands the challenges of lupus. Meets at Beatley Library, 5005 Duke St., Alexandria. Call or 202-349-1176 or 1-888-

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Alexandria Gazette Packet



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MAY 12, 2011

Home LifeStyle



PHOTO BY LOUISE KRAFFT/GAZETTE PACKET

Why Personal Design Matters

Interior design is about allowing yourself the freedom to create an environment that makes you smile, says Alexandria designer Barbara Franceski, who designed this family room for a spring design house.

SEE SPECIAL SECTION, STARTING ON PAGE 18.

Center Renamed for Slain Deputy

‘Guardians by choice, heroes by chance.’

BY JEANNE THEISMANN
GAZETTE PACKET

It was a clear and unusually warm winter morning 30 years ago when Zita Truesdale kissed her husband goodbye as he headed off to work as a deputy with the Alexandria sheriff's department. But that afternoon she picked up the phone and heard the three words that would change her life: "Bill got shot."

"I remember it like it was yesterday," recalled Zita Truesdale Noyes of Jan. 27, 1981, when William G. Truesdale became the only deputy sheriff to be killed in the line of duty. "Even though I was told to rush to the hospital, it took some time for me to realize what had happened. I kept thinking maybe he was only shot in the foot or something like that."

At the age of 26, Truesdale Noyes became a widow raising four children. The youngest, Kevin, was only 6 months old when he lost his father but on May 5, he followed in those footsteps when he was sworn in as a deputy with the Alexandria sheriff's department during a ceremony that renamed the city's jail in honor of the father he never knew.

"It kind of makes everything come full circle," said



PHOTO BY LOUISE KRAFFT/GAZETTE PACKET

Sheriff Dana Lawhorne congratulates Deputy Sheriff Kevin Truesdale and presents him with his badge.

Kevin Truesdale after receiving his badge from Sheriff Dana Lawhorne. "I hope that my career will honor his memory."

In addition to the renaming of the Alexandria Adult Detention Center to the William G. Truesdale Adult Detention Center, a 4,500-pound monument carved out of black granite honoring Deputy Truesdale was unveiled by Lawhorne as family members and dignitaries looked on.

"Today is truly bittersweet," said Lawhorne in his

SEE CENTER, PAGE 6

Waterfront Gamble

Council poised to consider allowing hotels and increasing density.

BY MICHAEL LEE POPE
GAZETTE PACKET

This weekend, members of the Alexandria City Council will consider a plan that would reshape the waterfront for generations to come. The plan under consideration would designate the Old Dominion Boat Club parking lot as a new public park known as Fitzgerald Square, although it's unclear how that would happen considering the club's resistance to the idea. It would also overturn a longstanding ban on hotels along the waterfront and increase density at three sites where hotels are envisioned. Finally, it would increase the height limit at one of the sites where one of the hotels would be located.

Critics of the plan are calling for a delay, but Mayor Bill Euille says his intention is to take action on Saturday.

"This plan might not be perfect, but at least it's a way to move forward," said Euille. "Unless there's a reason not to vote for this on Saturday, I'd like to go ahead and take action."

The waterfront small-area plan that will be before City Council on Saturday represents the culmination of years of planning and hundreds of community meetings. Elements of the plan have come and gone, including a last-minute decision of Planning Director Farrol Hamer to ditch the idea of Fitzgerald Square because the Boat Club opposed the idea. Plan

SEE COUNCIL, PAGE 3

BikeShare Program Wheeling into City?

Critics question variety of costs.

BY MICHAEL LEE POPE
GAZETTE PACKET

Those ubiquitous red bicycles that have flooded Arlington and the District of Columbia may be coming to Alexandria. The only real question is where the stations would be located and how the program would work.

Last month, Transportation Director Rich Baier sent a proposal to the city manager's office outlining a proposal for a pilot BikeShare

program that would put 54 bicycles at six stations in Old Town and the Carlyle neighborhood. The cost of the first year would be \$400,000, which could be financed with money from the Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Funding Program.

"We're excited about the possibility of bringing BikeShare to Alexandria," said Carrie Sanders, pedestrian and bicycle coordinator for the city government. "At this

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City Considers Joining BikeShare Program

FROM PAGE 1

point, we are still trying to determine where to put the station and answer questions about how the pilot would work.”

The concept of sharing bicycles has been popular for years in Europe, although it’s only recently become popular in the United States. Arlington County was the first local government to enter into a contract for Bike Share with a company known as Alta BikeShare, a contract that Washington, D.C. latter piggybacked onto through its affiliation with the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments. Each jurisdiction in the program owns the stations within the boundaries, but Alta BikeShare operates the regional system. If Alexandria were to agree to enter the contract, Alta BikeShare would have to sign off on the agreement as would Arlington and Washington.

“The city can’t afford to put the bus schedule at stops throughout the city but they want to spend \$400,000 on this?” asked Old Town resident Poul Hertel, who criticized a previous grant application for BikeShare earlier this year. “I think there are better ways to spend this grant money.”

CAPITAL BIKESHARE launched in September 2010 with 1,100 bicycles at 110 stations in Arlington and Washington. The idea is simple — public bicycles are made avail-

able for shared use of people who have purchased subscriptions. Users can pick up or drop off bicycles at any of the designated stations throughout the region. Currently, the program has more than 10,000 daily memberships and 5,300 annual memberships. Although the program is extremely popular with bicycle enthusiasts, it has struggled to make a profit.

“At this point, the operation is not at the break-even point yet,” acknowledged Michael Farrell, transportation planner for the Council of Governments. “But there’s an economy of scale that will take place as the program gets bigger.”

Memberships range in price depending on how long the customers wants to have 24-hour access to the bicycles. A one-day pass costs \$5. A five-day membership is \$15, and a 30-day subscription costs \$30. Yearlong participation in the program can be purchased for \$75. The first 30 minutes of every trip is free, prompting many users to use the bicycles almost exclusively for short-distance trips. Revenues are distributed to jurisdictions based on the origin of each revenue-generating trip.

“We are trying to get this up and running in Alexandria as quick as we can,” said Sanders. “But we also want to make sure we take all the necessary steps to have a successful program.”

Studies of the program indicate that

BikeShare works more efficiently when stations are clustered in a dense urban grid because the average trip on Capital BikeShare is 1.2 miles, and the average trip duration is 24 minutes. As a result, city officials are planning to select the first six stations a quarter mile apart in Old Town and Carlyle. The first stations will probably be at the Metro stations, followed by areas that have population clusters such as the Carlyle neighborhood and along the King Street corridor.

“BikeShare helps solve the last-mile problem of commuters getting to their destination by co-locating BikeShare stations with transit,” wrote Rich Baier, director of the Department of Transportation and Environmental Services, in an April 6 memorandum. “If successful, expansion should be considered outside of Old Town, heading north to Del Ray and Arlandria, connecting to the existing Arlington BikeShare network.”

FINDING THE RIGHT LOCATION for the stations isn’t just about making sure they’re convenient. The stations also have to be in a spot with lots of sun because they are solar powered, a feature that makes them much easier to install than hooking them into the grid. But it also limits where they can be situated. The solar-powered stations range in size from six to 14 bicycles.

Cost of BikeShare

Item	Cost	Quantity	Total
Small station	\$41,500	3	\$124,500
Medium station	\$49,300	3	\$147,900
Annual operating cost per bicycle	\$1,860	54	\$100,440
Installation labor	\$4,500	6	\$27,000
Fiscal year 2012 total costs			\$399,840

SOURCE: Department of Transportation and Environmental Services

The pilot program currently under consideration would spend \$124,500 to construct three small stations and \$147,900 to build three large stations. Installation labor would cost \$27,000, and the annual operation costs would be \$100,000.

“The \$100,000 figure doesn’t include the cost of replacing the bikes or the stations,” said Sanders. “It’s just to give an indication of what the pilot project would cost each year.”

BikeShare suggests replacing the bicycles every six years at a cost of \$1,000 each, and the system says the stations need to be replaced every 10 years at a cost of \$10,200 for each station. Since the program was launched eight months ago, revenue has covered less than half of the expenses. Until the system’s revenues can cover operating costs, local jurisdictions will be expected to cover the gap in operating costs. Critics say the city is setting itself up for failure.

“It’s not going to pay for itself, and we’re going to be stuck with the tab,” said Seminary Hill resident Jack Sullivan, who has been critical of the program. “Unless you have a number of bikes and a number of stations, it doesn’t work.”

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Alexandria Gazette Market



MICHAEL LEE POPE

First Place in Health, Science and Environmental Writing

Judges comments: Really interesting stuff and like how writer sets the stage to present opposing viewpoints. Takes talent to write about a topic that could be as dull as dirt and keep the reader engaged. Really good work.

Alexandria Gazette Packet



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JANUARY 13, 2011



PHOTO BY TRACY BARBER/GAZETTE PACKET

Hello There
Dollie Beckleind and dog Gus near the Braddock Road Metro.

‘Soul’ Asylum

Appeals Court ruling strikes a blow at the city’s waterfront plan.

BY MICHAEL LEE POPE
GAZETTE PACKET

When Planning Director Faroll Hamer presented the outline of the city’s waterfront plan last month, she called the new 200-foot pier at the foot of King Street “the soul” of the city’s vision for the future of the waterfront. Yet federal appeals court ruling this week may have crushed that soul.

“This is like pulling the proverbial string on the proverbial sweater,” said Bert Ely, Old Town resident and member of the Old Dominion Boat Club. “You pull enough and the whole thing falls apart.”

On Tuesday, Jan. 11, the United States Court of Appeals for the

District of Columbia Circuit affirmed an earlier ruling by the United States District Court for the District of Columbia in favor of the Old Dominion Boat Club. The controversial court case, which has been dragging on since the Nixon administration, was originally filed by the Justice Department at the request of conservationists who wanted to transform Alexandria’s waterfront into a national park. But the issue lingered in the court system for decades with little or no action — until now.

At issue in the case was a survey conducted in 1791 that identified the high-water mark as the boundary between Maryland and Virginia, which were then being

SEE COURT RULING, PAGE 12

Conflict of Interest?

Alexandria doctors receive tens of thousands of dollars from Big Pharma.

BY MICHAEL LEE POPE
GAZETTE PACKET

Does your doctor take money from pharmaceutical companies? Many do, including a handful of doctors here in Alexandria. There’s nothing illegal about it, although the practice has come under fire from critics who say that it undermines the medical profession by calling into question the relationship physicians have with Big Pharma.

“It’s a conflict of interest,” said Lisa Eckenwiler, director of health-

care ethics at George Mason University. “It looks like doctors are more interested in making a profit than looking after the best interests of their patients.”

According to a database compiled by the nonprofit organization ProPublica, Alexandria doctors have taken tens of thousands of dollars from pharmaceutical companies over the last two years. And that’s just from the seven pharmaceutical companies that disclose the information. There are more than 70 drug companies that

SEE CONFLICT, PAGE 24

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Conflict of Interest?

FROM PAGE 1

don't report such payments, although they will be forced to in 2013 as part of the Physician Payments Sunshine Act.

"If patients think there's a conflict of interests, then there is a conflict of interest," said Del. Patrick Hope (D-47), who is also a lobbyist for the American College of Cardiology. "This is a difficult subject, and the best way to address this is to get all the information out there and let the patients decide for themselves the same way that elected officials have to disclose who gave us money."

ALEXANDRIA DOCTORS interviewed for this story say they are not influenced by money from the pharmaceutical industry. They way they look at it, giving speeches to their colleagues is a great way to exchange information with their colleagues and the pharmaceutical industry. Besides, they

say, patients pay doctors for the time spent on the clock. Why shouldn't pharmaceutical companies?

"The criticism of this is more political than realistic," said Dr. Soren Caffey, an internist and oncologist who received \$1,500 from GlaxoSmithKline in 2009 for a speaking engagement. "It's never had any influence in the way I treat my patients."

Whistleblower lawsuits filed in recent years have accused firms of using doctors to push pills for unapproved uses during dinnertime talks, prompting at least 10 firms to settle cases for nearly \$7 billion in the last three years.

Since that time, pharmaceutical companies have tightened control over what happens during presentations given on their dime. Last year, for example, GlaxoSmithKline instituted a new policy prohibiting doctors from using their own slides during presentations. Starting in 2010, all

Dollars for Docs

DOCTOR	COMPANY	AMOUNT	SERVICE
Dr. John Cochran	GSK and Eli Lilly	\$35,375	professional education programs (Eli Lilly): \$33,625 speaking (GSK): \$1,750
Dr. Mark McClellan	GSK	\$17,500	speaking
Dr. Haideh Sabet	Pfizer and Eli Lilly	\$14,124	professional education programs (Eli Lilly): \$12,616 Expert-Led Forums (Pfizer): \$1,000 Meals (Pfizer): \$66 Travel Expenses (Eli Lilly): \$8
Dr. Howard Lando	AstraZeneca	\$9,800	speaking
Dr. Stuart Stark	GSK	\$6,310	speaking
Dr. Mahan Chehrenama	GSK	\$4,300	speaking
Dr. Abraham Cherrick	J&J	\$1,453	speaking: \$750 travel: \$433 meals: \$270
Dr. Soren Caffey	GSK	\$1,500	speaking
Dr. Ramon Eduardo Mendez	Pfizer	\$1,468	Expert-Led Forums: \$1000 Business Related Travel: \$385 Meals: \$83
Dr. Yousef Hussien Salem	Pfizer	\$1,000	Expert-Led Forums
Dr. Richard Ashby	AstraZeneca	\$900	speaking
Dr. Marvin Chadab	J&J	\$472	consulting fees: \$350 meals: \$122
Dr. Divyang Trivedi	GSK	\$100	speaking

SOURCE: 2009 and 2010 data from ProPublica

doctors giving speeches sponsored by GlaxoSmithKline must use slides presented by the pharmaceutical company in the order specified.

"We want to make sure that everything is correct," said Mary Anne Rhyne, a spokeswoman for GlaxoSmithKline. "The best way to do that is to have our team prepare the slide."

SEVERAL ALEXANDRIA doctors also hold academic positions in medical schools, which have come under increasing pressure to tighten control of faculty members taking money from Big Pharma. Stanford University, for example, has banned its faculty members from receiving giving paid promotional talks for pharmaceutical companies. Other schools, such as Virginia Commonwealth University take a more nuanced approach.

"Our policy is an attempt to thread the needle," said Jerome Strauss, dean of the Virginia Commonwealth University School of Medicine. "We want our faculty members to be able to give their advice without becoming sales representatives for the pharmaceutical industry."

Strauss says the key is disclosure. Faculty members at the VCU School of Medicine are required to obtain permission from the dean in advance of any speech, consulting job or expert-led forum and get permission in advance. Other medical schools in the area say they require disclosure, although the rules can be limited. Howard University of Medicine, for example, requires faculty members who are part of their practice plan to disclose financial transactions

with pharmaceutical companies. But that rule doesn't apply to doctors outside of the practice plan that are listed as Howard professors by the Virginia Board of Education.

"We are currently in the process of revising our policy," said Meredith Harrison, chief compliance officer at Howard University Hospital. "We want to stay current with the standards of the (Association of American Medical Colleges)."

RECENT YEARS HAVE seen a growing concern about the influence of Big Pharma. Back in 2008, the Association of American Medical Colleges urged its members to adopt an "influence-free" culture by prohibiting drug industry gifts and services to physicians, faculty, residents and students. In a series of recommendations since that time, the association encouraged its members to "strongly discourage" participation by faculty in industry-sponsored speaking engagements. The association cites mounting scientific evidence indicating that gifts, favors and other marketing activities prejudice independent judgment in unconscious ways.

"In the last few years, there has been growing attention to interactions between industry sources and physicians," said Heather Pierce, senior director for science policy and regulatory counsel. "It's an opportunity for the medical profession to look at itself and make sure that its practices are in the best interest of the patients."

The Alexandria Gazette Packet attempted to contact all of the Alexandria doctors who appear on the ProPublica database — most

of whom did not return phone calls.

The ones who did defended the practice as a legitimate way for doctors to interact with the pharmaceutical industry. Dr. Marvin Chadab, a dermatologist who says he attends one or two industry-sponsored events a year, says the events are sometimes a way for him to tell pharmaceutical companies that their products are overpriced. "We're not talking about a week in the Bahamas here," said Chadab. "It's a way for them to pick your brain and find out why you prescribe one drug over another."

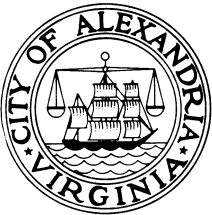
THE INFORMATION isn't without problems, especially because some of the drug companies making disclosures are made voluntarily and without any rules governing how the information is presented. That means some disparities creep into the data.

For example, Dr. Mark McClellan is listed as an Alexandria doctor even though he is not licensed with the Virginia Board of Medicine. A spokeswoman for GlaxoSmithKline said he is a doctor in the District of Columbia and the drug company listed him as an Alexandria doctor because that's where he lives.

Additionally, Dr. Divyang Trivedi says he hasn't participated in a speaking engagement sponsored by a pharmaceutical company for many years.

He said that that one of his employees may have used his name to receive compensation because he is the head of the practice and that he has approached the drug company about altering its disclosure.

Legal Notices



A public hearing will be held by the Alexandria Board of Architectural Review on WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 26, 2011 beginning at 7:30 PM in Council Chambers, second floor of City Hall, 301 King Street, Alexandria, Virginia on the following applications:

CASE BAR2011-0002
Demolition/encapsulation at **927 Oronoco St**, zoned RB Residential.
APPLICANT: Michael Bergner by Stephen Kulin-ski, AIA

CASE BAR2011-0005
Alterations and rear addition at **927 Oronoco St**, zoned RB Residential.
APPLICANT: Michael Bergner by Stephen Kulin-ski, AIA

CASE BAR2011-00003
Alterations to previously approved plans at **219 N West St**, zoned RB Residential.
APPLICANT: Wanda Carter

CASE BAR2011-0004
Request for trash enclosure screening at **1400 Princess St**, zoned RB Residential.
APPLICANT: Alexandria Redevelopment and Housing Authority

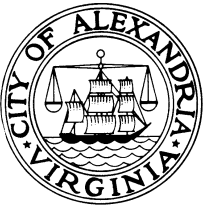
CASE BAR2011-0011
Request for new construction of 21 townhouse units (17 single-family and 4 triplexes), 3 multi-family buildings and park, and waiver of rooftop screening requirement for Phase IV of the James Bland Redevelopment Project at **898 North Alfred St**, zoned CDD #16
APPLICANT: Alexandria Redevelopment and Housing Authority by Kenneth Wire (McGuire Woods)

CASE BAR2011-0001
Request for change to previously approved plans for windows at Phase I of James Bland Redevelopment at **808 Madison St**, zoned CDD #16

APPLICANT: James Bland Housing I LP by Kenneth Wire (McGuire Woods)

Information about the above item(s) may be obtained from the Department of Planning and Zoning, City Hall, 301 King Street, Room 2100, Alexandria, Virginia 22314, telephone: (703) 746-4666.

Legal Notices



ALEXANDRIA PLANNING DEPARTMENT
NOTICE OF ADMINISTRATIVE REVIEW

The following requests have been received for administrative review and approval.

The Director of Planning and Zoning may approve the permits unless a request that the application be forwarded to City Council is received by February 4, 2011.

For information about this application or to comment, visit the City's website at alexandriava.gov or call (703) 746-4666.

SPECIAL USE PERMIT # 2011-0003

ADDRESS: 123 NORTH WASHINGTON STREET

REQUEST TO OPERATE A MASSAGE ESTABLISHMENT WITH AN EXISTING HAIR SALON AND SPA; ZONED CD/COMMERCIAL DOWNTOWN

APPLICANT: ELLEN VLASAK

LEGAL NOTICE

Pursuant to the provision of section 4-1-16 of the code of the City of Alexandria, the Alexandria Police Department located at 2003 Mill Road, Alexandria, VA 22314 is now in possession of unclaimed bicycles, mopeds, lawn equipment, money, scooters, and other items. All persons having valid claim to the property should file a claim to the property with reasonable proof of ownership or the items will be sold, destroyed, converted or donated. For a complete listing go to <http://alexandriava.gov/police/> and contact the Police Property Unit at (703) 838-4709.

ABC LICENSE

Fraternal Order of Eagles, Inc trading as Alva Aerie No. 871, 1015 Cameron St, Alexandria, VA 22314. The above establishment is applying to the VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGE CONTROL for a wine and beer on and off premises license to sell or manufacture alcoholic beverages.
Peter C. Wintermute, trustee

Alexandria Gazette Packet



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AUGUST 18, 2011



PHOTOS BY LOUISE KRAFT/CAZETTE PACKET

Ready, Aim, Fire

Before giving his company the order to fire during Fort Ward Civil War Camp Day on Saturday, Aug. 13, Sgt. Dave Tucker gave an order to the civilians, "Cover your ears!"



Austin Williams explains the use and purpose of the contents of a typical backpack carried by soldiers in his company. The packs weighed between 40 and 60 pounds.



Bishop Ireton graduate John Gerndt cooks up lunch for members of the 11th New York Volunteer Infantry.



Daniel Danielson and Bill Lynch portrayed infantry soldiers of the First Minnesota Company D, the first regiment to volunteer to fight for the Union.



Rebecca and Max Preas cook up ham and fresh corn for members of the Fifth Virginia.



The contents of a typical backpack and haversack carried by a soldier of the Fifth Virginia Company was on display to visitors at Fort Ward Park during Civil War Camp Day Aug. 13.

Bottom Falls Out

Alexandria has the lowest test scores in Northern Virginia.

BY MICHAEL LEE POPE
GAZETTE PACKET

Alexandria ranks lowest among all school divisions in Northern Virginia, according to standardized test scores released last week by the Virginia Department of Education. The scores show a dramatic reduction in pass rates for students with disabilities and math as well as a slight reduction among all students in reading.

Because the benchmarks rose yet again this year, Alexandria logged its worst year ever in terms of meeting the federal expectations. Only one school — Barrett Elementary School — made adequate yearly progress compared to last year, when seven schools made the grade.

"It's kind of like sticking your

finger in the air and saying 'this feels like a good number,'" said Alexandria Superintendent of Schools Morton Sherman. "There was no scientific reasoning nor basis for the establishment of those numbers."

The No Child Left Behind Act was designed to increase standards each year until 2014, when all students will be required to meet minimum standards. As a result, the annual measurable objectives rise each year. This year, for example, that means that 83 percent of students are responsible for passing the math test and 86 percent of students are expected to pass the reading test. Next year the benchmark will rise again, with 91 percent of students expected to pass reading and 90 percent expected to pass math.

SEE CITY SCHOOLS' PAGE 5

Coal Versus Gas

Natural gas industry proposes getting rid of Alexandria's coal-fired power plant.

BY MICHAEL LEE POPE
GAZETTE PACKET

The slick broadside for Potomac River Green looks like something a developer might put together — colorful architectural drawings, detailed maps and pages of plans for the future. But the 67-page spiral bound document on thick cardstock is not a site plan or an application for a development special-use project.

In fact, it's not a plan at all.

It's a "concept" for transforming

25 polluted acres into a mixed-use community. But there's a catch. The land is owned by energy giant Pepco and leased to GenOn, which operates a coal-fired power plant. Yet the colorful concept plan for the future was put together by the American Clean Skies Foundation, a nonprofit organization whose chairman is the chief executive officer for natural gas producer Chesapeake Energy Corporation. That means the foundation presented a concept for what should happen on land they don't

SEE GAS INDUSTRY, PAGE 6

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Gas Industry Targets Coal-Fired Power Plant

FROM PAGE 1
OWN.

“This is not an altruistic plan,” said Elizabeth Chimento, a member of a monitoring group the city set up to closely observe the coal-fired power plant. “This is about money, and it’s a fight for dominance between the coal industry and the natural gas industry.”

The Clean Skies Foundation concept also suggests that some of a \$32 million settlement might be redirected toward getting rid of the coal-fired power plant rather than making it cleaner. Because the engineering contract to install the “baghouse” filters is still being negotiated three years after the settlement, the natural-gas industry group suggested that investing the money in a coal-fired power plant might be used to remediate the site.

“How dare they,” said Poul Hertel, another member of the monitoring group. “It’s the height of irresponsibility for this group to suggest that we endure another decade of polluted air for some pie in the sky BS.”

THE STORY of how a coal-fired power plant ended up on valuable waterfront property dates to 1949, when the Potomac Energy Company — now known as Pepco — constructed the Potomac River Generating Station. Back then, the land use fit into a



CLEAN SKIES FOUNDATION

Funded by the natural-gas industry, the Potomac River Green concept seeks to do away with a coal-fired power plant on the city’s waterfront.

collection of industrial uses along the waterfront that included everything from a rendering plant to an abandoned torpedo factory. The coal-fired power plant was situated between the Potomac River Clayworks and the American Chlorophyll Company.

Over time, the waterfront became less

industrial. A park replaced the rendering plant. Condominiums replaced warehouses. And the Torpedo Factory became an art center. But the old coal-fired power plant remained intact and operational, with Pepco leasing the plant to Atlanta-based energy company Mirant. In 2004, city officials be-

gan a coordinated campaign to shut down the plant.

“We tried everything,” recalled Councilwoman Del Pepper. “We tried to take away their special-use permit. We tried rezoning. None of it worked.”

SEE BATTLE, PAGE 7

Legal Notices	Legal Notices	Legal Notices	Legal Notices	Legal Notices
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Important Notice for Comcast Customers in Alexandria

We previously notified the following International channels would be launching on or about Sept. 1st. The new launch date is on or about **Thursday, September 22, 2011.**

NETWORK	CHANNEL	LEVEL OF SERVICE	MONTHLY PRICING
The Israeli Network	652	Premium	\$19.99
Channel One Russia	654	Premium	\$14.99
RTN	655	Premium	\$14.99
Russian Kino	657	Premium	\$9.99
CTI-Zhong Tian	660	Premium	Not Sold Separately
CCTV-4	661	Premium	Not Sold Separately
CTI-Zhong Tian Channel & CCTV-4	660 and 661	Premium	\$11.99
Phoenix InfoNews	662	Premium	\$9.99
Phoenix North America	663	Premium	\$9.99
ET-Super Channel	664	Premium	Not Sold Separately
tvK	667	Digital Preferred	
WKTV Korea	668	Premium	\$14.99
GMA Pinoy TV	669	Premium	\$11.99
The Filipino Channel	670	Premium	\$11.99
TV Japan	674	Premium	\$24.99
Rai Italia	679	Premium	\$9.99
TV5 Monde	680	Premium	\$9.99
NEOCRICKET	689	Premium	Call For Pricing
STAR India NEWS	690	Premium	Not Sold Separately
STAR One	692	Premium	Not Sold Separately
STAR India PLUS	693	Premium	\$11.99
SET Asia (Sony)	694	Premium	\$14.99
STAR India GOLD	696	Premium	Not Sold Separately

On or about, **Thursday, September 22nd**, the following channels will move channel location and new prices will be in effect:

NETWORK	CHANNEL	LEVEL OF SERVICE	MONTHLY PRICING
Zee TV	was 666, now 691	Premium	was \$15.95, now \$14.99
TV Asia	was 665, now 695	Premium	was \$15.95, now \$14.99

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Battle Between Coal, Gas

FROM PAGE 6

By 2008, City Council members were ready to compromise. So they struck a \$32 million deal with Mirant to clean up the operation by installing the latest technology in an effort to reduce the level of particulates released into the atmosphere. But progress has been slow. It's been three years since the settlement agreement and none of the "baghouse" filters have been installed yet. City officials hope to have the first of three baghouse filters installed by the end of 2012.

"This isn't like changing a bag on your vacuum cleaner," said Bill Skraback, deputy director for the Department of Transportation and Environmental Services. "It takes time."

BUT THE PROPOSAL for Potomac River Green calls that settlement into question. Instead of investing tens of millions of dollars into making the coal-fired power plant cleaner, supporters of natural gas now say that money might be better spent cleaning up the site and preparing it for some other use. That would include removing asbestos in the turbine hall, PCB contamination in the transmission switchyard, fly-ash deposits around the site and fuel-oil residue associated with coal-fired electric generating stations — a process that could cost as much as \$50 million, according to the Clean Skies Foundation.

"In short, the time has come to start planning for what will come next," wrote American Skies Foundation CEO Gregory Staple in a written statement. "Today the prime riverfront site the PRGS occupies (some 25 acres) is worth much more for alternative civil and commercial purposes than for generating electricity."

The concept for Potomac River Green notes that much has changed since the 2008 agreement between Mirant and the city. For starters, Mirant has now become the property of GenOn, a much larger company that owns more than 40 power plants. In addition to this, the foundation notes, demand for electricity produced at the plant has fallen off as more efficient and lower cost power producers compete to sell electricity to Pepco and other distribution companies. And new air-quality standards from the Environmental Protection Agency could jeopardize the economic viability of the operation.

"Whatever the provisions for site redemption," the concept outline concluded, the Potomac River Green plan "contemplates an early resolution of the responsibility and funding for demolishing the PRGS and site clean up."

CITY COUNCIL MEMBERS are legally bound from

Coleman Pleads Guilty to Child Pornography

A teacher at John Adams Elementary School pleaded guilty Wednesday, Aug. 3, to two counts of producing child pornography following an investigation by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement's Homeland Security Investigations.

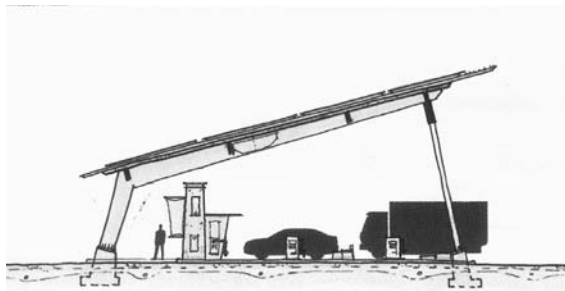
Justin Coleman, 35, of Falls Church, was arrested on April 6, on receipt of child pornography charges. A federal grand jury indicted Coleman on June 16 on six child pornography related charges. According to the statement of facts, Coleman was among

900 individuals in the United States identified by Italian law enforcement as part of an overseas child pornography investigation.

During an interview with U.S. law enforcement, Coleman admitted he had viewed child pornography for years, as often as two or three times a week, and preferred images and videos depicting 5- to 12-year-old girls engaging in sexually explicit conduct. A forensic analysis of digital evidence in this case revealed that Coleman had created at least two videos.

The analysis also found more

than 2,500 images of existing child pornography that had been altered by Coleman to depict former, minor female students to appear to be engaging in sexually explicit conduct. Overall, the analysis found more than 75,000 images of child pornography and child erotica and 1,000 child pornography movies. Coleman faces a mandatory minimum of 15 years and a maximum penalty of 30 years for each production charge when he is sentenced on Oct. 28, before U.S. District Judge Gerald Bruce Lee.



CLEAN SKIES FOUNDATION

The Potomac River Green concept calls for an Alternative Fuels Center that would recharge electric vehicles and serve as a public compressed natural gas refueling center for taxis, corporate fleets and government vehicles.

making any public statements about shutting down the plant, a provision of the 2008 agreement. (Violating this condition could jeopardize the settlement.) But others have been vocal about the possibility for shutting the doors of the coal-fired power plant as soon as possible. Shortly after the plant was acquired by GenOn, the Sierra Club launched a campaign called "GenOff" to warn about the potential dangers of the plant. According to the Sierra Club, the Potomac River Generating Station is responsible for 37 deaths, 60 heart attacks and 610 asthma attacks each year.

"We need to stop investing money in a plant that has no future," said Philip Ellis, field organizer with the Sierra Club.

"It's time to stop trying to put a Band-Aid on this and start working toward a solution like the one that the Clean Skies Foundation has laid out."

Critics of natural gas point out the dangers of hydraulic fracturing, also known as "fracking" that is currently used in most oil and gas wells. Last week, 22 universities in 13 states signed a letter objecting to the makeup of an advisory panel named by Energy Secretary Steven Chu to examine safety and environmental issues associated with fracking. The scientists said the panel was dominated by the natural gas industry, pointing out six of the seven members of the Energy Advisory Board National Gas Subcommittee have ties to the natural gas industry.

"In our work, we believe in reducing individual biases in evaluating the merits of scientific or technological ideas," the scientists wrote to Secretary Chu. "The current panel does not meet this standard."

Councilwoman Pepper said that the Clean Skies Foundation will be meeting later this month with Pepco to discuss the Potomac River Green concept.



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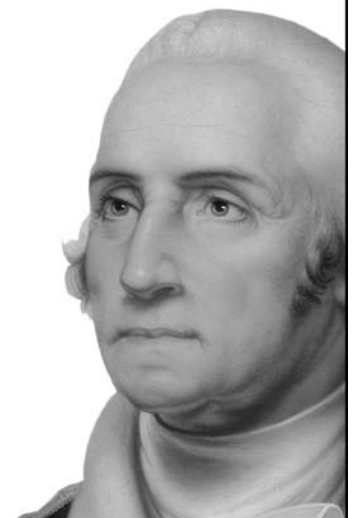
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Waterfront Club

The City Council won't be meeting this summer to argue about the waterfront plan. So they've created an advisory commission to do it for them. When council members return in the fall, they'll be expecting a full report.

For now, the planning process is at an impasse. Opponents reject increased density, calling for more open space and a maritime museum.

Supporters dismiss that idea as unworkable, praising the planning document as a vision for transforming some of the waterfront's last industrial uses. Rhetoric has been heated and emotional, featuring an extended debate about how to configure the advisory committee.

"We're at a stalemate," said Councilwoman **Del Pepper**. "And I hope we can find a way out."

After considering and rejecting a number of proposals, the final list includes one member of the Old Town Civic Association, one member of the Waterfront Committee and five citizens at-large to be selected by Mayor **Bill Euille** from a pool of names suggested by council members.

One member of the council will convene the meeting but have a nonvoting role. All meetings will include an opportunity for the general public to comment.

"I don't see this as a stalemate," said Councilman **Paul Smedberg**, one of the plan's strongest supporters. "We just need to make a decision. People are afraid to make a decision."

Trolley Debate

When the King Street Trolley first launched in April 2008, the rubber-tire vehicles arrived at designated stops once every 15 minutes. Then the economy crashed, and the city cut back service to 20-minute headways. Now that the city's financial situation has improved, City Council members are reducing headways back to 15 minutes.

But not without a debate.

This week, City Council members approved an annual increase of \$188,000 to the cost of trolley service. The money will come from real-estate tax revenues reserved for transportation projects, a new pot of money recently created by the May budget vote. With \$700,000 set aside in the recently adopted transportation project list, the \$188,000 allocation will leave \$512,000 for planning expanded service to Del Ray and Carlyle. Councilwoman **Alicia Hughes** voted against the measure because she said she would like to see any new money go to expanding the service beyond Old Town.

"The world does not revolve around Old Town," said Hughes, who lives on the West End. "I voted against it because I want to see service expanded now rather than waiting for some undetermined point in the future."

A Running Start

Speaking of Old Town, residents there may soon find themselves in the middle of a marathon.

Last year, Endurance Enterprises president **Steve Nearman** tried to include several residential streets in Old Town in the Woodrow Wilson Half Marathon. That effort failed after Councilman **Paul Smedberg** worried about residents getting to church in the morning and former City Manager **Jim Hartmann** raised concerns about upscale grocer **Balducci's**.

Now the debate has returned.

Last week, the Old Town Civic Association endorsed Nearman's effort to bring the race through the streets of Old Town. So Nearman approached Vice Mayor **Kerry Donley** about the possibility that the route could be changed in advance of the October race.

He raised the issue Tuesday night, although council members would be unable to change the route during their recess. So the elected officials left the decision for the special-events committee, a group of staff members from public safety and code-enforcement.

"We'll stand by your decision," said Donley.

— MICHAEL LEE POPE

NEWS

A Heavy Load

Northern Virginia braces for new EPA calculations.

BY MICHAEL LEE POPE
GAZETTE PACKET

Local governments across Northern Virginia are bracing for a new federal report expected later this month, when the Environmental Protection Agency will release modeling data that could have drastic financial consequences. At stake are hundreds of millions worth of infrastructure projects and potential fines for violating permitted daily limits of pollution. Some have a head start while others are struggling to catch up.

"Ultimately it's a local decision how to respond to the requirements," said Martha Shickle, executive director of the Northern Shenandoah Valley Regional Commission. "At this point, we don't have any way to understand the magnitude of what it will take to respond."

Responding to increasing demands from the federal government will likely be inconvenient and costly. Later this month, Arlington County will finish construction of a \$568 million upgrade to its wastewater treatment plant that's been in the works for decades. Additions include two new equalization tanks, two new aeration tanks and three new secondary classifiers. When the new EPA modeling is released later this month, Arlington officials feel they will be able to meet the rigorous new standard because of the decade-long effort to reduce the amount of bacteria that's dumped into the river.

"We should be able to do better than the new standard," said Larry Slattery, division chief of the Water Control Pollution Bureau. "So it's not a problem for

us."

OTHER JURISDICTIONS face serious problems. Officials in Alexandria are facing

strict new requirements that will be difficult if not impossible to meet — especially for Old Town, much of which still uses a 19th century system. Every time the city experiences a major rain event, which is about 10 times a year, the floodgates open and thousands of gallons of raw sewage are discharged into the river. Fixing that could require digging up the streets of Old Town to fix the combined sewer system or constructing massive new storage tanks underground at Jones Point Park.

"Either way, it would be a big hit for the city," said Councilwoman Del Pepper. "At this point, we have to wait and see what happens."

It's all part of a plan to fully restore the Chesapeake Bay and its tidal rivers by 2025, with at least 60 percent of the actions taken by 2017. The EPA's new limits on total maximum daily limit of various pollution will be considerably stricter than the current limits. For example, the amount of nitrates Arlington County will be allowed to release into the river will be reduced by more than half. EPA officials say federal action could be used to spur progress if needed.

"We all pay for polluted water through degraded water sources, including drinking water and loss of fish and wildlife habitat," said EPA Regional Administrator Karl Brooks in a January written statement about new requirements in Missouri.

SEE SEWER COSTS. PAGE 26

Exploring the Benefits of Google

SBDC holds small business seminar.

BY SVETLANA AVELLAN
GAZETTE PACKET

A seminar focusing on how to use Google's free tools to advance small businesses was presented by Ray Sidney-Smith at the Lyceum in Old Town on June 23. Sidney-Smith discussed areas of business that Google can help with, such as marketing, accounting, social media, customer service, human resources and management.

The gathering was hosted by the Alexandria Small Business Development Center, whose services are free.

Sidney-Smith will conduct weekly webinars of each tool described in the seminar to further educate small business owners or potential owners. Each webinar will explain in detail how to use each tool in the most productive way for business development.

An entrepreneur, Sidney-Smith has worked in the legal, small business start-up and management fields. "I help businesses understand how to use technology," Sidney-Smith. "Why should they pay for seminars or software when I can show them how to use the Google tools for free?"

David Martin, owner of Goldworks, was in the audience.

"He's an incredibly brilliant person," Martin said



PHOTO BY SVETLANA AVELLAN

Ray Sidney-Smith

of Sidney-Smith. "I have had many appointments and consultations with him to help promote my business. I will, no doubt, attend his webinars to further my knowledge."

Joining Martin at the seminar were about 100 attendees, most of whom are eager to register for the upcoming webinars.

Bill Reagan, executive director of SBDC, said, "The seminar showed a strategic overview of what the webinars will cover in detail. The tools covered in the webinars can be a valuable benefit to small business owners."

Space is limited for the webinars to 100 seats. Sidney-Smith will host the first webinar on June 30 from 10:15 - 11:15 a.m. To reserve a seat, visit <https://www3.gotomeeting.com/register/775544934>.

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NEWS

Sewer Costs

FROM PAGE 6

SEWER SYSTEMS in Northern Virginia date to the 19th century, a time when cholera epidemics threatened health and commerce in the region. After an 1828 epidemic, the Alexandria Board of Health convened in emergency session and outlawed the practice of dumping raw sewage into the streets. The city government funded infrastructure projects to repave streets that were clogged with raw sewage, including Washington and Columbus streets running south from Duke and the west wide of St. Asaph.

"All dram and drinking houses were ordered closed in Washington," wrote Alexandria maritime historian Donald Shomette. "Although Alexandria advised similar measures, the only action taken was to recommend the healthful virtues of abstinence."

That included daily notices in the Alexandria Gazette from the Alexandria Board of Health recommending that citizens refuse to eat unwholesome fruits and vegetables, remain sober and go to bed early. The cholera epidemics of the 19th century gave rise to the need for the early sewage tunnels under the streets of Old Town, cedar tunnels later replaced by cast-iron pipes.

By 1968, Arlington County began requiring construction projects to separate sewage from stormwater runoff. Instead of digging up the county's old neighborhoods, officials decided to build large tanks at the treatment plant.

"Some areas in Arlington still have combined sewers," said Slattery. "But we fix that at the plant."

Alexandria faces a different problem. The old sewer system that was progressive in the 19th century has now become a liability. Now city officials are facing a choice about how to respond to the new modeling and reduce the amount of raw sewage dropped into the Potomac River and ultimately the Chesapeake Bay. Digging up the streets and fixing the combined sewer system or constructing massive new underground tanks at Jones Point are both very expensive infrastructure projects — at least \$300 million. How the city will respond may depend on the new EPA requirements.

"We'll have a better idea in the next few months," said Pepper, a member of the Northern Virginia Energy and Environmental Policy Committee.

Localities across America are considering how to respond to the ever-increasing demands from the EPA, which is trying to implement a 1970-era mandate that rivers must be "swimmable." The District of Columbia has opted to build a series of massive underground tanks that will store polluted water during heavy rains, an infrastructure project that will cost billions. New York and Philadelphia, on the other hand, have attempted to convert impervious surfaces to allow absorption and reduce stormwater runoff.

"As a result of the EPA report," said Shickle, "localities will have a much clearer picture of what the nutrients loads need to be."

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JULY 7, 2011

Neighborhood Under Siege?

North Old Town residents confront city officials on noise and crime.

BY MICHAEL LEE POPE
GAZETTE PACKET

Cunshots in the middle of the night. Drug dealing in plain sight. Public urination.

Threats of violence. A car set on fire. Screaming and loud music. Litter rolling through the streets. These are some of the things neighbors in North Old Town say are happening in and around public-housing units in Chatham Square and government-subsidized units at Hopkins Tancil.

"It's not what you think of as Old Town," said Jennifer Smith, president of the Gadsby's Court Homeowners Association. "The quality of life has really deteriorated over the last two years."

Nonsense, responds the chairman of the Alexandria Redevelopment and Housing Authority.

"I think their concerns are overblown," said Melvin Miller, long-



PHOTO BY MICHAEL LEE POPE/GAZETTE PACKET

Originally built in 1942, Hopkins Tancil is subsidized under the Section 8 Moderate Rehabilitation program.

time chairman of the public housing authority. "I just don't think it's true."

Last month, several North Old Town residents met with city officials, ARAH representatives and police officers at City Hall. The meeting, which was tense at times, allowed residents to express their concerns about what they say is a growing sense of lawlessness on the streets of North Old Town. One woman talked about witnessing people smoking marijuana on the stoop outside her house. Another woman said real estate agents don't want to bring potential homebuyers to the neighborhood because of its reputation.

"My concerns is that people are starting to feel safe breaking the law," said Kara Clemens, a resident of Chatham Square. "We'd like to see zero tolerance."

RESPONDING TO concerns that their neighborhood is spiraling out of control, several have banded together to form the North Old Town Residents Coalition. By acting as a group, they hope to prompt action by the Alexandria

Police Department and ARHA. Several of the neighbors at the meeting did not want to speak on the record, fearing for their safety. Those who were willing to use their names say things started to change about two years ago, when former Police Chief David Baker stepped down and was replaced by current Police Chief Earl Cook.

"Most of the people who live in these units are very nice, but there is a small bad element," said Smith. "The city and ARHA don't seem to be willing to do anything about this."

This is not the first time that North Old Town residents have raised concerns about a decreasing quality of life in their neighborhood. Back in 2008, a group of neighbors attended a City Council public hearing to complain about a laundry list of problems in their neighborhood — assaults, drug sales, child abuse, public drunkenness, open-container violations, trespassing, vandalism, profanity, littering, loitering, prowling, threats, intimidation, torturing of animals and graffiti.

SEE NEIGHBORHOOD. PAGE 3



PHOTO BY LA SHAWN AVERY-SIMONS/GAZETTE PACKET

Marking 235 Years

Fireworks explode a day early, on July 3, in Alexandria in celebration of Independence Day.

From the Streets to Success

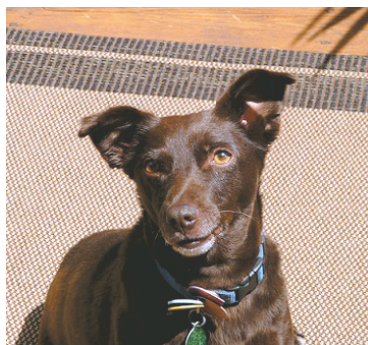
Former Kosovo street dog places in competitions.

BY EDISON RUSS
GAZETTE PACKET

Brownie, a dog rescued from the streets of Kosovo three years ago, has placed second and fourth in American Kennel Club (AKC) obedience competitions.

In Kosovo, Brownie's tail had to be amputated after someone tied firecrackers to it. She survived the ordeal by finding her way into a locked building in the U.S. embassy and making it to the office of State Department worker Bob Ruehl, who took her to a veterinarian.

Ruehl called his friend, Sally Nist of Alexandria, who also worked for the State Department,



EDISON RUSS/GAZETTE PACKET

Brownie with ears raised while owner Sally Nist makes whistling sound.

to let her know that Brownie was injured and to see if Nist would take care of her. Nist agreed.

"I tried to catch her a couple of times," Nist said, "but she was a little bit elusive. And I even bought

dog food and everything."

Nist had to leave Kosovo before Brownie was well enough to travel, so Brownie stayed with Bev Dewalt, one of Nist's friends, for a month. Brownie attended the grand opening of the new U.S. embassy during that time.

Brownie was pregnant when Dewalt brought her back. After two weeks, Brownie had five puppies. Two of the puppies are with Nist's daughter; another is with Dewalt's parents; and the last two are in Washington with friends of Nist's daughter.

Nist registered Brownie with the American Kennel Club's (AKC) canine partner program under the name "Kosovo Coffee Bean" and

SEE FROM KOSOVO. PAGE 3

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Waterfront Clique

Later this week, Alexandria Mayor **Bill Euille** will announce members of one of the most elite clubs in the city — the waterfront advisory commission. As the summer months heat up, members of the commission will have the hottest seat in town, presiding over a panel tasked with making a recommendation on one of the most controversial topics in recent memory.

At stake is the future of the three major sites on the waterfront slated for redevelopment. A small-area plan released earlier this year by city planners calls for allowing hotels at the sites and increasing density.

Opponents of the proposal reject the idea that increasing density along the waterfront would be the best course of action, criticizing the document as a blueprint for clogging city streets and creating a parking nightmare.

A majority of City Council members seemed to be on board before they adjourned for the summer recess last week, although they wanted a larger margin of support for the vote to indicate widespread support behind the plan. That left the process at a stalemate, with each side digging in its heels and preparing for a protracted fight. Euille said he felt it would probably be impossible to impanel a group of people who have no opinion on the plan.

“Everybody has an opinion,” said Euille, one of the plan’s most vocal supporters. “At the same time, we want them to have an open mind.”

The advisory group is expected to hold its first meeting later this month. After that, the schedule will be left up to the group. A final recommendation is expected before the end of the calendar year.

“I’d like to see a recommendation by mid-October or early November,” said Euille.

Armed Bank Robbery

In the 1930s, when bankers were universally reviled, bank robbers were considered folk heroes. These days they are considered dim-witted criminals — risking federal prosecution for relatively small amounts of money.

Nevertheless, they continue to be attracted to Alexandria. This week it was the Virginia Commerce Bank on Prince Street. Alexandria police officials say a black male between 30 to 40 years old entered the bank and demanded money shortly after noon on Tuesday. He was wearing a yellow construction helmet, a black sleeveless shirt and blue jeans. Police describe him as 6’1” with a thin build.

“We tell people to hand over the money,” said **Margot Mohsberg Johnson**, spokeswoman for the American Bankers Association, in an interview last year. “Don’t be a hero. It’s not worth it.”

According to police statistics, suspects have been arrested in about half of the bank robbery cases over the last six years.

Clerk Announces Bid

Alexandria’s Clerk of Court **Ed Semonian** announced this week that he will be seeking a fifth term, making him the elected official to hold the same office for the longest period of time. (Second place goes to Councilwoman **Del Pepper**, who was elected in 1985; U.S. Rep. **Jim Moran**, who was first elected in May 1979, holds the record for longest serving elected official overall.)

First elected in November 1979, Semonian serves an important if little noticed role. As clerk, he records deeds and issues marriage licenses as well as handling all probate and fiduciary matters. The position has an eight-year term.

“The efficiency and responsiveness of his office are critical to the effective and fair handling of criminal cases in the city,” said Commonwealth’s Attorney **Randy Sengel**.

“His professionalism and personal work ethic are inspirational, and have earned him the respect, admiration and loyalty of judges, attorneys, his dedicated employees, and citizens who seek his help.”

— MICHAEL LEE POPE

News

Gorsuch To Lead School Board

Cited as “an outspoken voice for the disenfranchised.”

BY MAYA HOROWITZ
GAZETTE PACKET

After a series of seven votes, the Alexandria City School Board elected Sheryl Gorsuch chairman Friday, July 1. To be elected chairman, a candidate must get majority approval. On the nine-member board, this meant five votes.

The problem on Friday was that the vote was split three ways. Helen Morris, Marc Williams and Sheryl Gorsuch were all nominated to be chairman. Speeches were given in support of each can-

didate and each of them was allowed to speak on their own behalf.

Then there was a vote. Four for Gorsuch, three for Morris and two for Williams.

Since there was not a majority, members of the board were again given the chance to speak. Then there was another vote. But no one had changed his or her mind.

After the third vote — and same results — someone made the joke, “we might have to order for lunch.” “Or dinner!” another chimed in.

SEE NEW CHAIR, PAGE 22



School Board Vice Chairman Helen Morris, newly elected Chairman Sheryl Gorsuch and Superintendent of Schools Morton Sherman.

Neighborhood Under Siege?

FROM PAGE 1

“We have to discontinue touting Chatham Square as an award-winning community, a jewel in the crown of the city of Alexandria,” Clemens told City Council members in a September 2008 public hearing. “The newspapers cannot print puff pieces about what a wonderful neighborhood this is anymore because it’s not true.”

AFTER DRAWING attention to the problem, Clemens said, the situation improved dramatically. The Chatham Square homeowners association even considered discontinuing their private security force. But then the pendulum began to swing in the other direction, neighbors say. They say the problems are

worse now than they’ve ever been — and they are calling on the police and ARHA to do something about it. “Why are we living like this?” Smith asked city officials last month. “It defies logic.”

Although one representative from ARHA suggested that neighbors who were unhappy with living in an urban environment should move to the suburbs, North Old Town residents dismissed that idea. Instead, they said, they would like to see the police take incident reports of problems instead of scattering crowds after a brawl.

“We’d like for everyone to have peace and quiet at home,” said Rose Boyd, special assistant to the city manager. “And you have a commitment from the chief of police that he will enforce the law.”

From Kosovo to Alexandria

FROM PAGE 1

entered her into her first rally obedience trial.

Brownie earned the title of “rally novice” June 12 at the Skyline Kennel Club in Staunton, Va. She has two qualifying scores, or “legs,” toward the title “beginner’s novice.” Rally requires a dog to complete 10 to 12 of 20 exercises selected by the judge. The exercises may include weaving around poles, taking three steps forward and sitting, putting the dog in a sit stay, heeling and others.

Nist said that obedience competitions are more objective than others, such as competitions that judge dogs based on their appearance. Points are deducted if a command is issued more than once, if a dog takes too long to perform a task, or if a dog sits the wrong way. Nist is teaching Brownie to heel on a leash and off, to do figure eights around people, and the recall.

Nist entered Brownie in the trials after seeing her progress in obedience training at the Mount Vernon Dog Training Center, where Nist took her to get Brownie comfortable with being around people and other dogs. “When I first got her,” Nist said, “I would sit out on the porch, and as far away as she could see, if she saw a dog, she would just bark and carry on. And so, that was her ... territorial limit, however far she could see.”

Cheryl Pratt, one of Brownie’s instructors, said that even though Brownie was nervous around other dogs

at first, she didn’t require any special treatment, just time and patience. “I knew after the first eight-week class, she was much better than she was when she first started,” Pratt said about Brownie’s comfort level around other dogs.

The center uses positive reinforcement to train dogs, and corrects them if necessary. Dogs are praised when they perform a task properly, and after completing an eight-week basic class, instructors use treats to get the dogs to focus.

The Center offers classes for all levels of AKC obedience. It does not offer classes for other events, like agility or flyball. Brownie is the first mixed breed dog Nist has had since she was a child.

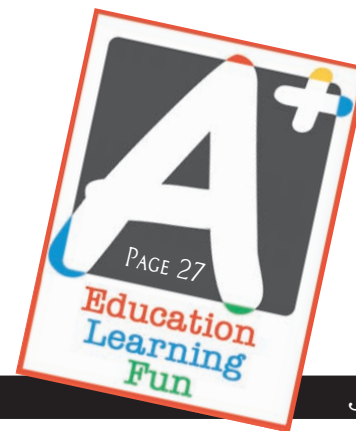
“Over the years, I’ve had a series of registered dogs,” Nist said, “and that’s not to say they’re better or worse, I just was always competing in dog shows, so I had a purebred dog for that reason. But then, with Brownie, I just couldn’t resist that little face of hers.”

Nist doesn’t know for certain all of the breeds Brownie is, but she is sure there is some dachshund and terrier. Nist hasn’t had Brownie tested for her breeds because she doesn’t think U.S. veterinarians have the proper information for dog breeds from Kosovo.

Brownie will travel to Salisbury, Md., this month to compete for her last leg in beginner’s novice, and to Berryville, Va., in August, to try for the “novice” title.

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PHOTOS BY LOUISE KRAFT/GAZETTE PACKET



The Alexandria Citizens Band will perform one more Friday evening concert in Market Square on July 29 at 7:30 p.m.

In Market Square

The 99-year old Alexandria Citizens Band performed a concert in Market Square on Friday, July 15. The band is the oldest performing arts organization in the City of Alexandria. Founded in 1912, the group made its first public appearance in the 1914 George Washington Birthday Parade. For more information on the band and the upcoming concert schedule visit www.alexandriacitizensband.org.



Dean Eveland on the tuba.



John Pickeral secures the sheet music to his stand as a breeze blows through the square. Pickeral is the oldest member of the band at age 78.



Zoe Greszler dances around the flagpole as the concert prepares to start.

City Considers Eminent Domain

After years of rejecting the idea, city considers new strategy.

BY MICHAEL LEE POPE
GAZETTE PACKET

For more than three decades, the City of Alexandria and the Old Dominion Boat Club have been locked in a struggle over a series of properties near the foot of King Street. Last week, that struggle took a dramatic turn when City Attorney James Banks acknowledged that the city government is now considering using eminent domain to take some of that property — marking a change in direction.

“Eminent domain is only going to be something of a last resort,” said Banks. “If all settlement discussions with the Boat Club break down, only then would we consider eminent domain.”

Banks said that the City Council members had taken up the issue in executive session, and that the sense of council was that the city should change its policy on eminent domain. Mayor Bill Euille declined to comment on the change in policy, directing all questions to the city attorney. As a result of the new policy, the city made an offer of \$150,000 for several properties — a move that was interpreted by Boat Club members as the first step in a potential taking action.

“I think it’s reasonable to assume that they would eventually file a taking action against the club,” said Bert Ely, a member of the club who stressed that he was not speaking on behalf of the organi-

SEE DOMAIN, PAGE 16

‘Increasing Polarization’

Neighbors disagree about quality of life in North Old Town.

BY MICHAEL LEE POPE
GAZETTE PACKET

Residents of subsidized housing and public housing in North Old Town are furious at accusations that their neighborhood has spiraled out of control, a claim that a growing number of homeowners asso-

ciations are making in an increasingly tense environment of claim and counter-claim. Responding to a series of allegations made by residents of Chatham Square and Gadsby’s Court last month, community organizer Lenny Harris arranged a meeting at Charles Hous-

SEE POLARIZATION, PAGE 17

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PHOTO BY MICHAEL LEE POPE/GAZETTE PACKET

Community organizer Lenny Harris speaks to a standing-room only crowd at the Charles Houston Recreation Center last week.

'Increasing Polarization'

FROM PAGE 1

ton Recreation Center last week.

"There's nothing wrong with us standing on the corner discussing sports, family and friends," Harris said. "That's part of our culture, and you can't take that away from our culture."

Neighbors who originally raised the concerns during a tense meeting with officials at City Hall last month were outraged that that Alexandria Communications Director Tony Castrilli invited the press to Harris' meeting but failed to notify them of the event. As to assurances from the Alexandria Police Department that crime statistics show a decline, several neighbors expressed skepticism that the numbers were a fair representation of what was happening in their neighborhood.

"We are disturbed that the city is playing fast and loose with crime statistics," wrote Jennifer Smith, president of the Gadsby's Court Homeowners Association, in a sharply worded letter to city officials. "In our opinion, this meeting is a calculated effort by the city and ARHA to discredit the good citizens who live in Old Town and are using race as a divider."

ACTING CITY MANAGER Bruce Johnson responded that Castrilli invited the press because city officials were "concerned over the credibility" of coverage of the issue. He made no apologies for not reaching out to neighbors who raised the concerns, describing the event as a meeting organized by Harris and others "who felt disrespected and denigrated" by comments from North Old Town residents. Johnson said he and other

city officials would work to make the city an "inclusive, safe and enjoyable and peaceful" place to live.

"This task has been made more difficult in your neighborhood as recent events have led to an increasing polarization between some residents," Johnson wrote in a letter released Friday evening, July 15. "This situation is regrettable. It is in all our interests to bring neighbors together, not divide them."

"This situation is regrettable. It is in all our interests to bring neighbors together, not divide them."

— **Acting City Manager
Bruce Johnson**

One of the issues raised by neighbors who are concerned about crime in their neighborhood is that they are concerned statistics don't tell the whole story. Several neighbors expressed reservations about calling the police for fear of retaliation. Other neighbors said they were concerned incidents were only logged into the official record when an arrest was made or when a neighbor specifically requested that the incident appear as part of the crime report. A spokesman for the police department said the threshold for whether or not an incident is recorded is a result of the police investigation.

"If the officer determines that a crime has occurred (whether or not there is an arrest or even a known suspect), a police report is initiated and captured as a criminal incident," said Alexandria Police Department Public Information Officer Jody Donaldson. "If not, then no report is taken, but the call for service still appears in the calls for service database with a disposition of 'no report.'"

NORTH OLD TOWN is home to some of the starkest disparities in Alexandria, with \$1 million homes literally next door to pub

SEE NEIGHBORS, PAGE 34

Things To Do Today

- ☐ 1. Breakfast w/ Mary & Bob—8:30
- ☐ 2. Tai chi group at 10
- ☐ 3. Birthday Luncheon—Noon
- ☐ 4. Pottery class—1:00
- ☒ 5. Canasta club at 3:00

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News

Neighbors

FROM PAGE 17

lic housing units. That was part of an effort to disburse public-housing throughout the city rather than clustering them in one area of the city. The centerpiece in that effort is Chatham Square, a development that opened in 2005 and mixes market rate housing with public housing. Three years later, a group of neighbors appeared at a City Council public hearing to complain about a laundry list of problems in their neighborhood — assaults, drug sales, child abuse, public drunkenness, open-container violations, trespassing, vandalism, profanity, littering, loitering, prowling, threats, intimidation, torturing of animals and graffiti.

“We have to discontinue touting Chatham Square as an award-winning community, a jewel in the crown of the city of Alexandria,” Chatham Square resident Kara Clemens told City Council members in a September 2008 public hearing. “The newspapers cannot print puff pieces about what a wonderful neighborhood this is anymore because it’s not true.”

Several neighbors say the problems went away for a while, and some even considered getting rid of their private security force. Now some say the pendulum has swung in the other direction, with gunshots in the night and drug dealing in plain sight. Police officials respond by pointing to crime statistics, which show a decline since 2008. Meanwhile residents of public housing at Chatham Square and government-subsidized housing at Hopkins Tancil say it’s time to stop making accusations and start working together.

“What disturbs me the most is that these are our neighbors,” said Hopkins Tancil resident Lisa Harper during the meeting at Charles Houston Recreation Center. “You have two different socio-economic backgrounds, and yes there are issues. But we have to come together and solve these problems.”

Deficit Fixes

FROM PAGE 13
whole.”

However, when asked about how discussions on Capitol Hill are going, Moran replied that they’re “not as well as the one tonight.” Congress has until Tuesday, Aug. 2, to reach a deal to raise the debt limit. Otherwise, according to the Concord Coalition’s Thiebert, the United States would default on its debt for the first time in its history. If that does happen, Thiebert says that interest rates will rise, thus increasing the cost of borrowing, and the country wouldn’t be able to borrow more money to “pay its bills.” The Secretary of the Treasury would decide who would be paid first with what money the federal government already has. Thiebert is hoping that it doesn’t come to that. “Default isn’t an option. We’ve known this is coming. This isn’t something new.” He said that all that’s really needed is the political leadership to come to a deal.

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-William Van Horne

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PET GAZETTE



PHOTO BY LOUISE KRAFT/GAZETTE PACKET

Hanging Out

Skipp Calvert and Hugo Saltonstall. More pet photos on pages 14-15.

Hidden Crime

Chatham Square crime statistics prove elusive.

BY MICHAEL LEE POPE
GAZETTE PACKET

The crime happened on March 30, according to police records — “suspect arrested for drunk in public” on Euille Street, which cuts right through the southernmost block of Chatham Square. Thirteen days later, a woman who lives in Chatham Square watched through a window as a man was arrested for possession of crack cocaine. That arrest was logged in police records, as were a handful of other quality-of-life crimes since February on the streets surrounding Chatham Square — two blocks of houses that include market rate

houses mixed with subsidized units owned by the Alexandria Housing and Redevelopment Authority. Charges include everything from public drunkenness and possession of cocaine to a suspect who was arrested for an open container of alcohol.

But when frustrated neighbors organized a new group called the North Old Town Residents Coalition and took their concerns to the city government last month, senior city officials went on the attack. The communications blitz started with a letter to the editor from Police Chief Earl Cook claiming that Chatham Square had no incidents of public drunkenness or

SEE CHATHAM, PAGE 6

‘Healthy Resistance’

Historic structure on Duke Street takes on new life.

BY MICHAEL LEE POPE
GAZETTE PACKET

Earlier this year, Theresa Wilson was running out of options. She had nowhere to live and limited financial resources. Like many low-income seniors, the Georgia native found herself facing homelessness as her golden years approached. Then she

“If this wasn’t here, I’d be sleeping out there in the street,” said Wilson, pointing toward Duke Street. “I wouldn’t have anywhere to go.”

Now, she’s got somewhere to go — Beasley Square. Named for the late Rev. Moses Beasley, who served as Shiloh’s pastor from 1947 to 1986, the church’s long struggle to

made her way to Shiloh Baptist Church, which was about to open eight new affordable housing units for low-income seniors.

create affordable housing for seniors began back in 2005. Neighbors of the traditionally

SEE AFFORDABLE, PAGE 3

“When you try to do something like this, people come out of the woodwork to oppose it.”

— U.S. Rep. Jim Moran (D-8)

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"I feel like we've been attacked by the city and ARHA. They've obviously aligned themselves against us."
— Kara Clemens, a resident of Chatham Square

Chatham Square Crime Statistics Prove Elusive

FROM PAGE 1
drug offenses since January. That was followed by sharply worded statements from Mayor Bill Euille decrying "unverified statements" from the neighbors and Acting City Manager Bruce Johnson castigating the "credibility" of media reports detailing their concerns.

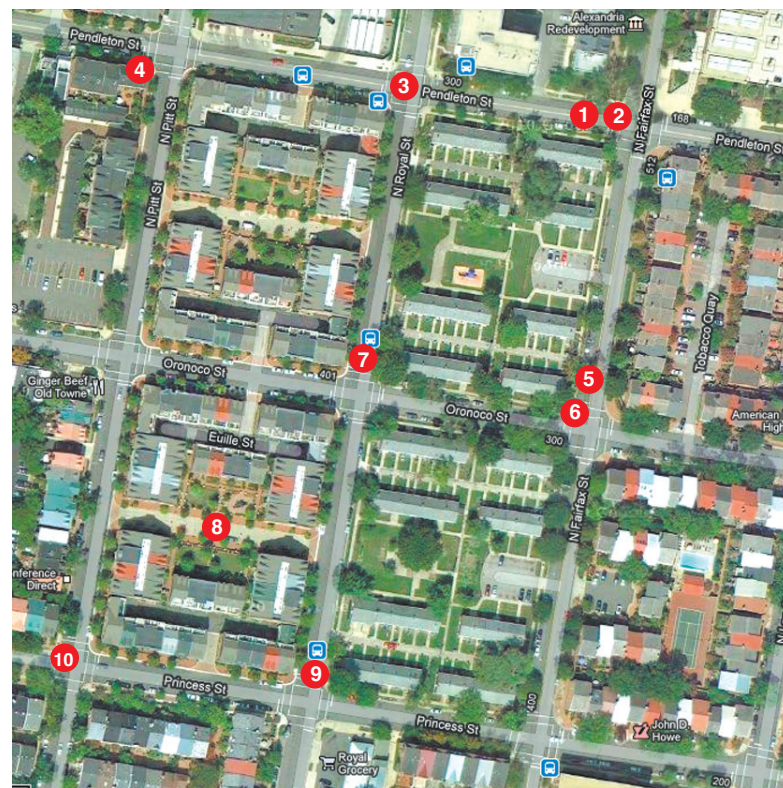
"I feel like we've been attacked by the city and ARHA," said Kara Clemens, a resident of Chatham Square. "They've obviously aligned themselves against us."

A police spokeswoman now says that Cook's letter should have included the Euille Street crime, an error they say was created when the crime database assigned that crime to another neighborhood. But the open-container violation that happened on the block forming the southeastern edge of Chatham Square does not count as Chatham Square. And the drug crime that a Chatham Square resident said happened five feet from her house also doesn't count as Chatham Square the way police record crime statistics.

"Technically, that's not Chatham Square," said Ashley Hildebrandt, public information officer for the Alexandria Police Department, adding that the Euille Street crime should have been included in Cook's letter. "Our crime analysts are working out a fix."

Inaccurate crime statistics are only part of the problem, say members of the North Old Town Residents Coalition. What happens when a crime is reported but no arrest is made? Neighbors say they are concerned it won't end up in the crime report. What about concerns raised by several neighbors that gunshots are reported that don't end up in the crime statistics? Neighbors say they have reported gunshots that are not reflected in the official statistics. And why bother reporting a crime when the chief of police will write a letter saying it didn't happen anyway?

"In their statement to the press, city officials and ARHA are trying to divide us," said Jenny Smith, president of the Gadsby's Court Homeowners Association. "Nobody



Chatham Square is bounded on the south by the 400 block of Princess Street; on the west by the 400 and 500 blocks of North Pitt Street; on the north by the 400 block of Pendleton Street; and on the east by the 400 and 500 blocks of North Royal Street.

wants to be targeted, and if people were afraid of being targeted before, they're really going to be afraid of being targeted now."

Tensions between neighbors in North Old Town date back to 2005. That's when Chatham Square first opened next to Hopkins Tancil, two blocks of subsidized housing also owned by ARHA. At the time, Chatham Square was seen as a visionary solution to lingering crime problems associated with concentrated public housing. The idea was to scatter subsidized units within market-rate housing in a way that made them indistinguishable from each other from the outside. From the inside, however, the juxtaposition has created tension.

"There's always two sides to a story," said Sandra Fowler, public resources consultant for the Alexandria Redevelopment and Housing Authority. "Some of the market-rate residents have been caught putting trash in ARHA bins, but we didn't go to the press with it."

WHEN THE COALITION first raised concerns, residents of subsidized housing said they felt they had been disrespected and denigrated. Community activist Lenny Harris responded by organizing a meeting at Charles Houston Recreation Center, which became a forum for residents of subsidized housing to defend themselves against allegations they considered specious and inaccurate.

"We're here to discuss what we can do as a community," Harris told the standing-room-only crowd. "We have to learn to protect our community and protect ourselves."

Alexandria Communications Director Tony Castrilli invited the press to Harris' meeting but failed to notify members of the North Old Town Residents Coalition — a move that was interpreted by many neighbors as way to divide neighbor against neighbor. Johnson defended the move, explaining that city officials were "concerned over the credibility" of coverage of the issue. Last week, the acting city manager met with several of coalition members in his office at City Hall to listen to their concerns.

"I understand much better where they are
SEE CRIME STATISTICS, PAGE 7

Quality-of-Life Crimes

- 1 May 21, 2011: 300 block of Pendleton Street. Suspect was arrested for having an open container of alcohol.
- 2 May 4, 2011: 300 block of Pendleton Street. Suspect was arrested for possession of marijuana.
- 3 April 12, 2011: Intersection of Pendleton and North Royal Street. Suspect was arrested for possession of cocaine.
- 4 February 10, 2011: 500 block of Pendleton Street. Suspect was arrested for being drunk in public.
- 5 May 1, 2011: 500 block of North Fairfax Street. Suspect was arrested for having an open container of alcohol.
- 6 June 1, 2011: 300 block of Oronoco Street. Liquor-law violation.
- 7 June 28, 2011: 500 block of North Royal Street. Suspect was charged for possession of cocaine.
- 8 March 30, 2011: 400 block of Euille Street. Suspect was arrested for being drunk in public.
- 9 April 20, 2011: 400 block of North Royal Street. Suspect was arrested for having an open container of alcohol.
- 10 March 30, 2011: 500 block of Princess Street. Traffic stop resulted in arrest for driving under the influence.

Source: Alexandria Police Department

GRAPH BY JOHN SMITH/GAZETTE PACKET/GOOGLE MAPS

OBITUARY

Francoise Chauffour

BY JEANNE THEISMANN
GAZETTE PACKET

They were smitten teenagers in love in the early 1970s, the French village of Orleans providing the backdrop for a courtship that would last 41 years between Francoise Chauffour and her husband Jean-Francois. Their love story came to an end July 17 when Francoise lost her battle with lung cancer.

"She was 15 and I was 18," recalled Jean-Francois of the first time he laid eyes on Francoise. "She was beautiful and I was ugly. I am still ugly but even until the end, she was always so very beautiful."



Francoise Chauffour.

Born Francoise Jeanne Bernadette Dayries in Orleans, France on May 6, 1955, she moved to the United States with her future husband in 1976. They married in 1979 and together they opened Le Refuge Restaurant in Old Town in 1983.

"From the very beginning we were almost always together," Jean-Francois said. "Her

brother worked with me in a restaurant and so I began teaching her how to cook. It didn't take long before she got very good at it."

Francoise was a fixture at Le Refuge and her vivaciousness and sense of fun was legendary.

"Her revelry during Bastille Day was quite a restaurant tradition," said Julie Ferrill, a longtime friend of the family. "Patrons looked forward to her rendition of Le Marseilles delivered on occasion on top of a table."

Francoise and Jean-Francois had two children; Alexandre and Anne-Claire, who is following in her mother's footsteps at the restaurant.

"There are so many things I learned from her," Anne-Claire said. "She always taught me to believe in myself and to always go forward, never backward, in life."

Francoise, who finally became a U.S. citizen on her birthday earlier this year, was diagnosed with lung cancer in June of 2010, one month before her daughter's wedding.

"She fought like nobody else," said Anne-Claire, who just learned that she is expecting her first child. "And even in the end, she was still so full of life and always had a smile on her face. It is especially sad that she never got to hear the news about her grandchild."

A memorial service was held July 20 at Advent Funeral Service in Falls Church.

Her ashes will be interred Aug. 3 in Tavers Loiret, France, not far from the village where Francoise was born.

"She gave me a great life," Jean-Francois said. "This is a great loss and she will always be the love of my life."

Alexandria Gazette Market



MICHAEL LEE POPE

First Place in Breaking News Writing: School System Iced

Judges comments: Thorough information on a late breaking story. The lead was good in establishing why the school superintendent was upset. And the inclusion of quotes from the ACLU was a good way to put the investigators action- or lack of it- in perspective. Well done.



PHOTO BY DAVID COLEMAN

Home Life Style

Alexandria custom builder Murray Bonitt loves challenges, including historic, contemporary and traditional. Here, a kitchen in the home of an Alexandria couple executed by Bonitt Builders. See HomeLifeStyle, page 23.

Hotels or Parks?

Planning Commission and City Council to determine fate of the waterfront.

BY MICHAEL LEE POPE
GAZETTE PACKET

In the game of Monopoly, players build hotels to maximize profit on a given plot of land. City leaders will soon be faced with the same proposition when they roll the dice on four prime spots of real estate on the Alexandria waterfront.

The small-area plan city planners released in February would overturn a longstanding ban on hotels along the waterfront. They say adding 625 hotel rooms at four sites would allow public access in a way that would create additional

tax revenue for the city without privatizing the waterfront.

"It took us two years, and we had well over 100 meetings," said Planning Director Faroll Hamer. "We have tried to create a plan that reflects a balance."

Critics say the plan lacks balance, and a group known as the Greater Alexandria Preservation Alliance plans to issue its own alternative proposal this weekend. The alternative plan will reject the idea of adding hotel rooms in favor of creating an Alexandria Maritime Museum and public parks. They say city planners never seri

SEE WATERFRONT, PAGE 3

School System Iced

When should administrators and parents find out about a federal pornography investigation?

BY MICHAEL LEE POPE
GAZETTE PACKET

When federal officials kicked down the door of an Alexandria teacher last week, his bosses at John Adams Elementary School had no idea he was being investigated. Then, when officials from the Immigration and Customs Enforcement told the teacher not to report for work that day, Alexandria City Public Schools had no idea anything was wrong. Finally, when 34-year-old Justin Coleman showed up for work as a fourth-grade Dual Language teacher on Wednesday, teachers and students

had no idea what had happened.

"I am furious at ICE," said Superintendent Morton Sherman. "I am just beside myself with anger."

Facing down a room full of angry parents earlier this week, Sherman repeatedly blamed federal officials for not keeping the school system in the loop. Sherman says school officials should have been notified earlier, and that allowing Coleman to come to work the same day federal officials executed a federal search warrant at his Falls Church home was unacceptable. A spokeswoman for ICE, which was investigating international online trade

SEE SCHOOL, PAGE 34

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School Officials Complain of Federal Non-communication

FROM PAGE 1

of child pornography, responded that the agency was just following the standard operating procedure. "During the course of executing the search warrant, following protocol, local law-enforcement officials notified the principal of John Adams Elementary School of the search warrant," said Cori Bassett, public affairs officer for ICE. "Local law enforcement and a school official escorted Coleman off school grounds."

According to court documents in the case, federal investigators

began investigating Coleman in August 2010 when his Internet Protocol address showed up in a search of web users who accessed child pornography sites. On the morning of April 6, ICE agents and Fairfax County police officers showed up at Coleman's house to execute a search warrant issued by the Fairfax County Circuit Court. The affidavit says Coleman admitted to local and federal investigators that he "downloads what interests him," and that he prefers "5-12 year old girls."

"During part of the interview,

Coleman was dressed up in a Scottish kilt for a theme day at school," the affidavit reports. "After admitting that he had child pornography, he took out an external hard drive he had hidden in the sporran/pouch and provided it to agents."

While agents were moving a bed to retrieve an MP3 player, they found several small pairs of panties — undergarments he later admitted to stealing from a backpack at John Adams Elementary School. While federal agents were interviewing him without the presence of a lawyer, Coleman told them he had spied on a 9-year-old girl while she changed her clothes. When the agents examined the external hard drive, they found several images and videos of child pornography. One of the girls that appeared in a German video had been identified through the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children.

Coleman apparently told agents there was a "Justin at home and a Justin at work," and that he was afraid "they will mesh together."

Later that morning, Coleman reported for work as if nothing had happened. It wasn't until Alexandria Police



PHOTO BY LOUISE KRAFT/CZETTE PACKET

Administrators say they wanted to know earlier about a federal investigation involving a teacher at John Adams Elementary School.

moved from the classroom. Sherman says federal agents should have informed the school system what had happened that

was under investigation, according to the American Civil Liberties Union, they would have been violating his civil rights.

morning instead of allowing Coleman to report to work.

"They didn't give me a fair warning so that I could have taken precaution to protect the children," said Sherman. "Until the Alexandria detective showed up at the school to tell us what had happened, we were completely in the dark."

"Many investigations never lead to arrests, so informing the school system of an investigation could have ruined the life of a perfectly innocent individual," said Kent Willis, executive director of the American Civil Liberties Union of Virginia.

"Even when people are arrested, many times the police and the federal agents accusing them of crimes are wrong."

School officials say they wish they had been notified earlier, especially now that parents are upset they didn't find out about the arrest until after the fact. School Board Chairwoman Yvonne Folkerts said she would have liked to have seen more cooperation between federal agents and Alexandria police, which may have led to earlier notification.

"I respect everyone's rights," said Folkerts. "But my job is to look out for the safety of the kids, and I feel my ability to do that was compromised."

"I respect everyone's rights. But my job is to look out for the safety of the kids, and I feel my ability to do that was compromised."

— School Board Chairwoman Yvonne Folkerts

CIVIL RIGHTS ADVOCATES say local and federal agents should not have notified school officials until an arrest had been made, which happened that evening. If they had called the school division to inform officials that Coleman

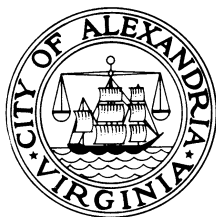
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Riva Enterprise, Inc trading as Euro Bistro and Grill, 6027 Richmond Hwy, Alexandria, VA 22303. The above establishment is applying to the VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGE CONTROL for a Wine and Beer on Premises & Mixed Beverage on Premises license to sell or manufacture alcoholic beverages. Fotis Sadikaj, President

LEGAL NOTICE

Pursuant to the provision of section 4-1-16 of the code of the City of Alexandria, the Alexandria Police Department located at 2003 Mill Road, Alexandria, VA 22314 is now in possession of unclaimed bicycles, mopeds, lawn equipment, money, scooters, and other items. All persons having valid claim to the property should file a claim to the property with reasonable proof of ownership or the items will be sold, destroyed, converted or donated. For a complete listing go to <http://alexandriava.gov/police/> and contact the Police Property Unit at (703) 838-4709.



Public Hearing will be held by the City Council of the City of Alexandria, Virginia, in the Council Chambers, City Hall, City of Alexandria, Virginia, on Saturday, April 16, 2011, at 9:30 a.m., or as soon thereafter as may be heard on the hereinafter described items.

AN ORDINANCE to amend and reordain Section 3-2-181 (LEVIED; AMOUNT) and Section 3-2-188 (CLASSIFICATION AND TAXATION OF CERTAIN COMMERCIAL AND INDUSTRIAL PROPERTY), of Division 1, (REAL ESTATE), and Section 3-2-221 (LEVIED ON TANGIBLE PERSONAL PROPERTY OTHER THAN MOBILE HOMES, AUTOMOBILES, TRUCKS, ANTIQUE MOTOR VEHICLES, TAXICABS, MOTOR VEHICLES WITH MOTORCYCLES, CAMPER, AND OTHER RECREATIONAL VEHICLES, BOATS AND TRAILERS; AMOUNT), Section 3-2-222 (LEVIED ON MACHINERY AND TOOLS USED IN MINING OR MANUFACTURING BUSINESS; AMOUNT), Section 3-2-223 (LEVIED ON AUTOMOBILES, TRUCKS, TRAILERS, SEMI-TRAILERS, ANTIQUE MOTOR VEHICLE, TAXICABS, MOTORCYCLES, CAMPER, AND OTHER RECREATIONAL VEHICLES, BOATS AND TRAILERS; AMOUNT) of Division 3 (TANGIBLE PERSONAL PROPERTY AND MACHINERY AND TOOLS), all of Article M (LEVY AND COLLECTION OF PROPERTY TAXES), Chapter 2 (TAXATION), Title 2 (FINANCE, TAXATION AND PROCUREMENT) of the Code of the City of Alexandria, Virginia, 1981, as amended.

The proposed ordinance sets the City's 2011 tax rates for (1) real property; (2) personal property; (3) machinery and tools; and (4) for the additional real property taxes assessed on commercial and industrial property.

Legal Notices

0.3 percent of estimated 2011 real estate tax revenue continues to be set aside for the Open Space Trust Fund to cover debt service on Open Space Trust Fund supported bonds. 0.6 percent of estimated 2011 real estate tax revenue continues to be set aside for affordable housing. 0.5 percent of estimated 2011 real estate tax revenue continues to be set aside for the Storm Water Trust Fund

The ordinance set the 2011 real property tax rate at \$1.00 on each \$100 of assessed value. Personal property and machinery and tools tax rate are unchanged from 2010. The ordinance levies for calendar 2011, an additional real property tax of \$0.125 per \$100 of assessed value on all commercial and industrial property in the City. City Council has the authority to lower the tax rates set forth in the ordinance.

AN ORDINANCE to amend Division 1 (REAL ESTATE), of Article M (LEVY AND COLLECTION OF PROPERTY TAXES), of Chapter 2 (TAXATION), of Title 3 (FINANCE TAXATION AND PROCUREMENT), of the Code of the City of Alexandria, Virginia, 1981, as amended, by adding thereto a new Section 3-2-189 (TIER I POTOMAC YARD METRO RAIL STATION SPECIAL SERVICES DISTRICT TAX).

The ordinance codifies the Tier I Potomac Yard Metro Rail Station Special Services District as a separate classification for real estate tax purposes and establishes the tax rate for calendar year 2011.

AN ORDINANCE making supplemental appropriations for the support of the government of the City of Alexandria, Virginia, for fiscal year 2011.

The proposed ordinance accomplishes the final adoption of the supplemental appropriations for the operation of the city government in the fiscal year 2011.

AN ORDINANCE to amend and reordain Section 6-300 (FLOODPLAIN DISTRICT) of Article VI (SPECIAL AND OVERLAY ZONES) of the City of Alexandria Zoning Ordinance, in accordance with the text amendment heretofore approved by City Council as Text Amendment No. 2011-0004.

The proposed ordinance accomplishes the final adoption of Text Amendment No. 2011-0004 to implement changes to the City's floodplain regulations in accord with the model Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) regulations and adopting new Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRMS) as the City's floodplain maps.

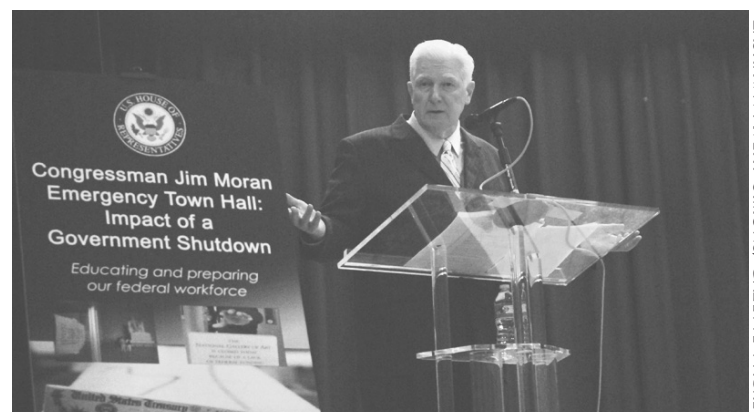
Public Hearing to Obtain Community Input on the Recruitment Profile for the New City Manager.

Public Hearing on the Draft Fiscal Year 2012 Action Plan for Housing and Community Development.

THE PUBLIC IS ADVISED THAT AMENDMENTS OR ADDITIONS MAY BE MADE TO PROPOSED ORDINANCES WITHOUT FURTHER PUBLICATION. IT IS RECOMMENDED THAT PERSONS INTERESTED IN ANY OF THESE ORDINANCES OBTAIN FREE FULL-TEXT COPIES FROM THE CITY CLERK AT CITY HALL. JACKIE M. HENDERSON, MMC, CITY CLERK

Moran Town Hall Anticipates Shutdown

In anticipation of the now averted government shutdown, U.S. Rep. Jim Moran (D-8) held an emergency Town Hall meeting April 7 that drew more than 200 concerned government workers and their families to Francis C. Hammond Middle School. Last-minute negotiations in Congress forestalled the shutdown, which would have furloughed about 70,000 federal employees in Moran's district, more than any congressional district in the nation, according to the National Treasury Employees Union. An additional 58,000 federal workers are employed in the adjacent 11th district, represented by Gerry Connolly (D-11).



LASHAWN AVERY-SIMONS/CZETTE PACKET

U.S. Rep. Jim Moran (D-8) addresses more than 200 concerned government workers and their families during an emergency Town Hall meeting at Francis C. Hammond Middle School Thursday, April 7 concerning the prospective government shutdown. Congress was able to avert the shutdown later on Friday.

End of Leone Era

The outspoken and lively president of the Alexandria Chamber of Commerce is leaving Alexandria and headed to Ballston, where she will take control of the Arlington neighborhood's business improvement district. Since assuming control of the chamber in July 2009, **Tina Leone** has created a new sense of liveliness among the city's captains of industry. Now that she's leaving, she can count one of her accomplishments as increasing membership from 530 to 850.

"The chamber is now much more relevant than it used to be," said Leone, who will step down at the end of this month. "Businesses used to question why they were in the chamber, now the city comes to us for our position on things."

Leone's style had its detractors. But she built a team that was able to expand the organization's membership while downscaling the overhead, moving the office into a smaller rental space to save money. She took some criticism for throwing lavish events, but Leone said she's leaving the organization in a much stronger position than when she arrived. She's also excited about moving into the field of economic development. Leone applied to become president of the Alexandria Economic Development Partnership several years ago, but the organization hired **Val Hawkins** instead.

"This is a career goal for me, so I'm really excited to have the opportunity," said Leone. "It's a great fit for me right now."

As she begins her new job in Ballston, Leone said one of her top priorities was bringing a bookstore to the neighborhood. She's also interested in working on the redevelopment of Ballston Mall.

"That's sort of low-hanging fruit," said Leone. "Right now, we're not really sure who it's serving."

Wale of a Suit

This week, the Virginia Supreme Court granted the city of Alexandria's petition to appeal a Circuit Court ruling issued by visiting **John McGrath** back in April. That means the long-running legal dispute will now head to Richmond, prolonging the dispute between the Old Dominion Boat Club and the city.

"We believe the judge made an error," said City Attorney **James Banks**. "He used a ruling that doesn't apply to the city."

Back in June, the City Council approved an ordinance authorizing the city manager to execute a five-year lease agreement with Virtue Restaurant that would allow the use of part of Wales Alley for outdoor seating. The Old Dominion Boat Club responded by filing a lawsuit against the city, claiming it owned part of the alley and seeking an injunction preventing any obstructions in the alley. McGrath ruled that the city owned the alley, and that the Old Dominion Boat Club had a right to be able to move its boats and trailers through the alley.

"Keeping in mind that the deed which has given rise to this litigation was executed only months after **George Washington** had taken his oath of office as the first President of the United States and only four days before the storming of the Bastille," McGrath wrote, "it is not surprising that there are huge gaps in the evidentiary record."

City officials say they hope to resolve this dispute along with a handful of other conflicts in a "global" settlement with the Boat Club, although no signs have yet emerged such a settlement is close.

Election Hotline

Having a problem voting? The American Civil Liberties Union of Virginia wants to help. This week, the Richmond-based organization announced a new hotline to answer questions from voters who encounter problems on Election Day. The number is 804-644-8080.

"Casting a ballot shouldn't be a complicated process," said ACLU of Virginia director **Kent Willis**. "But there are always glitches on Election Day."

— MICHAEL LEE POPE

Correction

Last week's issue had the incorrect annual salary for incoming City Manager Rashad Young. The correct salary is \$245,000.



St. Paul's Nursery and Day School headmistress Martha Scott Schafer greets the children and passes out treats on Wolfe Street.

Halloween in Old Town

Centurion Skipp Calvert and the young pirate Noah Rodenberg.



Ellison Paul appearing as a witch and Elizabeth Chapman as Elizabeth the pirate.

PHOTOS BY LOUISE KRAFT/GAZETTE PACKET

Teacher Gets 30 Years in Prison

John Adams Elementary School teacher sentenced for producing child pornography.

BY MICHAEL LEE POPE
GAZETTE PACKET

Federal Judge Gerald Bruce Lee told 36-year-old Justin Coleman that he deserved an Academy Award for a convincing performance leading a double life. In public, he was an upstanding and well-respected fourth-grade teacher at John Adams Elementary School. But in private, he manipulated thousands of photographs of West End students by superimposing their faces over scenes of child rape and molestation. Lee described Coleman's behavior "cruel, despicable and outrageous," sentencing him to the 30 years prosecutors were asking for rather than the 15 years requested by the defense attorney.

"Mr. Coleman, you are a bad seed," the judge said. "You have harmed the image of teachers everywhere."

John Adams parent Steven Sykes agreed. Sitting in the back of the sixth-floor courtroom, Sykes attended Friday's sentencing hearing to find out what would become of Coleman. As the parent of a student at the elementary school where Coleman secretly took photographs of young girls, Sykes said that he wanted to see the judge issue the harshest possible sentence. Although his child was not a victim, Sykes said that the incident has caused him to

cast a wary eye on all teachers.

"It makes me look at teachers differently than I used to," said Sykes. "We put our trust in teachers, and our trust has been betrayed."

COURT RECORDS show that Coleman devised a number of schemes to illicitly photograph young girls at John Adams, positioning cameras under tables or on furniture. Although Coleman was sentenced for charges of producing child pornography with two Fairfax County girls, prosecutors say agents found more than 2,000 images of students at John Adams. More than 70 of the images were manipulated with a photo-imaging software known as Photoshop so that they appeared to be engaged in scenes of sexual abuse. Coleman was one of 900 individuals in the United States identified by Italian law enforcement officials as part of an overseas child-pornography investigation.

"It is my personal belief that sorry is just another word," Coleman told the judge as his mother wept openly in the third row. "My ultimate actions will be proof of how sorry I am."

U.S. Attorney Neil MacBride appeared outside the courthouse to take questions after the sentencing hearing, noting that this was the fourth case in recent years of teachers prosecuted for producing child pornography. When asked about criticism from Alexandria City Public School superintendent that Coleman was allowed to return to school after being interviewed by federal agents but before being arrested, MacBride said the agents had no other choice.

"The agents advised him not to go back to school, but he chose to do so anyway," said MacBride. "We have no evidence he engaged in any illegal behavior that day."

Alexandria Gazette Market



MONTIE MARTIN
First Place in Business and Financial Writing

HOLIDAY GIFT GUIDE

Don't Forget Everyone's Best Friend

Pet gifts for pet people.

BY MONTIE MARTIN
GAZETTE PACKET

Consider picking up a gift this holiday season that delights both animals and their people. From venison antlers for dogs to delectable cat treats for the feline affiliated, there is a range of goodies and services that fit every budget.

This year's trending dog toys include venison and elk antlers, an all-natural product that lasts longer than conventional bones. Unlike bones or rawhide that splinter and are not wholly digestible, antlers stay fresh and are reasonably priced at most pet stores.

"I never even heard of antlers nine months ago, now we can't seem to keep them on the shelf."

— **Brand Vitz,**
sales associate at
Chateau Animaux

"I never even heard of antlers nine months ago, now we can't seem to keep them on the shelf," said Brand Vitz, a sales associate at Chateau Animaux in Old Town. "They're porous and can be soaked in chicken stock to hold flavor."

Squeaky toys are also popular. "Dogs of all ages like toys, and all toys are destructible," said Fabina Neves, a sales associate with Profeed Pet Supplies at the

Bradlee Shopping Center. "It's so obnoxious when the toy squeaks, but dogs love it."

Gifts for people include breed specific magnets that show off animal pride, and can be professionally wrapped at most pet stores which makes life a little easier for the holidays.

Friends and family with animals might also enjoy a professional dog walk or home visit. The gift of a home sitter offers an opportunity to go out late without concern for furry loved ones.

"Home sitters are very popular around the



PHOTO COURTESY OF KITSTRING MARKETING

Dean DeGood, owner of doggywalker.com, provides professional dog walking services and pet sitters for the holidays.

holidays," said Sue Lambert, operations manager with doggywalker.com. "Between late night shopping and parties it's good to know someone is there to take care your animal so you can have fun."

Books about pets are another possibility. Allie Phillips, an animal rights lawyer who tackles the legality of classifying pets as property, will be promoting her new book "Defending the Defenseless" on Saturday, Dec. 18 at the new Pro Feed Pet Nutrition Center at the Belle View Shopping Center.

Donating to a shelter in the name of an animal-conscious friend or family member would make for a different kind of present, and engender a memorable feeling of kindness to the holiday season.

Animal Sitters for Carefree Evenings

Professional animal sitters are available over the holidays and make for a perfect gift for someone who can enjoy an evening out without worrying about a furry loved one. Sitters service Alexandria, Mount Vernon, Arlington and parts of Fairfax. For more information, visit doggywalker.com



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BUSINESS

Restaurant Plans To Move

Bombay Curry Company awaits city approval.

BY MONTIE MARTIN
GAZETTE PACKET

The Bombay Curry Company, a fixture of the Del Ray community since 1995, will be closing on Dec. 20. Owner Balraj Bhasin, however, sees the closing of his Clavert Building location as an opportunity to move closer to his clientele along Mt. Vernon Avenue.

"Running a restaurant can be stressful, but the neighborhood has been very supportive," said Bhasin. "A lot of people have given us encouragement, we have received over 200 emails of support from regulars."

Such an overwhelming community response is no surprise considering the many organizations Bombay Curry Company has supported over the years. Bhasin has given proceeds and gift certificates to Food and Friends, Head Start, and Alexandria's Volunteer Bureau.

In recognition of Children's Day in India, on Nov. 14 Bombay Curry Company donated all sales to Alexandria's Child, which supports foster care through the city's Department of Community & Human Services.

"In India I grew up to believe Children's Day was very important," said Bhasin. "Nov. 14 is the birthday of India's first Prime Minister, and while some of his views were controversial he believed the future of the country was with children."

As those who have eaten at Bhasin's restaurant will say, his food is recognized as among the best in Alexandria.

"The curry is awesome, the chicken kabobs are awesome, and the Sunday brunch is awesome," said Estela Herrera, a barista at St. Elmos Coffee Pub. "They take pride in what they do. They're coming



Balraj Bhasin, owner of the Bombay Curry Company, has been a fixture of the Del Ray community since 1995.

LOUISE KRAFT/GAZETTE PACKET



PHOTO BY MONTIE MARTIN/GAZETTE PACKET

The Bombay Curry Company plans to relocate to 2607 Mt. Vernon Avenue pending city approval.

back to a better area, and it will be good for the community when Bombay opens again."

Bhasin first moved to Del Ray in 1991, and established his curry restaurant when the Del Ray Citizens Association identified the need for Indian food.

His recipes come from a lengthy experience working in the hospitality sector in northern India, where people move with their herds and cook over fires.

The chooza kabob, a dish that includes a young chicken, onions, bell peppers, served on bed of rice and topped with curry sauce, was a must for Bhasin.

"I really wanted the dish, but could not get it exactly as I remembered," said Bhasin. "Then one day at a mall I noticed an old cook book from the 1960s and started flipping through it. It had the recipe; it was exactly the same. The name of the book was 'Great American Cooking.'"

Indian Cuisine

The Bombay Curry Company, currently located at The Clavert Building, will close Dec. 20 with plans to open at 2607 Mt. Vernon Avenue pending city approval. For a complete menu visit: bombaycurrycompany.com

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Two-Story Addition:	\$12,000	\$6,000
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Heading to the Polls

BY MICHAEL LEE POPE
GAZETTE PACKET

Election officials in Alexandria are expecting about 15 percent turnout on Election Day, which is traditionally the lowest turnout in the four-year cycle of elections. Because there are no statewide races on the ballot, the same is likely to be the case this year. Here's what's on the ballot this year.

STATE SENATE DISTRICT 39

This is one of the hottest races in Northern Virginia, one that's the target of financial support from the Democrats and Republicans who both view the seat as a battleground. In redistricting, it became 1.7 percent more Democratic. Although the seat has a Democratic incumbent, Republican Gov. Bob McDonnell won the old district by 54.5 percent. Even with the newly redrawn map, the G.O.P. candidate won 52.8 percent of the vote.

Democrat: George Barker
money raised: \$604,181

Barker is a freshman member of the Virginia state Senate who ousted Republican incumbent state Sen. Jay O'Brien (R-39) in 2007. On the campaign trail, he has touted his record as an effective legislature as one of two members who were able to get 20 bills or more to the governor's desk. He raised more than \$600,000, one

of the largest amounts of money raised for any Northern Virginia candidate this election cycle. Most of his money came from the party, including \$295,000 from the Democratic Party of Virginia, \$31,000 from the Virginia Democratic Senate Caucus and \$10,000 from Senate Majority Leader Dick Saslaw (D-35).

Republican: Miller Baker
money raised: \$256,000

Baker raised \$187,000 during the primary to fend off academic Scott Martin, emerging victorious in the August primary with 73 percent of the vote. On the campaign trail, Baker has tried to cast Barker as an ineffective legislator, blaming him for the expected traffic congestion expected at the Washington Headquarters Service as part of the Base Realignment and Closure process. The G.O.P. has targeted the race as a potential ticket, with \$21,000 from the Republican Party of Virginia, \$5,000 from the Republican Committee of the 7th congressional district and \$2,500 from the political action committee controlled by Virginia Attorney General Ken Cuccinelli.

STATE SENATE DISTRICT 30

This is an open seat created by the retirement of longtime state Sen. Patsy Ticer (D-30), who was originally elected in 1995. In redistricting, the seat became 4.6

percent more Republican. But the Democrats still have a substantial edge here, and the race is not one that is targeted by the state parties. Election returns show that 36.9 percent of the old district voted for Republican Gov. Bob McDonnell while 41.5 percent of the new district went with the G.O.P. choice.

Democrat: Adam Ebbin
money raised: \$324,569

Ebbin has been a member of the House of Delegates since 2003, when he emerged from a tightly contested primary to become the party's standard-bearer. During the next three election cycles, Ebbin had no Republican opposition. During the primary this year, he raised \$278,000 fending off challenges from Alexandria City Councilman Rob Krupicka and Arlington County School Board member Libby Garvey. After pulling off an upset victory of Krupicka, who had been expected to win early in the race, Ebbin raised \$46,000 during the general election cycle.

Republican: Tim McGhee
money raised: \$7,000

McGhee is a social conservative who says his decision in office would be guided by the United States Constitution and the Virginia Constitution as revised in 1971. Beyond that, McGhee says

during his appearances on the campaign trail, all his decisions would be based on "life, liberty and justice." The Republican Party has not targeted his race, although McGhee has received \$600 from the Commonwealth Republican Women's Club and \$250 from the Mount Vernon Republican Women's Club. His Democratic opponent heads into Election Day with about 18 times as much money as McGhee.

STATE SENATE DISTRICT 35
Democrat: Dick Saslaw
money raised: \$1.7 million

As the Democratic majority leader in the Virginia state Senate, Saslaw sits at the center of a complicated web of money and power. He raised money for Democrats across the commonwealth, sometimes lending his support to favored candidates in contested primaries including Arlington County Board member Barbara Favola and other times lending support to vulnerable Democrats such as state Sen. George Barker (D-39). He also raised large amounts of money from various interest groups across the state, including \$27,000 from the Virginia Dental Association, \$20,000 from Dominion Power, \$20,000 from the Medical Society of Virginia and \$20,000 from Verizon.

Republican: Robert Sarvis
money raised: \$26,000

A native of Fairfax County, Sarvis is the youngest of three children of an immigrant Chinese mother

and Kansas-born father. On the campaign trail, he's tried to tag Saslaw as a leader who has failed to deliver transportation solutions for Northern Virginia. The vast majority of his money has been self-financed, including money from the candidate himself and other family members. The race is not targeted by Republicans, although Sarvis did receive \$150 from the Commonwealth Republican Women's Club.

ALEXANDRIA CLERK OF CIRCUIT COURT

This is a low-profile but high-power race, an office that comes up for election once every eight years. It features the city's longest serving elected official against the chief architect of the "plunking" strategy that ousted two Democrats from the Alexandria City Council in 2009.

Democrat: Ed Semonian
money raised: \$32,000

Semonian is the longest-serving elected official in Alexandria, holding the job of clerk of court since 1980. Back in 1979, Semonian beat out six rival Democrats in a primary and then had no Republican opposition. Since being sworn into office in 1980, he's faced no Republican opposition until now. On the campaign trail, Semonian has trumpeted his record in office as someone who modernized the clerk of court's office and created the first-ever system in Virginia that allowed

SEE VOTING, PAGE 22

In Little Bavaria, Lots of Good Cheer

But American beer triumphs.

BY MONTIE MARTIN
GAZETTE PACKET

The fifth annual Alexandria Oktoberfest, sponsored by Rustico Bar and Restaurant, drew large crowds this year amidst good weather and some of the finest imported and local brews on tap.

Oktoberfest is the hallmark German festival celebrated in Bavaria during the final weeks of September. In 1994 the event was modified to coincide with German's Unity Day on Oct. 3, when East and West Germany reunited after decades of separation as a result of the Cold War.

Activities in Alexandria included a blend of German and American fare, including bratwurst, sauerkraut, strudel, burgers, sandwiches and turkey legs.

A family section complemented the

typical Oktoberfest festivities, and included a moon bounce, face-painting and pumpkin painting. Enthusiastic residents also dressed in traditional German garb.

Missy Whittington and Judy Rainey were eager to show off their Dirndls, purchased during a recent visit to Austria.

"We never made it to Oktoberfest, but the famous Hofbräuhaus has a giant beer garden and there are always large crowds," said Whittington.

The Alexandria Oktoberfest boasted nine German brews as well as 44 American micro beers on tap.

Mike Olsen, a financial analyst with the Motley Fool, was satisfied with the disparity between German and American options.

"Local beers are more appealing, the ones from Germany are staid and boring," said Olsen. "The past few years have seen a renaissance of American micro tastes."

"It comes down to handcrafted verses a macro automated line," said Bill Butcher, CEO of Port City beer in Alexandria. "Craft beer always tastes better closer to the origin, fresh beer is local beer."

In keeping with the movement to go lo-

O'zapst ist!

The traditional opening toast in Bavaria is reserved for the mayor of Munich once he taps the first keg at noon. Cries of "it is tapped!" will fill the beer tents as thousands await their first stein.

cal, proceeds from the Alexandria Oktoberfest benefited the Arcadia Center for Sustainable Food and Agriculture.

"We want to support farmers from our backyards instead of other countries, and Arcadia builds connections between local farmers and neighborhood restaurants," said Rustico General Manager Jason Asher. "It's important to educate people about where our food comes from, we try and put on an outstanding event with great activities and it draws a large crowd."

One popular incentive that gathered a crowd at Oktoberfest also encouraged the use of public transportation. People who took a picture of in front of the Braddock Road metro received a free beer, mug or choice of food.

"It's pretty marvelous to see so many people, especially young folks," said Glen Davis, a WWII veteran who flew sorties over



Missy Whittington and Judy Rainey show off their Dirndls from a recent trip to Austria.

Germany. "After the war ended I enjoyed some of the real beer from Bavaria."

Alexandria Gazette Market



MONTIE MARTIN

First Place in Personal Service Writing

Judges comments: Zombie story is weird enough to grab attention! Other entries workmanlike. None overwritten, which appears to be the norm in these “personal service” categories.



Zombies menace the public during Survive Alexandria, a record holding game of zombie tag on Aug. 17.

Beware of Zombies

Health Department emphasizes emergency preparation.

BY MONTIE MARTIN
THE GAZETTE

The Alexandria Department of Health has issued a warning to all residents to be prepared in the event of a zombie outbreak.

Precautions include signing up for the city's emergency mobile alert system, creating an evacuation plan, and establishing an emergency kit.

Zombie emergency preparedness helps Alexandria citizens plan for the unexpected.

"We issued the zombie warning because it's a metaphor for any peril," said Dr. Steven Haering, director of Alexandria's Department of Health. "The unexpected could be a hurricane, high winds, emergent illnesses or earthquakes. It could also be man made, a terrorism attack, a bomb or chemical event."

Perhaps the most serious emergency-related event that hit Alexandria was the Aug. 23

5.9 magnitude earthquake. Although the earthquake caused minimal damage, telephone networks failed and communication was only possible via text messaging and social media.

"The City of Alexandria was the first to issue an official tweet after the earthquake," said Cindy Lake, emergency planner with the Department of Health. "Stay informed, make a plan, and prepare an emergency kit. The more individuals that are prepared, the more the community is prepared."

The Department of Health takes a three-stage approach to zombie outbreaks, including accessing the problem, tailoring a response and delivering services.

Information from hospitals and clinics are monitored every day through the Essence System, and trends such as a high incidence of rashes and bite marks would be red flagged.

SEE ZOMBIES, PAGE 30

Preparing for Zombies

In the event of a zombie emergency it is important to have a disaster kit, which includes three days worth of food and water. Select non-perishable food that can be rotated into the regular food supply. Make a plan with family and neighbors and sign up for mobile emergency alerts. For more information on emergency kits visit ready.gov, and to sign up for mobile alerts visit [https://enews.alexandriava.gov/register.php](http://enews.alexandriava.gov/register.php)

Watering Down the Waterfront

New study to recommend against increasing density along the waterfront.

BY MICHAEL LEE POPE
GAZETTE PACKET

Don't rezone the waterfront — that's the sentiment behind a new report that will be released this weekend by the Citizens for an Alternative Alexandria Waterfront Plan. Titled "Parks, Arts and Museums: The Key to Rediscovering, Protecting and Revitalizing the Alexandria Waterfront," the report recommends keeping the existing zoning along the waterfront rather than increasing it as Planning Director Faroll Hamer and the Planning Commission have recommended. It will also

recommend against overturning the longstanding ban on allowing hotels on the waterfront.

"The planning process that's gotten us to this point has been seriously flawed," said former Vice Mayor Andrew Macdonald, one of the leaders behind CAAWP. "We feel that the city never really examined its own assets very effectively."

Macdonald declined to share the report in advance of this weekend's release, but people who have seen the document say it recommends keeping the existing 1992 zoning rather than increasing to a denser 1981 settlement agreement. The plan will also call for the city to acquire some property at the two Robinson Terminal sites, either by purchasing the land outright or acquiring it through some kind of agreement similar to how Founders Park was created in the 1970s. Supporters of the plan currently under consideration say CAAWP's plan isn't realistic. "It's just not feasible," said Gina Baum, a leader in a

"We feel that the city never really examined its own assets very effectively."

— Andrew Macdonald SEE WATERFRONT, PAGE 7

Clerk Candidates Debate Access

Clerk of court candidates disagree about how easy it is to interact with the office.

BY MICHAEL LEE POPE
GAZETTE PACKET

Longtime Democratic Clerk of Court Ed Semonian says his office pioneered availability of court documents online, leading the way where others have followed. But his Republican challenger Chris Marston says Semonian isn't doing enough to move the office into the 21st century, making the case to voters that lawyers and homebuyers should be able to submit documents online. Voters will have the final say on Election Day next month.

"I'm not going to sit around and wait for someone to invite me into a pilot program," said Marston, a former chairman of the Alexandria Republican City Committee. "I want to get it done now."

The Virginia Supreme Court is currently operating a pilot program in Norfolk that allows lawyers to submit court documents online, including criminal and civil



Ed Semonian



Chris Marston

cases. Semonian acknowledged that he hasn't made any formal overture to be part of the pilot or sent a letter requesting that Alexandria can participate, although the longtime clerk is regularly in touch with court leaders in Richmond.

"They know we want to be part of the pilot," said Semonian. "I have no doubt that when the time comes, we'll be part of the program."

THE CAMPAIGN for clerk of court is raising issues that have long remained behind the scenes, including the role of technology in the Alexandria Circuit Court. Semonian's supporters say he has revolutionized the office since he was elected to his first term in 1979. Marston's supporters say technology is leaving Alexandria behind, with lawyers in Fairfax County being able to submit property transaction records online.

"It certainly would be a lot easier to submit online," said Mike Ginsberg, an attorney with Arnold

SEE CLERK, PAGE 30



NEWS

A Reading of 'I.M. Green'

Gudrun Hooff and her daughter Maremi Andreozzi invited friends over to the Hooff Cottage on Tuesday, Oct. 25, on South Quaker Lane for the reading of their new book, "I.M. Green."

Gudrun wrote the adventure story of a frog living in a pond near her house in Lorton, Va. and her daughter Maremi Hooff Andreozzi created the illustrations.

The book is presently available online at www.imgreenchildrensbook.com.

Gudrun's inspiration for writing the book is her love of reading to her children and now her grandchildren. Andreozzi was inspired to paint waterlife in the tropics while her husband was assigned overseas in Guam and also by her son's love of stories. Maremi now lives in Mount Vernon with her husband and two children.



Two of Gudrun Hooff's grandchildren Eloise and Augusta tell each other their story about the story of "I.M. Green."



Author Gudrun Hooff reads the story of "I.M. Green" to the children.

Clerk of Court Candidates Debate Access

FROM PAGE 1

& Porter who supports Martson's campaign. "That would make it more convenient than going to the clerk's office all the time."

Semonian's supporters say the longtime Democratic clerk has a record of leadership, adding that Alexandria was the first jurisdiction in Virginia that allowed lawyers to have remote access to court documents. They point out that Alexandria uses the Supreme Court system for property trans-

action records, which will eventually be moving toward an online format. Until then, they argue, it would be a mistake to leave the Supreme Court system for adopting a Fairfax County model or some other system.

"Why give up something that's working with a system that's unproven," said Semonian's campaign manager Susan Kellom, a former chairwoman of the Alexandria Democratic Committee. "That doesn't make any sense."

MARTSON SAYS it's a matter of priorities. He would rather find some way for lawyers to submit documents online instead of waiting for the pilot program to expand beyond Norfolk. And he would rather adopt a new system for land records similar to Fairfax County rather than wait for the Virginia Supreme Court to expand that system. He would also like to see users be able to submit applications online, including everything from weddings to carrying a concealed weapon.

"In many cases, the law says you have to be there to submit the form," acknowledged Marston. "But if the form is already filled out online, it's just a matter of signing the document."

Semonian has criticized Marston for making expensive promises that go well beyond the \$1.5 million budget of the office. And the Republican concedes that he does not know how much any of his proposals would cost. But he said he would work to make them happen, potentially lobbying City Hall for more money rather than waiting for Richmond to move forward.

"I just want to get it done," said Marston. "It's a priority for me."

"There's just no money for any of this," countered Semonian. "That's just all there is to it."

Murder on Wythe

First homicide of the year reported in North Old Town.

Shortly after 10 p.m. Thursday Oct. 20, Alexandria police officers responded to a report of shots fired in the 1200 block of Wythe Street. When the arrived, police discovered the Bob Cory McNeely, 40, of Alexandria suffering from a gun-

shot wound to the upper body. He was transported to a local hospital, where he was later pronounced dead. An autopsy later determined the cause of death to be a gunshot wound.

"Our detectives are investigating and have some leads," said police spokeswoman Ashley Hildebrandt, who declined to elaborate. "The investigation is ongoing."

Anyone with information is asked to call 703-746-6711.

Beware of Zombies

FROM PAGE 1

Warnings would be issued via the mobile alert system, and the all-volunteer medical reserve corps would proceed to deliver services.

"The Health Department would be unable to distribute medicine to 450,000 people in 48 hours alone, but we have trained volunteers who can help to accomplish the service," said Lake.

According to Max Brooks, author of the "Zombie Survival Guide," official zombie warnings are the perfect way for people to prepare for disasters without realizing it. "Parents can trick kids into getting excited about being prepared," said Brooks. "Zombie warnings are a great way for the government to connect with people. There are so many lame government programs, like the old civil defense films, and for the first time they're hip."

Brooks has documented zombie incidents and human responses across cultures in his book "Recorded Zombie Attacks," and blames zombie outbreaks on human folly. "The number one cause of zombies is stupidity," said Brooks. "My template for zombies is the AIDS virus. AIDS isn't airborne; it requires fluid-to-fluid contact, which is difficult. In 1980 the government could have stopped AIDS with a pamphlet on awareness."

"Some societies are totally incapable of handling zombie outbreaks," said Brooks. "In the U.S. today we would need to cooperate, but there might be a Z-Party that would refuse to pay for a response and cause division."

Salil Maniktahla, a local zombieologist and owner of the Urban Evolution gym in Alexandria, noted that cooperation was key to zombie tag during the Aug. 17 Survive Alexandria zombie scenario. "The people who made deals and worked in convoys survived longer than individuals," said Salil. "In a zombie attack you need teamwork, if you are a jerk no one wants to be around you and you won't survive."

Preparing for a zombie outbreak includes physical fitness. "A light jog won't cut it," said Salil. "Survive Alexandria helped people evaluate their fitness in a response to a zombie outbreak. If someone did well in zombie tag they would do well in a true event."

"I agree with the recommendations of the Alexandria Department of Health's emergency plan. They've adapted a response to any disaster, but as every movie will tell you, a zombie menace is not like any other pandemic."

According to Brooks, being prepared for zombies with a survival kit saved the life on one of his fans. "A fan came up to me once, and told me that because he had prepared a z-kit his family survived for three days when a severe storm washed their boat out to sea."

Alexandria Gazette Packet



25 CENTS

SERVING ALEXANDRIA FOR OVER 200 YEARS • A CONNECTION NEWSPAPER

NOVEMBER 17, 2011



PHOTOS BY LOUISE KRAFFT/
GAZETTE PACKET

Dr. Stephen Versace and members of the West Point Class of 1959 and Friends of Rocky Versace salute a wreath in tribute to all of the veterans past and present.



Brigadier General (USA, ret.) JW Nicholson gave the keynote address by retelling the story of the life and imprisonment and death of U.S. Army Captain "Rocky" Versace.

Price of Freedom

The weather was blustery on Veterans Day last week. The ceremony, moved inside to the gym at the Mount Vernon Community Center, was sponsored by the "Friends of Rock Versace" with the help of the staff from the community center. Miss Alexandria, Delesia A. Watson, opened the ceremony by singing the National Anthem. Veterans were recognized, past and present. Brigadier General (USA, ret.) JW Nicholson gave the keynote address. Major James N. Rowe's widow, Jane, also appeared and spoke. Rowe was in the same Vietnamese prison camp as Versace and wrote a book "Five Years to Freedom" about the experience. Fr. Edwin Perez, the parochial vicar at St. Rita's parish, gave the closing blessing.

— LOUISE KRAFFT



Councilmember Frank Fannon reads the names of a few of the 67 Vietnam soldiers from Alexandria who died in the war.

Extending the Line

Location of streetcar maintenance yard could radically change region's transit options.

BY MICHAEL LEE POPE
GAZETTE PACKET

Early next year, members of the Arlington County Board and the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors will make a decision that will have drastic consequences for the region's transit options. At stake is the shape of the region's high-capacity transit corridors and the ability of students at Northern Virginia Community College to take a streetcar to class.

The question that will be before

elected leaders in Arlington and Fairfax is where to locate a maintenance yard for the streetcar system. Current plans call for the facility to be located on a plot of land in Crystal City at a spot along the existing line. But leaders at Northern Virginia Community College have been in discussions with Arlington and Fairfax about potentially locating the maintenance yard at the Alexandria campus. Doing that would abandon existing plans for the initial line, al

SEE PROPOSAL, PAGE 30

Ensuring Happy Holidays

Volunteers at human services on a mission.

BY MONTIE MARTIN
GAZETTE PACKET

Every year the Alexandria Department of Community & Human Services devotes hundreds of hours to make the holidays special for some of the most disadvantaged residents of Alexandria.

Suzanne Kratzok has led the Holiday Sharing Program since 1999, and understands what it takes to provide one gift and one book to children in more than 800 families, as well as 150 elderly citizens who may not otherwise receive anything for the holidays.

The scale of the program is daunting. Operations begin as early as August, and continue throughout the fall. Cooperation between non-profits, the Salvation Army and churches is essential so the maximum number of families can receive gifts.

"Collaboration is huge, there are five Alexandria organizations that meet to discuss a time frame over the summer, and to make sure there is no duplication between families," said Kratzok. "We can't leave it 'til Dec. 24 like the big cities who wait till the last minute, for me that's too risky."

During mid-October, an average of eight volunteers contribute 320 hours of service simply registering families and identifying what children would like for the holidays.

In addition to identifying and

SEE VOLUNTEERS, PAGE 30

Making Black Friday Local

Merchants prepare shopping kick-off event.

BY JEANNE THEISMANN
GAZETTE PACKET

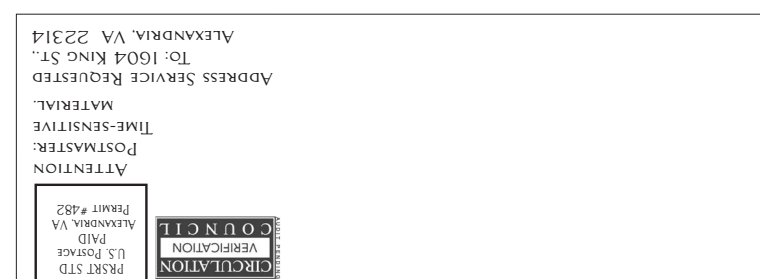
It's that time of year again — time to deck the halls, roast the chestnuts, dash through the snow and get up early for the shopping spectacle known as Black Friday.

"Our Black Friday effort this year has really been a

collective effort," said Elizabeth Todd, owner of the Shoe Hive and co-founder of the Old Town Boutique District. "Many shops have joined together to open at 6 a.m. and offer specials only available that one day of the year."

The City of Alexandria has joined in the effort by

SEE LOCAL, PAGE 8



Legal Notices

LEGAL NOTICE

Notice is hereby given to members of the NY, nonprofit, American Society of Clinical Oncology, Inc., that eligible ASCO members may vote by proxy ballot from Oct. 13 to Nov. 21, 2011 to elect the President Elect, Treasurer, five seats on the Board of Directors, and two seats on the Nominating Committee for service beginning on June 4, 2012. Information about proxy ballots is available at www.asco.org. Completed proxy ballots will be delivered to the ASCO President or his designee for casting at a meeting held on Nov. 30, 2011, 7:30 AM – 8:00 AM at ASCO Headquarters, 2318 Mill Road, Suite 800, Alexandria, VA 22318. Members with questions can email ASCOelection@asco.org or call 571-483-1316.

LEGAL NOTICE

ON NOVEMBER 3, 2011, LIBERTY UNIVERSITY, INC. TENDERED FOR FILING WITH THE FCC AN APPLICATION FOR ASSIGNMENT OF FM TRANSLATOR STATION

W275BO, CHANTILLY, VIRGINIA, TO METRO RADIO INC. W275BO OPERATES ON CHANNEL 275, WITH 130 WATTS EFFECTIVE RADIATED POWER AT 38-51-18

NORTH, 77-22-28 WEST. AFTER APPROVAL OF THE APPLICATION W275BO WILL RE-BROADCAST THE SIGNAL OF WTNT, 730 KHZ, ALEXANDRIA, VIRGINIA.

ORDER OF PUBLICATION

Case No JJ031119-05-00
Commonwealth of Virginia
VA. CODE § 8.01-316
Alexandria J & DR Juvenile and Domestic Relations District Court
Commonwealth of Virginia, in re
JAYDEN WARD
The object of this suit is to:
Terminate the residual parental rights and responsibilities of unknown father to Jayden Ward, born on 11/19/2010 to mother Sophie Ward, and to authorize the placement of the child for adoption.
It is ordered that the defendant unknown father, appear at the above named Court and protect his or her interests on or before 12/02/2011 at 2:30pm

ORDER OF PUBLICATION

Case No JJ031119-06-00
Commonwealth of Virginia
VA. CODE § 8.01-316
Alexandria J & DR Juvenile and Domestic Relations District Court
Commonwealth of Virginia, in re
JAYDEN WARD
The object of this suit is to:
Terminate the residual parental rights and responsibilities of Adrian D. Williams, putative father to Jayden Ward, born on 11/19/2010 to mother Sophie Ward, and to authorize the placement of the child for adoption.
It is ordered that the defendant Adrian D. Williams (father), appear at the above named Court and protect his or her interests on or before 1/11/2012 at 2:00pm

News

Linking Streetcars to Community College?

FROM PAGE 1

though it would benefit students at the community college and connect the streetcar line with a high-capacity transit corridor Alexandria officials are planning to create along Beauregard Street.

"Everybody wins," said Jimmy McClellan, dean of liberal arts at the college and a member of the Streetcar Coalition. "It makes no sense not to connect them."

But persuading the Arlington County Board and the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors to extend the line beyond the current plans might be difficult. The jurisdictions are in the process of trying to pin down federal money for the project, and delaying the process could throw a wrench into the works. Furthermore, as federal resources continue to dwindle in the near future, local leaders across the region are wondering if the money will exist to bring the line to Skyline at all. And extending the line through Skyline into Alexandria would require using land that's currently a public park, which is protected under the Environmental Protection Act.

"There are a number of quality of life issues that have been raised by neighbors of the campus," said Rich Baier, director of the Alexandria Department of Transportation and Environmental Services. "Alexandria is generally supportive of transit, but we need to see more of the concept here before we could take a

position."

THE STREETCAR LINE is a dream years in the making, one that is on the verge of becoming a reality in Arlington and Fairfax County. But important details have yet to be worked out, including the location of the maintenance yard. The public-policy benefits include increasing public transit options for students and connecting the streetcar line to Alexandria's bus-rapid

"It's worth the time and money. This would be a major step forward for the region."

— Tim Lovain

transit. Furthermore, the community college has offered access to the land for a maintenance yard at no cost whereas acquiring land in Crystal City would require a substantial expenditure.

"It sounds like a brilliant idea to me," said Arlington County Board member Barbara Favola, who was recently elected to the Virginia state Senate. "If we can find a way to partner with the community college, I think this could be a win-win scenario."

Not everyone views the scenario as a win, however. Alexandria neighborhoods near the campus and residents of a high-rise building in Skyline have raised objections. They're con-

cerned about living next to what would essentially be an industrial use, potentially with unsightly streetcar storage and noisy streetcars clanging into each other at all hours of the evening. Some have suggested that locating the maintenance yard on the campus might even prompt a lawsuit, leading to more cost and more delay.

"We've definitely heard from people who are concerned about the quality of life," said Baier. "Then there's concerns about where the funding would come from, what kind of noise would be involved, what the aesthetics would be and where the railcars would be stored."

ADVOCATES FOR BRINGING the line to the Alexandria campus say the decision should be considered in the context of building a regional system. Connecting Alexandria to the Fairfax and Arlington lines would maximize the system's utility, they say. And the aesthetics of the building could be masked by placing a student union or classrooms on the top, essentially disguising it to look like any other building on campus. Furthermore, training a generation of students to work on public transportation system would benefit the country.

"It's worth the time and money," said former Alexandria City Councilman Tim Lovain, an organizer of the Northern Virginia Streetcar Coalition. "This would be a major step forward for the region."

Volunteers at Human Services on a Mission

FROM PAGE 1

registering the families who receive services, Kratzok and her team must coordinate with 339 sponsors who contribute by matching gifts to those requested by the families.

Although not every family receives their requested gift, the remaining families have an opportunity to receive donated toys via the Toys for Tots program.

Community mom and pop stores also coordinate with the Holiday Sharing Program by acting as distribution points where individual citizens can donate toys.

By the first week in December all toys and donations are set aside, and letters are sent to families with information on how to pick up the gifts on Dec. 15.

The program raised nearly \$30,000 last year, with an additional \$20,000 worth of in-kind contributions from the 109 volunteers.

"It's rewarding, it's helping Alexandria, your hometown. In the end the toy does not matter, even something that just lights up puts a joy on a child's face," said Barbara Sherlock, who has volunteered with the Holiday Sharing Program for three years.

"We can't leave it 'til Dec. 24 like the big cities who wait till the last minute, for me that's too risky."

— Suzanne Kratzok, coordinator, Community Resources, Alexandria Department of Community & Human Services



Senior volunteers Sharon Crampton and Dianne Adams check in donations during last year's Holiday Sharing Program.

To Help

The Holiday Sharing Program accepts gift cards, toys and donations into the first week of December, and volunteer opportunities are available for distribution days when families pick up gifts. For more information visit: alexandriava.gov/holidaysharing.



Barbie dolls, donated by Alexandria citizens, make perfect gifts for the Holiday Sharing Program.

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THE CONNECTION
to your community



COUNCIL NOTEBOOK

Going Postal

The city's first post office was George Tavern, which was at the northwest corner of Cameron and Royal Street. Back then, the city was located on an official post road known as King's Highway and the postal service was a growth industry.

These days the United States Postal Service is in decline. It's running a \$10 billion deficit, and Postal Service leaders have put together a list of 3,700 facilities that could be on the chopping block including two in Alexandria.

"The two that have been targeted have historic significance," said Mayor **Bill Euille**. "We shouldn't sit idly by."

One of the post offices is a historic building on the campus of the Virginia Theological Seminary with murky origins. The other is a 1940s-era Art Deco building on Mount Vernon Avenue known as the Potomac Post Office because Del Ray was once a town called Potomac. Both facilities have their supporters, who have been lobbying City Council members to do something — anything — to prevent the two offices from closing.

"There's no doubt that something needs to be done," said Vice Mayor **Kerry Donley**. "You can't have these kinds of deficits and continue to operate."

Ultimately, City Council members don't have much of a say because the federal government will be making the decision. So they decided to do the only thing they can — write a letter to formally opposing the closure of the two post offices. During a discussion of how the letter should be framed Tuesday night, Donley suggested that the Postal Service should consider eliminating Saturday mail delivery and reducing health-care costs.

Councilwoman **Alicia Hughes** said the Postal Service officials should keep in mind that they are not paying for the land or the building at the Seminary post office.

"It doesn't make sense to close a post office that's actually turning a profit," said Hughes.

Imperfect Attendance

Woody Allen once observed that 80 percent of success was showing up. For members of Alexandria boards and commissions, the percentage is closer to 75 percent.

That's the minimum standard of attendance expected of the 58 boards, commissions and task forces that are required to file attendance reports. According to a recently completed review of attendance records, eight members did not make the cut.

"Each of the eight persons has been notified by letter of their attendance record," former acting city manager **Bruce Johnson** wrote in the Dec. 6 memorandum. "These persons may reapply for reappointment with other new applicants when the positions are advertised by the City Clerk."

The Commission on Information Technology suffered the biggest cut, with three members booted for imperfect attendance. One of the members on the chopping block was School Board member **Helen Morris**.

Acting No More

Monday marked the first day on the job for new city manager **Rashad Young**, ending the seven-month tenure of the acting city manager. Mayor Euille and several council members took a few moments to thank Johnson for stepping in and leading through a hurricane, a flood and an earthquake.

"I think he got to enjoy it because wherever I went around the town I saw him at parties and receptions," Euille said. "I never looked at Bruce as being a party animal. I always thought of him as someone who is boring. But I saw a side I didn't know he had."

"Free food," quipped Johnson, who has now returned to his day job as the city's chief financial officer.

— MICHAEL LEE POPE



Burke and Herbert's Walter Clarke and Marilou Octavious thank a donor to the Salvation Army Red Kettle Campaign Dec. 9 on King Street in Old Town.

Battle of the Bells

Red Kettle Campaign continues through Dec. 24.

It's a holiday symbol as traditional as red hats and reindeer: The bell ringers for the Salvation Army Red Kettle Campaign and volunteers from many local civic organizations are behind those smiles greeting Alexandrians throughout the city.

"There's a friendly competition going among several local organizations," said Lt. Trey Jones of the Alexandria Citadel. "Rotary, the American Legion, the Boat Club, Kiwanis — they are all out this year to see who can raise the most money during their bell-ringing hours."

The Alexandria Citadel raises 25 percent of its yearly operating budget during the 35 days of the Red Kettle Campaign, which runs through Christmas Eve.

"So far we have raised just under \$100,000," Jones said. "Our budgeted goal is \$175,000 but because we have Giant grocery stores back involved, we'd like to reach \$200,000. We're running low on re-



Donations to the Red Kettle Campaign can be made electronically via cell phone by scanning the QR code at the Red Kettle sites.

sources right now so I am hoping we can meet that before the end of the campaign."

The local support is what allows the Salvation Army to provide substantial services for the community throughout the year, including a transitional housing program for women, and emergency utility, rent and food assistance.

"This year we added an Army-Navy game day competition in front of Walmart in Kingstowne," Jones said. "Unfortunately for Army, Navy beat them there as well, raising \$860 to Army's \$731 but it was a fun day and we hope to do it again next year."

For more information or to donate to the Red Kettle Campaign, visit www.SalArmyDC.org/alexandria.

— JEANNE THEISMANN

Alive! Distributes Food to Needy

Volunteers work to ensure holiday meals.

BY MONTIE MARTIN
GAZETTE PACKET

Nearly 120 volunteers from over 41 religious congregations volunteered their time on Saturday, Dec. 10, to help distribute food for the holidays to Alexandria's most vulnerable citizens.

The Alive! Last Saturday food program holds 11 distribution events a year, with November and December combined for the holidays. The holiday event is the largest out of the year, with nearly 710 families in attendance.

"We hope to have enough donations to feed everyone," said Deborah Patterson, a senior volunteer with Alive! and site coordinator at Cora Kelly Recreation Center. "Times are tough for a lot of people, but if they can help those at the margins of survival it helps society and the city as a whole."

Once social workers refer clients and their family for services with the program, the site coordinators make requests from the National Capital Area Food Bank, which delivers the food for distribution.

Clients receive a five-day supply of fresh vegetables, venison and eggs. Although turkeys have been a traditional supplement for the holiday meals, due to a rise in the price of food and a strapped budget, chickens were selected this

SEE VOLUNTEERS, PAGE 29



Jeri Greenwell adds a 5-pound bag of potatoes to the food carts.

Touched by an Angel

Salvation Army provides holiday gifts for families

BY JEANNE THEISMANN
GAZETTE PACKET

They were women on a mission. As Heather Eggleston and Christina Tschampel entered Artfully Gifts and Chocolate Dec. 5, they were determined to find just the right gift for a special young teen.

"Do you have any diaries?" Tschampel asked the store's co-owner Eric Nelson. "And it's for a young girl so it needs to have a lock."

Eggleston and Tschampel were shopping for gifts as part of the Salvation Army's Angel Tree gift drive. Their employer, the National School Boards Association, is one of the many businesses participating in this year's drive.

"Most of our donations will come through company adoptions," said Lt. Sheri Jones, who spearheads the Angel Tree program in Alexandria. "We've been very fortunate. The public has been very generous to us."

The Salvation Army Angel Tree program was started in 1985 to help chil-

dren and families in need during the holidays. Families register in October to participate and the information of each recipient is compiled onto a tag that lists first name, gender, age, clothing size, shoe size and a Christmas wish. The tags are then distributed to area corporations and individuals who do the shopping for their 'angels.'

"We have 476 boxes waiting to be filled," Jones said. "Each one represents a family in Alexandria with more than 1,000 children 'adopted' through this year's drive."



Angel Tree tags provide the first name, age and needs of children hoping to be 'adopted' for the holidays.

The distribution days for this year's drive are scheduled for Dec. 19 and 20 so it's crunch time for Jones and the volunteers who sort, tag and load the gifts into individually labeled boxes at the Salvation Army headquarters on Mount Vernon Avenue in Del Ray.

"Now is the time that we need people to drop off any toys they bought for the Angel Tree drive," Jones said. "We want to make sure the gifts are here when the families arrive to pick up their boxes."



Lt. Sheri Jones and Diamond Simpkins bag toys Dec. 12 at the Salvation Army building in Del Ray as part of this year's Angel Tree Drive.

Throughout the region, more than 15,000 kids will be served through the Angel Tree drive thanks to the Salvation Army and the generosity of shoppers like Eggleston and Tschampel.



Christine Tschampel and Heather Eggleston of the National School Boards Association shop for gifts for Angel Tree recipients at Artfully Gifts and Chocolate.

"This is such a wonderful program," said Eggleston, who has participated in the Angel Tree drive for many years. "It just wouldn't be Christmas without a few 'angels' to shop for."

Volunteers with Alive! Distribute Food to Needy

FROM PAGE 3

year instead. The four-pound rooster chickens were contributions from the Capital Area Food Bank at no cost to Alive!.

With an operating budget of \$100,000 for food distributions throughout the year, Alive! stretches resources in the form of purchasing food for 20 cents per pound. Staples such as eggs, however, have doubled in price since last year. The rising cost of food puts an additional strain on available funds even as the number of referrals grows; from 2007 to 2010 Alive! has seen a 40 percent increase in the number of clients requesting services.

The Last Saturday food program distributes food at Ladrey Senior High Rise, Church of the Resurrection, and Cora Kelly Rec Center. While each site has its own logistical challenges, the Cora Kelly site receives over half of all Alive! clients. Nearly 70 percent of these clients are Spanish speakers.

"After working for so many years with a focus on my job and family, today I make a point to help the community," said Paul Doherty, an Alive! volunteer and member of the Christ Church congregation. "I also have a selfish motive for volunteering, I speak Spanish and wanted an opportunity to practice."

The message of helping others transcends religious affiliations, as seen by the varied Christian denominations, Jewish groups



Former ALIVE! president Gerry Hebert raffles off a few houseware items to those waiting at Cora Kelly.

and Muslim organizations present.

Deborah Schaffer, an ESL teacher at ACPs and member of the Beth El Hebrew Congregation, has volunteered with Alive! for the past six years. "In Judaism there is a term called 'Tikkun olam,' which means repairing the world. The idea is we need to make a point to help our community."

"Our church is mission oriented, and helping others is part of that," said Phillip

Ferguson, a 30-year volunteer with Alive! and member of the Alfred St. Baptist Church. "Helping others extends the ministry beyond the doors of the church."

The City of Alexandria also coordinates with Alive! in the form offering free flu shots during the distribution events. The Alive! partnership with the Department of Health began three years ago when health officials needed a way to reach the community dur-

Helping

Alive! is staffed primarily by volunteers, which allows up to 90 percent of contributions to go towards program needs. All contributions are tax deductible, checks can be made payable to Alive! and mailed to 2723 King St., Alexandria, VA 22302. For more information on volunteer opportunities or to make a contribution online, visit: alive-inc.org

ing the H1N1 outbreak.

"We found out the December food distribution draws the largest crowds, and thought it was a perfect opportunity to reach vulnerable populations," said Cyndi Lake, emergency planner with the Alexandria Department of Health. "Our collaboration with community partners is key, and making a difference is something all of us in public health believe is important."

Although the December food distribution event tends to draw the largest crowds, site coordinators are alarmed that holiday numbers remain high throughout the year.

"We're seeing a December high crowd every month," said Patterson. "Even when we had massive rain people still showed up."

"Contributions drop off dramatically after the holidays," said Ken Naser, executive director of Alive!. "People forget out clients have to eat year round. In June and July people are still eating."

Alexandria Gazette Packet



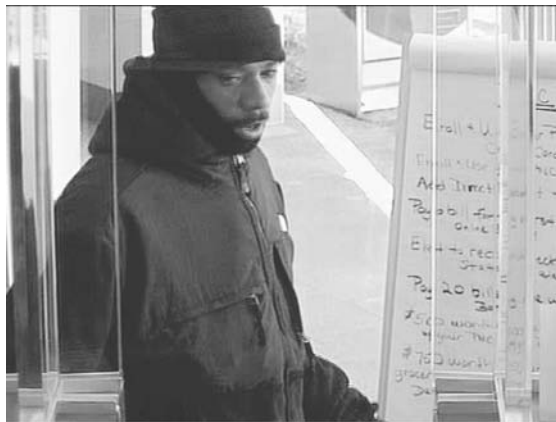
MICHAEL LEE POPE

First Place in Public Safety Writing

Judges comments: Writer does an outstanding job tackling broader issues. The bank-robberies article is extremely well done and doesn't sugarcoat an issue sure to give local police a black eye. The article on domestic violence is equally well done, giving the perspective of a victim who is now a survivor. The look at changes 10 years after 9/11 is another strong article, providing great insight and perspective.



Bank of America on North Washington Street was robbed on Jan. 21 at 10:41 a.m.



PNC Bank robbery on Diagonal Road was robbed on Dec. 27 at 2:10 p.m.



Capitol One Bank on South Washington Street was robbed on Oct. 20 at 9:45 a.m.



Virginia Commerce Bank on Price Street was robbed on Oct. 8 at 5:45 p.m.

Getting Away With It

Fewer than half of Alexandria's bank robberies in the last five years have been solved.

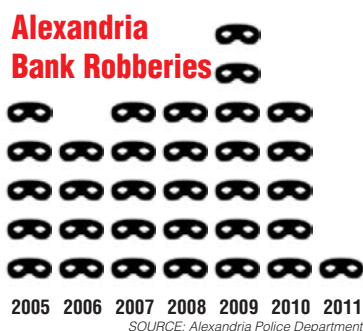
BY MICHAEL LEE POPE
GAZETTE PACKET

Sometimes bank robbers who strike in Alexandria are caught here in the city. Other times, they are caught in neighboring jurisdictions. But half the time, according to statistics from the Alexandria Police Department, nobody is ever arrested. Through a spokeswoman, the department declined to make anyone available to answer: Why are so many Alexandria bank robbers walking away with thousands of dollars in cash?

For now, the department is choosing to remain silent on that issue.

Since 2005 the city has logged 32 bank robberies, five of which have taken place in the last four months. Of those 32 cases, eight suspects were arrested here in Alexandria. Sixteen others were taken into custody by the feds or another jurisdiction. That leaves 16 bank robberies unsolved, with tens of thousands of dollars successfully heisted by criminals. The city's relatively low closure rate stands in stark contrast to national statistics compiled by the Federal Bureau of Investigation, which show that three out of four bank robbers are caught within 18 months of their crime.

"Like any other case, it depends on what kind of evidence we're working with," said Commonwealth's Attorney Randy Sengel. "Obviously cases are more difficult when you don't have DNA evidence or fingerprints, and the suspect isn't looking directly into the camera."



Bank of America on North Washington Street was robbed on Dec. 20 at 2:49 p.m.

United States happen without any violence, shooting or injury. Only 4 percent of the cases involve someone getting hurt. And most happen without a gun, according to FBI statistics, which show that 41 percent of the cases involve a

weapon being threatened and 25 percent of bank robbers use an actual firearm. Nevertheless, bankers say, caution is at the core of the training given to tellers.

"We tell people to just hand over the money," said Margot Mohsberg Johnson, spokeswoman for the American Bankers Association. "Don't be a hero. It's not worth it."

Bank robbers typically walk away with "a couple of thousand dollars," Johnson said, although banks and police officials make a habit of declining to release how much money is taken in a specific heist. Sometimes the teller will slip a GPS tracking device into the loot, and other times the serial numbers on a stash bills bankers call "bait money" that's specifically set aside for such a purpose. Many times, tellers will slip a "dye pack" in with the bills, which will later explode on the bank robber and the cash.

"Several years ago, a couple of agents for the Alcohol Control Board looked out the window and saw a man walking across the street with a lunchbox that was spewing red smoke," said Sengel. "It was pretty obvious what was going on, and they were able to

THE VAST MAJORITY of bank robberies in the

SEE GETTING AWAY, PAGE 15

Several Burglaries Hit Del Ray Homes

The Alexandria Police Department has seen an increase in residential burglaries and larcenies from autos over the last month, especially in the Del Ray section of the City. The residential burglaries have occurred during the daytime hours, usually between noon and 7 p.m. The suspect(s) have been using force to gain entry into rear or side doors. Laptops, jewelry, televisions and cash are the items mostly targeted.

All but one of the homes was unoccupied at the time of the burglaries. In that case, a resident in the 200 block of W. Windsor Avenue was in an upstairs office when she heard a banging on a door downstairs. When she went to investigate the noise, she came face to face with the suspect who then ran out a rear door. The victim was not injured and nothing was taken from the residence.

The suspect is described as a black male, approximately five feet six inches tall, weighing 150 pounds. He was wearing a puffy jacket with a hooded sweatshirt and dark jeans.

Between Jan. 9 and Jan. 11, there were also six larcenies from autos in the Del Ray area of the City. All of the vehicles were left unlocked and most were parked in the victim's driveway. The suspect(s) took loose coins from the interior of the vehicles.

Residents are encouraged to report any suspicious activity or suspicious persons by calling the Police Department at 703-838-4444.

Mineral Oil Spill at Pepco Substation

At approximately 10:30 a.m. Monday, Jan. 24, units from the Alexandria Fire Department were notified of a possible oil spill at the Pepco substation located at 1400 N. Royal St. Units arrived to find that a release of mineral oil from a transformer occurred and overflowed a containment basin. An oil sheen was seen in the Potomac River and fire department units set up containment booms to prevent any additional product from making its way into the river.

EPA, the Coast Guard, and the Virginia Department of Emergency Management were all notified. The incident remains under investigation.

Police Investigate Fatal Hit and Run

Police are investigating a fatal hit and run pedestrian crash that occurred around 12:10 a.m. on Friday, Jan. 21. A 26-year-old man was crossing King Street at the intersection with Park Center Drive when he was struck by a vehicle that fled the scene. A witness to the crash described the striking vehicle as a four-door black sedan, similar to a Lincoln Town car. The victim, Melbourne Clyde Leach, Jr. of Alexandria was transported to Inova Fairfax Hospital where he died from his injuries.

Members of the Crash Reconstruction Team are conducting the investigation.

Anyone with information about this crash is asked to contact the Alexandria Police Department at 703-838-4444.

Shoe Collection for the Needy

Alexandria residents are invited to recycle their new or "gently worn" shoes for people in need.

Soles4Souls and Tomorrows Black Men, Inc. are collecting gently worn footwear through Jan. 31 to help provide assistance to persons in need, whether they are victims of a natural disaster or subject to living in extreme poverty.

Individuals and companies interested in donating money to help defray shipping costs can contact Laverne Short at 571-338-7520 or visit the organization's website at www.giveshoes.org

Shoe drop locations include:

SEE NEWS BRIEFS, PAGE 15

NEWS

Getting Away With It

FROM PAGE 7

catch him fleeing the scene.”

LIKE ANY OTHER group of criminals, bank robbers come from a variety of backgrounds. One notorious suspect sported a gray fedora, a sharp trenchcoat and designer shoes during a 2007 robbery of the Virginia Commerce Bank on King Street. In another case, a bank robber later admitted that he needed the money to pay a lawyer because he had been accused of stealing a car. In the vast majority of cases, federal statistics show, the crime is as simple as slipping a note to the teller demanding money.

“Don’t believe what you see on television,” said Randy Benarick, director of security at Burke and Herbert Bank. “Most of the time, you won’t even know a bank robbery is going on.”

During their training exercises, tellers are instructed to avoid discussing details about what happened with each other until investigators arrive. This prevents memories from being tainted by the perceptions of others. Benarick said he tells the tellers to make eye contact with the criminal, a subtle bit of

psychology that gives the impression that the bank is in control of the situation. Sometimes, robbers are stopped by what bankers call a “man trap” in which a series of double doors at the entrance lock the criminal inside until the police arrive. Johnson acknowledged bankers have a couple other tricks that she declined to share.

“They’re industry secrets,” she said. “Most of time our efforts are directed at getting the bank robber out the door without anyone getting hurt.”

THOSE WHO ARE caught could face federal or state prosecution, depending on the facts in the case. In some cases, making the determination between which prosecutors will take a case could come down to which detectives caught the suspect. In other cases, a suspect’s criminal history could come into play. Sengel said his negotiation with the feds often boils down to which scenario would result in the longest potential prison sentence.

“Who gets the biggest bang for the buck?” he asked. “From our point of view in terms of presenting evidence in court, it isn’t much different than any other kind of robbery except for the forensic evidence involved.”

NEWS BRIEFS

FROM PAGE 7

- ❖ Alexandria City Hall 301 King St.
- ❖ Charles Beatley Central Library, 5005 Duke St.
- ❖ Charles Houston Recreation Center, 901 Wythe St.
- ❖ William Ramsay Recreation Center, 5650 Sanger Ave.
- ❖ Mount Vernon Recreation Center, 2701 Commonwealth Ave.
- ❖ Cora Kelly Recreation Center, 25 W Reed Ave
- ❖ Charles Barrett Recreation Center, 1115 Martha Custis Drive
- ❖ Patrick Henry Recreation Center, 4643 Taney Ave.
- ❖ Chinquapin Park Recreation Center, 3210 King St.
- ❖ Nannie J. Lee Recreation Center 1108 Jefferson St.

If a box is full or for bulk collection of 50 or more pairs of shoes, contact Laverne Short at 703-746-5503 or 571-338-7520.

Meeting on Jones Point Park

The first meeting of the Community Liaison Information Group on Jones Point Park Construction will be held Thursday, Jan. 27, 7 p.m. at the Lee Center, 1108 Jefferson St. The purpose of the meeting is to allow for liaison members and the general public to ask questions and to be briefed on ongoing Jones Point Park construction activities. The meeting is open to the public and will include representatives from the project’s managing parties — VDOT and the National Park Service — as well as staff from the City of Alexandria.

NEIGHBORHOOD

Taylor Run

MONEY FOR CHILDREN’S

Despite the sub-freezing temperature, Shooters Hill Ecumenical Carolers turned out happily on St. Stephen’s Day, singing and collection donations for Children’s Hospital, as they have done for 45 years. The total collected was \$1,149.

Rachel Gibson Hunt, one of the original small singers all those years ago, led the group this year, which included her sons Wyatt and Gabriel Qualiana.

The Swindell children — Amy, Holden, and Nathaniel — followed the lead of their father Richard as they sang.

Nathaniel Hunt, one of the original young carolers, turned up this year with daughter Dakota Kelso Hunt and her friend Abigail Adams.

Richard Bussey sang loyally although we all missed his daughter Rachel. After caroling all returned to 310 Park Road to eat a really filling potluck dinner.

— LOIS KELSO HUNT

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Caesar Salad

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Grilled Salmon and Shrimp with Grilled Asparagus and Fingerling Potatoes with a Lemon Garlic Sauce

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Petit Four (Lemon Poppy Seed)
Chocolate Ganache (Truffle with Raspberry Glaze)
Raspberry White Chocolate

Dinner for Two
(Just \$49.99 Per Couple)

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Peace of Mind!

Violence Behind Closed Doors

Domestic violence is on the rise as the city's Battered Women's Shelter celebrates its 30th anniversary.

BY MICHAEL LEE POPE
GAZETTE PACKET

Like many victims of domestic violence, Rachel felt like she had nowhere to turn. Trapped in an abusive relationship and afraid to leave her husband, she became trapped in a cycle of violence — until she reached out to a domestic violence service provider in Northern Virginia, where she found a support group and child care. Now that she's divorced, Rachel is one of 90 volunteers who help staff the city's Battered Women's Shelter — an anonymous single-family house tucked away on a quiet Del Ray street where women and children can escape until a restraining order has been issued.

"I actually enjoy working the hotline," said Rachel, who did not want to give her last name for fear that her abuser might track her down. "The person on the other end of the phone is in crisis, and I enjoy being able to give something back when it's needed the most."

The need has never been greater, according to experts in domestic violence and statewide statistics. A statewide database that collects information from local providers shows that the problem of domestic violence is on the rise across Virginia. The number of hotline calls has grown by 8 percent from 2009 to 2010, and the number of women, children and

men staying in a domestic violence emergency shelter on an average night has increased 22 percent. More than 2,000 families were turned away last year because existing shelters were full, a 54 percent increase over the previous year.

"We've seen a downturn in the economy and an increase in substance abuse," said Gena Boyle, domestic violence advocacy manager for the Virginia Sexual and Domestic Violence Action Alliance. "And we know both of these lead to an increase in domestic violence."

HERE IN ALEXANDRIA, the numbers also show an increased need for services at a time when local government is trying to cut back. In 2009, for example, the Battered Women's Shelter was home for 53 women and 38 children. The following year it was 61 women and 52 children. The court system has also seen an increase, with domestic spousal abuse cases rising from 165 in 2007 to 211 in 2009.

Prosecutors say domestic violence remains a problem despite changes in the last 30 years in how the cases are handled.

"I don't think you are ever going to eliminate the problem, in spite of your best efforts," said Commonwealth's Attorney Randy Sengel. "But in the last 20 years there's been a sea change in the way these cases are handled."

When police are called to a domestic violence case, an arrest can be mandatory if probable cause can be established — even if the victim does not want to press charges. Suspects are taken into custody by a special unit of the Alexandria Police Department and prosecuted by a commonwealth's attorney who specializes in domestic violence

cases. Victims and their children have access to the Battered Women's Shelter — the first of its kind in Northern Virginia when it opened its doors 30 years ago.

"The idea was that it was supposed to be as anonymous and nondescript as possible," said Councilwoman Del Pepper, who was an aide to Mayor Chuck Beatley in 1981. "That way the women and children could feel secure."

ALEXANDRIA'S SHELTER became a city-owned

SEE SHELTER'S 30TH, PAGE 25



An image from a National Institute of Justice study on domestic violence.

30th Anniversary

Friends of the Commission for Women will be commemorating the 30th anniversary of the Battered Women's Shelter with a MetroStage production on Feb. 10 of "His Eye is on the Sparrow," a play written by Larry Parr and directed by Gary Yates. A reception starts at 6:30 p.m., and the performance will begin at 7:30 p.m. A live auction will take place during the intermission. Tickets at \$75, and proceeds will benefit the Alexandria Domestic Violence Program. For more information, call 703-548-9044.

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PUBLIC SCOPING MEETINGS: POTOMAC YARD METRORAIL STATION EIS

You're Invited!

**Thursday,
February 10, 2011**


4:30 pm to 6 pm and
6:30 pm to 8 pm

**Cora Kelly Recreation Center
25 W. Reed Avenue
Alexandria, VA**

The Federal Transit Administration, in cooperation with the City of Alexandria, the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority, and the National Park Service, is initiating the preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the proposed Potomac Yard Metrorail Station.

You are invited to attend either meeting to learn about the EIS process; ask questions; and comment on the purpose and need for the project, alternatives considered, key environmental considerations, and the public and agency coordination process. No RSVP is required and all members of the public are welcome.

POTOMAC YARD METRORAIL STATION EIS



Transit to Cora Kelly: DASH bus route AT10 or Metrobus routes 10A/B/E. Parking is available on-site. Visual materials and a Spanish-speaking staff member will be available. A sign language interpreter will be provided upon advance request. Anyone who requires special assistance should call (202) 962-1745 or email jasje@wmata.com at least 3 days prior to the meeting. If City of Alexandria Schools are closed on February 10 due to inclement weather, the snow date for the meetings will be Tuesday, February 15.

www.potomacyardmetro.com

OBITUARIES

Elizabeth deBullet Hall

Elizabeth Whiteley deBullet Hall, 100, died Jan. 9, 2011, just one day before her 101st birthday, at the Goodwin House, Alexandria.



Born in Catonsville, Md. on Jan. 10, 1910, she was a 1931 graduate of the Bouve-Boston School of Physical Education, Boston, Mass., now part of Tufts University. She worked as a physical therapist at the Baltimore public school for crippled children prior to her marriage in 1932. A resident of Alexandria since 1935, she was among a group of Presbyterians who helped to reopen the Old Presbyterian Meeting House in 1949 to meet the needs of a growing post-war congregation from the Second Presbyterian Church in Alexandria. Throughout the remainder of her life, she was very active in the Old Presbyterian Meeting House, serving in many ways. Elizabeth Hall was an avid birdwatcher and a gardener of herbs and scented geraniums. She created beautiful crewel embroidery designs and assembled a large collection of American-made baskets as she traveled. She moved to the Goodwin House, Alexandria in 1999.

Elizabeth Hall was the daughter of Leon J. and Laura Whiteley deBullet. She was married to the late R. Clifford Hall. She is survived by sons Leon and wife Anita, Vestal N.Y., Clifford and wife Diana Post, Silver Spring, Md., Edwin and wife Janet, Alexandria, and Eugene "Dinny" Hall, Glenwood, Fla., grandchildren Clifford and wife Kalpana, McLean, Jeffrey and wife Kathleen, Manchester, Conn. and Ellen Hall and husband Carl Crown, Centreville, and great grandchildren, Maya and Jai Hall, Connor Hall and Benjamin Crown.

Interment was on Jan. 22, 2011 at the Presbyterian Cemetery, Alexandria.

James Graham

James Graham, 79, Alexandria restaurateur, died peacefully on Jan. 10, 2011, of natural causes. He was co-owner and proprietor of Scotland Yard Restaurant in Old Town Alexandria from 1978 to 2004.



James, known as "Sir James" by the locals, was a fixture in Old Town, standing outside his restaurant for 25 years, outfitted in his full dress Scottish regalia. James emigrated from Scotland in 1967, having been granted a special visa based on his background as a well-known, internationally acclaimed, Scottish ballroom dancer and judge. James worked in the dance world for many years, and then turned to his more artistic pursuits.

He was an artist in all respects. He was a renowned oil painter, an expert in faux facades and grand woodwork, as well as a builder and renovator of historic properties in Alexandria. In 1997 he won the Historic Alexandria Foundation's Preservation Award for his work at 517 S. Washington Street.

In 1978, James and his business partner, Susan Troup, created Scotland Yard Restaurant in Old Town, with family recipes from Scotland, as well as modern interpretations of Scottish fare.

James grew up during WWII in war-torn Glasgow, Scotland, where overnight bombings of the shipyards were common with an estimated 100,000 people left homeless. For safety, James and his younger siblings were sent off to live in the Scottish countryside until the war ended. From 1950 - 1952 he served in the British Army in Malaya, now Malaysia, and was part of the Cameronians and the King's Own Scottish Borderers regiments.

He is survived by his son, Stuart Graham, 10 brothers and sisters, as well as Susan Troup, Lelia Troup Beall and Waldon Wayne Beall of Alexandria.

Rose Marie Sandweg

Rose Marie Sandweg, 95, a local artist and master gardener, died Jan. 13, 2011 at Fairfax Inova Hospital after a brief illness. She lived in Annandale.

Born in Alexandria, Mrs. Sandweg was the daughter of Frederick S. Jackson and Marie Fannon Jackson. Mr. Jackson was the chief engineer in the construction of the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier and the re-design of Arlington Cemetery's entrance in the 1940s.

Mrs. Sandweg was a painter of pastoral scenes, mostly of her beloved Virginia countryside. Her paintings hung in the Prince Royal Gallery and Hodges Gallery in Alexandria as well as in the Island Gallery in Manteo, N.C.

Known as the "azalea lady," Mrs. Sandweg's gardens were the backdrop for many wedding photos as well as a destination spot for many sightseers every spring. Frequently found working in her beloved garden into her 90s, Mrs. Sandweg encouraged passers-by to stop and enjoy her yard.

With an associate's degree in drafting from George Washington University, Mrs. Sandweg worked at the United States Geodetic Society prior to her marriage. Married in 1942 to FBI Special Agent William H. Sandweg, Jr. of St. Louis, Mrs. Sandweg moved with her husband to Houston, Seattle and Chicago before being transferred back to the Washington Field Office in 1954. Her husband predeceased her in 1996. They were married for 54 years.

Mrs. Sandweg is survived by five children; William Henry Sandweg III of Phoenix, Ariz., Jean Marie Valenta of La Plata, Md., Robert F. Sandweg of Land Harbour, N.C., Frances Anne Canavan of Davidsonville, Md. and John Paul Sandweg of West Bloomfield, Mich., 11 grandchildren and five great grandchildren.

WEEK IN ALEXANDRIA

FROM PAGE 9

front.

First, there's the idea of transforming the parking lot of the Old Dominion Boat Club into a new public square that would lead to a new 200-foot pier into waters owned by the District of Columbia. Members of the boat club are openly hostile to that idea, although Hamer seems to think she'll be able to negotiate a settlement.

"We've negotiated before," said Hamer. "We could conceivably continue to negotiate."

Then there's the part of the plan that would construct a new building at the western edge of Waterfront Park. The plan calls for the new building to become a parking garage for the Old Dominion Boat Club.

"There's been a lot of talk about listening to what people want," said Old Townier **Poul Hertel**. "But I have yet to hear anybody say they want a new building in Waterfront Park."

Finally, there's the part about replacing the last remaining industrial uses on the waterfront with hotels. Many Old Town residents say Alexandria already has enough hotels, and that the last thing they want to see is new development along the waterfront. The plan is expected to include two new hotels at the two sites owned by Robinson Terminal, although this has become another controversial part of the document.

"We should be looking for the highest and best use of this land," said former Vice Mayor **Andrew Macdonald**. "And I just don't think hotels and restaurants is the direction we should be going in."

Managing Chef

Here's something you may not have known about City Manager **Jim Hartmann**, who announced this week that he'll be stepping down from his position in May. He's a gourmet chef.

"I love to cook," said Hartmann. "Although I haven't been doing a lot of cooking since I've been in this job."

The city manager said he enjoys cooking Chinese and Italian food, although he said he enjoys cooking anything with meats. His signature dish?

"Oh," he mused, "that would have to be marinated flank steak."

No word yet as to whether or not he'll be catering any city events during his remaining months in office.

— MICHAEL LEE POPE

NEIGHBORHOODS

Seminary Valley

Well, it looks like that dreaded day is upon our neighborhood, when we become an official parking district. Due to the BRAC development, the City has a number of proposals designed to keep BRAC employees from parking their cars in the Valley. Proposals range from having large or small parking districts; they also involve options regarding specific days and times parking restrictions would be in effect. Go to www.Alexandriava.gov/tes/info/default.aspx?id=42458 to see maps and additional information.

There will be a parking meeting, open to all, at the Beatley Library on Thursday, Feb. 10 at 7 p.m. The City's Parking Coordinator will prepare a draft plan by Feb. 15, present recommendations for an ordinance change to the parking code by Feb. 23 and start implementing the plan by Feb. 25.

Keep your prayers and good wishes coming for one of our neighborhood "stars," Bob Moran, who has again left his crossing guard post at Richenbacher and Pegram to launch treatment for lung cancer.

Patty Chamberlain reports that Bob is in excellent spirits and that he misses his Polk and Hammond kids very much. If you would like to drop Bob a line, you can send it to: Bob and Lois Moran, 7820A Harrowgate Circle, Springfield, VA, 22152.

Many congratulations to Hammond 8th Grader Brendan Zack, who was recommended by his Orchestra Teacher, Mr. Hodge, for an Optimist Club award. Fourteen-year old Brendan and his parents, Marie and Jeff, attended a luncheon at the Belle Haven Country Club, after which Brendan played the Minuet No. 3 on his cello. Brendan also received a \$100 savings bond. Marie reports that she was tickled to find out that many Optimist Club members are ACPs grads or have had children go through the City Schools. Largely due to efforts by John Porter, the Club has initiated awards for middle school children who excel in the arts. Another way in which our neighbors rise a notch above, wouldn't you say?

Kassy Benson, our Hammond High School Alumni contact, reported recently that Coach Keith Kischbauch passed away on Jan. 22. Coach Kischbauch was a teacher and coach at Jefferson Junior High School and Hammond High School; he was T.C. Williams' first athletic director.

— MIA JONES

Women's Shelter's 30th Anniversary

FROM PAGE 15

property as the result of a clash between city officials and a sitting member of the Alexandria City Council.

In the late 1970s, Councilman Nicholas Colasanto owned a property in Del Ray where the windows were boarded up, the paint was peeling and weeds were choking the lawn. Neighbors complained, and the property ended up on the city's list of blighted properties. City officials ended up taking the property by eminent domain against Colasanto's protests, and he stepped down in 1979.

Today, a park on Mount Vernon Avenue and the building that houses the Del Ray Artisans Gallery are named in his honor. But those aren't the only contributions Colasanto made to Alexandria.

BY 1981, city officials were looking for a place to open a shelter for battered women. This was a time when the women's movement had started to change public perceptions about the nature of domestic violence, and Alexandria wanted to be on the cutting edge of the movement.

That's when Colasanto's old property in Del Ray

entered the discussion. It was the right size in a great location that was comfortable and anonymous, a place where women and children could feel comfortable escaping the cycle of violence and starting a new life.

"It was a place where women could go, even in the middle of the night," said Vola Lawson, who was assistant city manager for housing at the time. "In many cases, it's a matter of life or death."

SINCE THE SHELTER opened in 1981, additional office space has been added and handicapped accessible features have been installed.

The 2006 special-use permitting process obscured the address of the Del Ray house to prevent its location from becoming public knowledge in an effort to prevent abusive spouses from seeking out the location of their victims.

According to the city's Domestic and Sexual Violence Programs, which oversees the shelter, "Most women who come here are in relative danger of being found by their abuser," said Claire Dunn, coordinator of the program. "We are able to provide a safe and supportive environment until they can get a protective order, which allows them to go back home."

Heroics and Heartbreak

“We remember every day.”

BY JEANNE THEISMANN
GAZETTE PACKET

The photograph remains instantly recognizable: A single fragment of time captured on Sept. 12, 2001 when firefighters and military personnel unfurled a flag atop the Pentagon as a symbol of resilience and hope for a nation still paralyzed with disbelief at the events of the day before.

“You’d think after 10 years, it would get easier but it doesn’t,” said Lieutenant Jim Morris, one of four local firefighters pictured in what has become a defining image of the terrorist attack on the Pentagon. “The emotions of that day are still very difficult to talk about.”

As Morris joined other Alexandria and Penn-Daw Fire Station 11 personnel in the heroic rescue and recovery efforts at the Pentagon, his mind was 225 miles north in New York City, where his brother Seth was still unaccounted for in the rubble of the World Trade Center.

SEE TEN YEARS, PAGE 3



PHOTO BY PAUL MORSE/THE WHITE HOUSE

Lt. Jim Morris and fellow firefighters from Alexandria and Fairfax County Fire and Rescue Station 11 join soldiers atop the Pentagon to hang an American flag during rescue and recovery efforts Sept. 12, 2001.

Out of 9/11, a Living Legacy

Steuerle family founded ACT to help others.

BY JEANNE THEISMANN
GAZETTE PACKET

It was a single day that changed America. Around the world eyes were riveted to images of horror as a stunned nation slowly came to grasp what had happened: On Sept. 11, 2001, America had been attacked.

“My daughters and I do not try to rank death or other loss,” said Eugene Steuerle, whose wife Norma was aboard American Airlines Flight 77 when it struck the Pentagon. “We realize that over the course of the last 10 years, millions — perhaps even a majority — of people have borne the loss of a loved relative or friend. We have received extraordinary



COURTESY PHOTO

Norma Lang Steuerle was aboard American Airlines Flight 77 when it struck the Pentagon on Sept. 11, 2001.

attention because of the international and national aspects of 9/11 but claim as a result no more knowledge or wisdom than others.”

SEE A LIVING LEGACY, PAGE 5

What’s Changed in 10 Years after 9/11?

Increased security, funding affects city.

BY MICHAEL LEE POPE
GAZETTE PACKET

Prompted by terrorism and forged in tragedy, Alexandria’s response to 9/11 has hardened the city to attack and added tens of millions of dollars worth of training and equipment for public-safety officers. The new era of security has reached into almost every aspect of the city’s civic life, influencing everything from planning to policing and traffic to parks. It’s also created a new building known as the Washington Headquarters Service that is expected to plunge the region into gridlock. And it’s delayed opening of Jones Point Park by more than a decade.

“In some areas, I’d say there was an overreaction,” said Vice Mayor Kerry Donley, who was mayor on 9/11. “We’ve gotten away from good, solid planning.”

The most glaring post-9/11 security change is looming over the West End, a building where more than 6,000 Department of Defense employees will work next year. The situation was created by the Base Realignment and Closure Commission, which issued a 2005 recommendation to move thousands of workers out of Crystal City because the leased space there failed to meet post 9/11 security concerns. In 2008, the city endorsed a site at Mark Center, which was eventually selected by the Pentagon because it was significantly cheaper than the other options. Now city officials have tried

to adapt by adding shuttle service and creating a new West End parking district, although many neighbors say that’s like spitting in the wind.

“There’s going to be gridlock anyway because there was no transportation plan before BRAC was developed,” said Lynn Bostain, a Seminary Valley resident. “None.”

PERHAPS NO PART of city government experienced as much growth as the Alexandria’s public-safety agencies. The police department, for example, responded to 9/11 by creating the Office of Homeland Security and Operational Preparedness. The office coordinates information regarding potential terrorist threats. It also makes preparations for international and domestic terrorism as well as acting as the point of contact for the National Joint Terrorism Task Force.

“We’ve gotten much better about sharing information with the feds,” said Deputy Chief Blaine Corle. “It’s a big commitment, but it’s one of those things you have to do.”

Because many of the federal government’s highest profile prosecutions are detained at the Alexandria jail awaiting court appearances at the federal courthouse, the facility received \$5 million worth of upgrades, including a new security perimeter that includes a building to screen visitors before they approach the building. Since 9/11, suspects that have spent time at the Alexandria jail have included Zacarias Moussaoui, one of the chief conspirators who planned the 9/11 attacks.

SEE HOW, PAGE 6

ALEXANDRIA, VA 22314
 TO: 1604 KING ST.
 ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED
 MATERIAL:
 TIME-SENSITIVE
 POSTMASTER:
 ATTENTION
 PERMIT #482
 ALEXANDRIA, VA
 PAID
 U.S. POSTAGE
 CIRCULATION
 VERIFICATION

Remembering 9/11

Where were you on 9/11? The question is often asked and answered as a sort of therapy — a way to commemorate the horrors of the day by recounting the gruesome tick-tock of events that day.

“It was a scary time,” said Sheriff **Dana Lawhorne**, who was detective at the time. “I never though I’d hear a call go out on the police radio that a hijacked airplane was on its way and the estimated time of arrival was 15 minutes, but that’s what happened.”

As the events of the day unfolded, the police department was flooded with emergency calls from every part of the city, and officers were scrambling to track it down. One of the most dramatic reports was a bomb explosion at Chinquapin Park Recreation Center, which turned out to be caused by the sonic boom created by the fighter jets that swept through the region. Detective **Eric Ratliff** decided the police needed a commanding view, so he positioned himself at the top of the Mark Center Hilton so he could help responders have a more complete picture of what was happening.

“From that vantage point, he was able to keep everybody calm by letting them know what wasn’t happening,” said Lawhorne, who eventually joined Ratliff at the top of the city’s tallest building. “And if there was an airplane on the way, he was certainly going to let everybody know about it.”

Widening Controversy

A controversy is widening in the West End, pitting neighborhood residents against advocates for mass transit. At issue is Beauregard Street, which city planners want to transform into something they call “Corridor C.” City planners want to widen the street to accommodate a dedicated lane for transit in the center of the road, although many neighbors oppose the idea because it would cut into the tree canopy along the side of the street.

“A challenge with providing dedicated transit lanes is that they require additional width to the street, unless existing travel lanes are removed to accommodate the transitway,” wrote transportation director **Rich Baier** in a memorandum outlining the city’s plans. “As with all implementation measures, the city often must balance competing objectives, including transit, cost and neighborhood context.”

To accomplish that balance, city officials are recommending a \$48 million plan that would install bus-rapid transit on Beauregard. The operation would have 8-minute headways at perk hours and 15-minute headways at off-peak hours. Ridership is estimated at 12,500 to 17,500 each day. Yet the plan will face strong opposition in the West End, where residents are grappling with major traffic gridlock as a result of the city’s endorsement of the Mark Center site for a massive Department of Defense installation as part of the Base Realignment and Closure process.

“We residents of the West End can be forgiven for thinking that we are witnessing a poorly disguised way of opening up six blocks to benefit developers JBG and Duke Realty,” said Seminary Hill resident **Jack Sullivan**. “Recall it was Duke Realty that gave us BRAC, a major part of the problem.”

The Russians Are Coming!

Five Russian jurists will be in Alexandria next week to examine the American system of justice as part of the Open World Program, a creation of the One World Leadership Center. Stops on the tour include the courtroom of U.S. District Judge **Anthony Trenga**, the Alexandria jail, the Fairfax County Circuit Court, the George Mason School of Law and Alexandria City Hall, where the delegation is expected to meet with Mayor **Bill Euille** and Vice Mayor **Kerry Donley**.

Founded in 1999 with a focus on Russia, the Open World Program has hosted visitors from Lithuania, Ukraine and Uzbekistan. Delegates this year include the chief judge of the Moscow regional court, the chief judge of the Moscow city court, a presiding judge of the Moscow regional court and a senior legal counsel. They’ll be in Alexandria from Sept. 10 to Sept. 17.

— MICHAEL LEE POPE

News



Security at the Albert Bryan U.S. Courthouse hasn’t changed much since the days after 9/11, when temporary barriers were erected at the site.

PHOTO BY
MICHAEL LEE POPE/
GAZETTE PACKET

How 9/11 Changed Alexandria

FROM PAGE 1

“The entire focus of local law enforcement changed after 9/11 in much the same way that the crack cocaine epidemic changed law enforcement in the 1980s,” said Sheriff Dana Lawhorne. “It used to be that only the fire department had breathing apparatuses, but now the SWAT teams are training for mustard gas attacks.”

ONE PLACE WHERE the attacks of 9/11 have had a dramatic influence is Jones Point Park, the southernmost tip of the District of Columbia where George Washington laid the first boundary stone more than 200 years ago. Before 9/11, the park plan placed parking for the park under the Woodrow Wilson Bridge. But in the heightened security after the attacks, that plan was spiked as a security threat. A new plan was written, although the park has yet to be completed.

“I think that was an overreaction,” said Donley. “But hindsight is always 20/20.”

Ironically, the modified version of the plan includes parking under the bridge. The parking will be limited to days when major events are taking place at the park, and cars will be screened before they are allowed to enter the area. Yet the level of security measures the cars must be subjected to in advance of entering the area are still being debated, and city officials recently met with federal officials to see if some kind of resolution could be brokered.

“The meetings were informal,” said Bernard Caton, Alexandria’s legislative director. “And they were inconclusive.”

One thing is clear about how Alexandria has changed since 9/11 — money has been flowing into the city to pay for increased security. Aside from increased training and equipment, federal dollars have paid for everything from protective suits for every Alexandria officer to new radios that give instant communication with regional and federal law-enforcement officials. Since the election of Barack Obama in 2008, his stimulus program has showered more than \$70 million from

the Department of Homeland Security to Alexandria.

“The communications systems have improved significantly,” said Sgt. Mike Kochis. “We’ve still got a way to go, but we’ve come a long way.”

DESPITE THE AMOUNT of money flowing to training police officers and prosecuting terrorists, one spending item has been neglected over the last decade. The Albert Bryan Courthouse is still protected by the temporary concrete barricades that were erected shortly after 9/11. All over the capital, those temporary barriers have now been replaced by permanent bollards — some of which have decorative elements and federal seals. But Alexandria’s federal courthouse is still frozen in time, as if the terrorist attacks recently happened and the federal government isn’t quite sure how to deal with the new security threats yet.

“All of the parties involved haven’t been able to come to an agreement yet,” said John Bolen, chief deputy United States marshal for the Eastern District of Virginia. “The delay has been getting all the stakeholders to sign off on the plan, including the federal government and the city as well as the private land owner.”

When 9/11 happened, railroad giant Norfolk Southern owned the property. Since that time, it’s been acquired by the global asset management firm known as the Carlyle Group. Bolen said that he’s hopeful a plan currently under consideration by the Carlyle Group and the city government will receive support, although he declined to provide details because he said he didn’t want to jeopardize negotiations.

“We’re pleased with the plan put forward to the city and the Carlyle Group,” he said.

Meanwhile, on the inside of the courthouse, the marshals have made another controversial move. Visitors are not allowed to enter the building with a cell phone, and the marshals do not offer a place to store the devices while the visitor is in court. One industrious deli across the street responded by offering daily cell-phone storage for \$2.

“It’s very popular,” said Megan Lee, who works at the Café Gallery Market.

Observing National Day of Service

Northern Virginia Community College will be hosting several activities this week leading up to the 10th anniversary of Sept. 11 and the National Day of Service and Remembrance.

On Saturday, Sept. 10, automotive students and faculty at the Alexandria Campus will perform vehicle repairs for low-income members of the community

who have been referred by the Drive to Employment partner community organizations.

On Sunday, Sept. 11, students, faculty, staff and community members will assemble school supply kits for needy children in partnership with Operation International Children. These school supplies will be distributed by U.S.

troops in Iraq, Afghanistan and Haiti.

The 9/11 National Day of Service and Remembrance is the culmination of a seven-year effort started by 9/11 family members and support groups to establish the service day as a way to honor the victims and heroes and to rekindle the spirit of unity and compassion that followed the attacks.

CONNECTION NEWSPAPERS 2011 AWARDS

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