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2011 AWARDS

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PART 3

Alexandria Gazette Packet



JEANNE THEISMANN
Second Place in Business and Financial Writing



Inova Alexandria Hospital will celebrate the 50th anniversary of "The Alexandria Plan" Friday, June 24 at 11 a.m.



Alexandria Hospital operated at the corner of Duke and Washington streets from 1917 to 1962.

COURTESY PHOTOS

Progress in Special Ed?

Board evaluates special education follow-up study.

BY MAYA HOROWITZ
GAZETTE PACKET

The School Board reviewed a mixed evaluation of its special education programs during its regular meeting on Thursday, June 16.

Superintendent of Schools Dr. Morton Sherman prefaced his remarks on a recent state study by saying, "Even if there is a slight glimmer of hope, we have many more miles to go to where this community would like us to be."

The study was done by the Virginia Association of School Superintendents (VASS) and was a follow-up to studies done in 2009 and 1995.

The report in 2009 was part of the initial strategic planning done at the start of Sherman's tenure. Several members of the VASS visiting team from 1995 returned in 2009. They found that not much had changed in ACPS special education services in 13 years.

"You're heading in a good direction but you have to keep building on that momentum or it will stall."

— Bob McCracken, Virginia Association of School Superintendents

The VASS 2009 study stated, "Data suggests schools still believe responsibility for ownership belongs with central office staff." It continued, "there is inconsistency in practice across the schools; some schools do have principals and teachers who are very attuned to the importance of ownership and accountability for learning and achievement of all students and have been working with various models of 'inclusion' in their classrooms. Other schools have not 'bought in' to this philosophy."

The findings of the VASS 2009 study also claimed that there was "very little inclusion." Further,

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'Alexandria Plan' Celebrates 50th

First 24-hour emergency department set nationwide standard.

BY JEANNE THEISMANN
GAZETTE PACKET

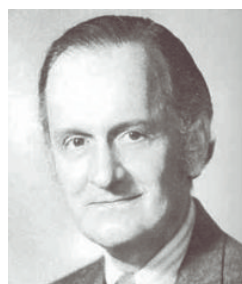
It was the middle of the night when Douglas Goist awoke last summer with abdominal pains so severe that he called a friend to rush him to the emergency room at Inova Alexandria Hospital. A doctor immediately examined the 42-year-old, who was diagnosed with kidney stones.

"I have never been in so much pain in my life," said Goist, a technology coordinator at the Alexandria-based National Industries for the Blind. "I can laugh about it now but I don't know what I would have done if I hadn't been able to get immediate medical treatment that night at Inova."

In this day of 24/7 access to medical care and information, it's hard to imagine a time when a trip to the emergency room was not

an option outside of standard doctors' office hours. But what is now taken for granted, for everything from playground falls to heart attacks, was considered revolutionary 50 years ago when Dr. James J. Mills, Jr., a local family practitioner and president of the Alexandria Hospital medical staff, convinced three other physicians to give up their private practices to become full-time emergency physicians in an initiative that became known as the "Alexandria Plan."

"It's a real privilege and honor for us to celebrate this anniversary," said Inova Alexandria president and CEO Christine Candio. "It's a tribute to the Alexandria physicians who had the foresight to pioneer this type of care for their patients."



Alexandria Hospital physician Dr. James Mills pioneered the idea of 24/7 emergency medical care in 1961.

alexandria."

As the first emergency department in the nation to have dedicated, full-time emergency physicians, Alexandria Hospital set the standard of care used by hospitals across

SEE 50TH ANNIVERSARY, PAGE 30

What's in Store for Harris Teeter?

City Council to decide fate of proposed North Old Town location.

BY JEANNE THEISMANN
GAZETTE PACKET

One speaker called it a civics lesson. Another called it a lesson in community activism and social responsibility. Whatever you call it, it was a late night at the June 7 Planning Commission meeting: 2:51 a.m. to be exact.

The last item on the docket was a proposed mix-use project on the 700 block of North Saint Asaph Street anchored by a first-floor full-service Harris Teeter grocery store and pharmacy with four levels of residential units above it and two levels of underground parking below. Twenty of the 25 registered speakers stayed late into the night to be sure their voices were heard. Nine speakers were in favor of the project, nine spoke against it and two were ambivalent. In the end, the Planning Commission

Artist rendering of the proposed Harris Teeter complex on North Saint Asaph Street in Old Town.



voted to recommend approval. Now the project goes before City Council this Saturday and the mayor and members of council will decide if Old Town needs another grocery store.

"To get a high-end urban grocery and pharmacy like this is something many neighborhoods would kill for," said Director of Planning and Zoning Faroll Hamer. "It greatly increases the walkability and

character of a community."

The proposal before City Council is for a 52,476 square-foot Harris Teeter complete with pharmacy, prepared meals, salad bar, seafood and deli counter and outdoor dining. Approximately 175 residential apartments will be housed above it.

This project, if approved, will require the

SEE HARRIS TEETER, PAGE 9

News



PHOTO BY JEANNE THEISMANN/GAZETTE PACKET

Harris Teeter is hoping to open its first Old Town location on this parcel of land on the 700 block of North Saint Asaph Street.

Room for Harris Teeter?

FROM PAGE 3

developer to pay for infrastructure improvements and other enhancements to the neighborhood, including improvements to Montgomery Park.

Some neighbors wonder if they need another grocery store in an area that already has a Giant and a Trader Joe's. A 2009 study commissioned by the City of Alexandria and conducted by the nationally recognized Gibbs Planning Group found that Old Town could support an additional 64,000 square-feet of grocery retail.

The site of the proposed Harris Teeter is an assemblage of five parcels of mostly empty buildings and vacant lots. Mark Latsios, a third-generation Alexandria property owner and owner of property two blocks from the site called the current conditions "blighted and unsightly" and went on to urge the Planning Commission to recommend approval. Those opposed expressed concerns about parking and traffic.

"Yes, there will be some additional traffic and parking and that will need to be managed," Hamer said. "But it's certainly doable and won't overwhelm the neighbor-

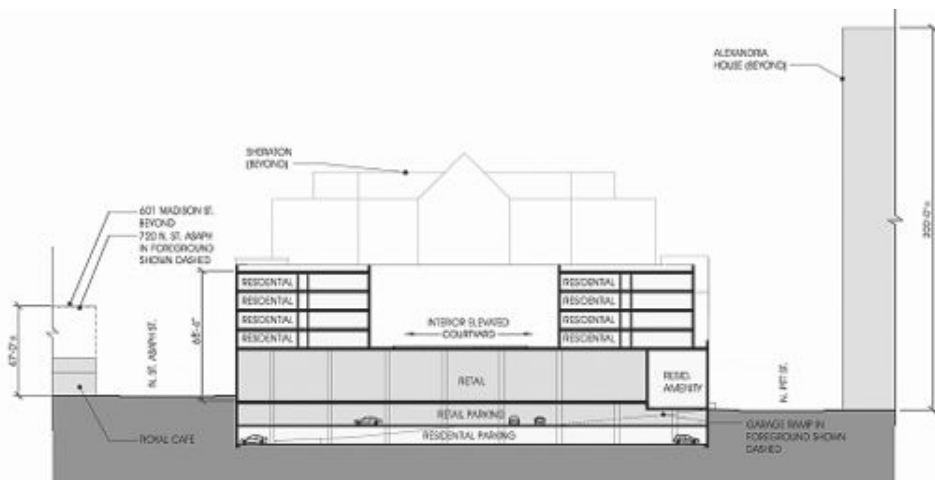
hood."

Now Council must decide if the creation of 150 permanent workforce jobs and millions of dollars in additional tax revenue is worth the impact to the neighborhood. Alexandria resident and Keller Williams Realty Broker/Owner, Shane McCullar, hopes they do.

"This is a huge win for this neighborhood," McCullar said. "A project of this nature will have an immediate and positive impact on not only neighboring property values, but also on quality of life. I sure hope Council approves this."

The proposed project has the support of city staff, the Planning Commission and the Urban Design Advisory Committee. City Council is scheduled to hear comments from the public and then vote on Saturday, June 25 in Council chambers.

"The support from the community has been tremendous," said Theo Androus, a native Alexandrian as well as a partner in the project. "Yes, there has been a small, vocal minority who oppose it, but the overwhelming majority of the neighborhood is extremely supportive of the project and hopeful that the Mayor and City Council will approve it."



The proposed Harris Teeter building height in comparison to others in the North Old Town neighborhood.

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ALEXANDRIA GAZETTE PACKET ♦ JUNE 23-29, 2011 ♦ 9

Security, Convenience and Green Innovation

Northern Virginia companies debut home technology trends in Las Vegas.

By JEANNE THEISMANN
GAZETTE PACKET

Getting a lot of attention at this year's Consumer Electronics Show were several Northern Virginia companies who were among the more than 2,700 exhibitors displaying some of the world's most cutting edge home technology trends.

This year was all about the "apps" as more than 150,000 people from around the world descended on the Las Vegas Convention Center last month for the 2011 Consumer Electronics Show.

Homeowners can have more control over their homes using many newly developed smartphone applications, getting real time information from home security systems even when not at home, controlling room temperatures, raising and lowering window shades or even starting dinner or the laundry from anywhere with an internet connection.

Surveillance Systems, Archerfish

For homeowners looking for a home surveillance system, Reston's Cernium Corporation has developed the Archerfish Solo, an IP-based wireless camera that emails video clip to your smart phone or computer whenever it senses unusual activity.

"There's been a lot of interest in the Solo," said Debbie Shuey of Archerfish, a CES exhibitor for the last three years. "We've had far more people stopping by this year than the last two."

Homeowners can use Archerfish to view live video via computer, smart phone or tablet devices, as Shuey demonstrated by monitoring the cameras at Reston Skate Quest cameras from the show floor in Las Vegas.

Debuting at CES this year was the Archerfish Solo Flood Light Adapter, which allows the camera to be installed by screwing it into an existing flood light socket.

"We're continuously developing products to help consumers keep an eye on the places that matter to them," said Cernium president Craig Chambers.

WWW.MYARCHERFISH.COM

Tablet Times Two, Entourage

McLean-based Entourage Systems used this year's CES to launch the Pocket Edge, a portable version of its bestselling Entou-



Herndon-based Simplikey president Jason Pizzillo, right, demonstrates the new lockset to Oracle's Joel Storm at the Consumer Electronics Show.

rage Edge.

"We just launched last year and are doing very well, especially internationally," said Entourage vice president Doug Atkinson. "As a consumer device, we are just getting started and are excited to be here." The mission is to provide an all-inclusive personal technology device that combines the functions of several products into one solution.

Both the Entourage and Pocket Edge are dual screen e-reader, Android-based tablet computer, notepad and audio/video recorder and player. Connected to the internet, it can manage any connected home security system or smart appliances. Prices start at \$349.

WWW.ENTOURAGEEDGE.COM

MAXSA, Going Green

Skip West is no stranger to the crowds of the Consumer Electronics Show.

"This is my eighth year here and it just keeps getting better," said West, founder and president of the Fairfax Station-based MAXSA Innovations. "I love inventing new products and this is the place to introduce them to consumers."

West debuted a dozen new items at this year's show, most focusing on "green" technology.

SEE HOME, PAGE 21

PHOTOS BY JEANNE THEISMANN/THE CONNECTION



Jon Kelman demonstrates a light-up security vest by Fairfax Station-based MAXSA Innovations.



Entourage vice president Doug Atkinson, left, demonstrates the new Pocket Edge to David Goldhagen of San Antonio.



Skip West, founder of Fairfax Station-based MAXSA Innovations, displays his latest home technology solutions at the Consumer Electronics Show in Las Vegas last month. West teaches the course "From Geek to Gazillionaire" at George Mason University.

Home Life Style New Local Technology

FROM PAGE 19

"We now have solar powered motion activated flood lights, along with our solar walkway lights for decks, stairs and driveways," West said. "We've been taking lots of orders and getting a great response."

MAXSA also offers laser garage parking systems and personal devices such as a reflective safety vest with 16 LED lights, devices to avoid automobile/deer collisions and special flashlights.

"I sold my last company but didn't like being retired," said West, who teaches the course "From Geek to Gazillionaire" at George Mason University. "I love helping students develop their ideas into successful companies." West, one of the first to produce battery powered votive candles, donates part of his salary from GMU to a student business competition.

MAXSAINNOVATIONS.COM

First Impressions, Simplicikey

If the employees of Herndon-based start-up Simplicikey all look young, it's because they are.

"We hired 11 people, all between the ages of 21 and 35," said Carl Guerreri, president of parent company Electronic Warfare Associates, a government defense contractor. "I told them to wander the world for a year to come up with an idea that best utilized our technology."

The result is the Simplicikey lock, a remote con-

PHOTOS BY JEANNE THEISMANN/THE CONNECTION



Debbie Shuey monitors security at the Reston Skate Park as part of the Archerfish demonstration at the Consumer Electronics show in Las Vegas last month.

trol electronic deadbolt.

"We wanted to make something worthy of a front door," said D'Vell Garrison, vice president of sales and marketing. "The lock is all metal with a carbon core center deadbolt, concealed light-up keypad and remote key fob that works from up to 50 feet away. ... It's great seeing all the first adapters' eyes light up when they see the lock."

"I started early this morning and haven't stopped talking since," said Simplicikey president Jason Pizzillo. "But people love the product and it's been a great show."

WWW.SIMPLICIKEY.COM

Capital Home & Garden Show, Feb. 25-27

The Capital Home & Garden Show will feature hundreds of displays and exhibits this year, with a special emphasis on "Going Green." Exhibitors include all aspects of home design and improvement, gardening, kitchen and bath remodeling, flooring, roofing, doors, windows, fencing, pools, interior and exterior lighting, home entertainment, interior designs and much more. Get ideas, investigate new products, gather information and meet the professionals who can help. **Dulles Expo Center, Feb. 25 - 27,** www.capitalhomeshow.com.

10 Green Tips from the Home Show

1. Energy Efficient Appliances: The refrigerator is one of the home's highest consumers of energy. Use the water and energy-saving settings on your refrigerator and dishwasher.

2. Lighting: Use **compact fluorescents (CFLs)**. Designing a home with good **natural lighting** cuts down on the need to use electricity.

3. Biodegradable Cleaning Products, and use common supplies like baking soda and vinegar.

4. Indoor air quality: Look for products that don't have **synthetic formaldehyde resins**. **Proper ventilation** will help maintain superior indoor air quality.

5. Green Cabinetry: Many are made from renewable and salvaged materials.

6. Skip the bottled water.

7. Green Flooring: Consider **cork, bamboo** or concrete flooring.

8. Countertops and backsplashes made of recycled glass or concrete.

9. Buy Local and Organic: Buying local keeps fuel usage at a minimum, supports local economy and encourages local farming.

10. Solar Water Heating can save your household up to 35 percent of its energy use and prevent tons of carbon dioxide entering our environment over the life of the system.

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BUSINESS MATTERS

Getting the Big Dog

When leaders of the newly formed Bishop Ireton High School Business Network were planning their inaugural kickoff, the school's most famous alumnus seemed like the obvious choice for a keynote speaker. But would he accept? Fortunately for the newly formed business network, Republican Gov. **Bob McDonnell** (class of 1972) said yes.

"Virginia is a great state," the governor alumni and alumnae of the Catholic school said in a Tuesday morning speech. "We have contributed more for freedom and democracy and, frankly, the propagation of the faith than any other state."

The governor encouraged the business leaders to exchange business cards and make connections, forming a network of associations from the Catholic school. Executive committee member **B.R. McConnon** (class of 1984) said it was a "huge shot in the arm" to have the governor deliver a keynote address to the inaugural meeting, which drew more than 100 people to the Carlyle Club. The idea was to build on a previous business association, known as the Cardinal Club, which had become dormant in recent years.

"Ideally, we'd like to provide internships and jobs," said McConnon. "But we need to get to a critical mass before we're able to do that effectively."

Return of Lunch

Carlyle isn't an ideal neighborhood for a restaurant. It's loaded with office workers seeking a quick bite to eat and it's mostly deserted after the workday. That's why Carlyle Club owner **Brennan Reilly** had a hard time drawing a crowd for lunch when he opened the doors of the upscale restaurant in October 2007. By the end of 2009, Reilly said, it was clear that lunch wasn't in the cards. So he took it off the menu.

"It was the right decision for the time," he said. "It allowed us to focus on private events, which have become extremely successful."

Now, two years later, the Carlyle Club is ready to have another stab at the mid-day meal. Later this month, the restaurant will once again open its doors with a mid-priced lunch menu. Reilly describes the price range as something akin to Clyde's — above the sandwich shops in the neighborhood but below a fine-dining establishment. Instead of offering lunch every day of the week, the Carlyle Club will offer lunch only on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday.

"It's a little non-traditional," he acknowledged. "But in Carlyle, you have to be non-traditional because it's not a great area for retail or restaurants — so far."

Clearing the Air

Alexandria's deal to shut down the long-despised coal-fired power plant moved one step closer to reality last week, when grid operator Pennsylvania New Jersey Maryland Interconnections announced that the GenOn Potomac River Generating Station is not critical to maintaining the electricity grid in the metropolitan Washington, D.C., region. The move was hailed as a victory among those who have worked to close the plant for years.

"This is a major step forward," said **Elizabeth Chimento**, one of the leading voices for shutting the plant down over the last decade. "At this point, I wouldn't imagine any reason why the plant wouldn't be able to close its doors in October 2012."

The deal city leaders struck with GenOn last month was contingent on approval of the grid operator as well as Pepco, which owns the land. Chimento said she feels confident Pepco will give the stamp of approval.

"Pepco might have to pay GenOn some money to get out of the lease agreement," she said. "But then they would be free to sell to a developer."

City officials have said they do not expect redevelopment at the 25-acre site to be part of the waterfront small-area plan now under consideration by City Council members.

— MICHAEL LEE POPE

NEWS

Leadership To Bank On

Peter Converse named Business Leader Of the Year.

BY JEANNE THEISMANN
GAZETTE PACKET

When Peter Converse first entered the banking profession, Gerald Ford was in the White House, the U.S. was in the midst of an oil crisis and Virginia Commerce Bank was still more than a decade away from opening its first branch.

"It's been 37 years," said Converse, who for the last 18 years has served as the president and CEO of Virginia Commerce Bank. "It's been extremely fulfilling spending my entire career here in the D.C. area with community banks."

Under Converse's leadership, Virginia Commerce has grown from a fledgling two-branch \$54 million institution to become Northern Virginia's largest community bank with \$2.9 billion in assets, 28 branches and 305 employees. For his dedication to serving the community, Converse has been named the 2011 Alexandria Chamber of Commerce Business Leader of the Year.

"The words 'humbled' and 'honored' don't do justice to how I feel about this award," Converse said. "And while I know it is meant to honor me for my leadership, I take it as an award for all of our employees who do so much to represent the bank in this market as a civic-minded community-oriented bank. Maybe with the exception of Kerry Donley," Converse added with a laugh.

A senior vice president at Virginia Commerce, Vice Mayor Kerry Donley will be a featured speaker at the Chamber of Commerce awards dinner Oct. 6 at the Patent and Trade Office. Known for his razor-sharp delivery of one-liners, Donley is expected to draw blood as well as laughs in his much-anticipated roast of his colleague and close friend.

"I have no idea what Kerry is going to say about me," Converse laughed. "There is no way for me to be prepared for a comeback with him. I'll just have to think on my feet."

While Donley's remarks during the awards presentation are expected to be in jest, he has nothing but praise for Converse and his leadership skills.

"Peter has been a real leader for everyone at VCB," Donley said. "During his tenure as our president and CEO, the bank has grown to become one of the largest community banks in state of Virginia. What makes Peter unique is that while the bank has grown, it has never lost its identity to the core market of Alexandria and Arlington, where the bank was founded and is headquartered."

A self-described "Army brat," Converse was born at Fort Belvoir and traveled the world with his family. After graduating from Washington and Lee University in 1972, he returned to the area to begin his career in banking and has earned accolades for his leadership during the recent economic crisis.

"No question we were challenged during the recession," said Converse, who turned around a \$37.9 million Virginia Commerce loss in 2009 to a profit of \$16.5 million in the last year. "We experienced some pain from the recession, especially in our construction loan portfolio. But the worst is behind us and all of our trends are positive. While 2009 was a very painful year, we had a great turnaround year in 2010 and are continuing the progress in 2011."

A leader in the community, Converse is known for the example of hard work he sets for his employees.

"Peter has high expectations but he also likes to make work fun," Donley said. "He is universally liked by everyone at the bank. He brings a good mix of high expectations but also a desire to make it an enjoyable workplace."

Converse concedes he has high expectations for himself as well as his employees.

"I will never accept failure in myself or my employees unless we can look in the mirror and say we did everything possible to succeed," Converse said. "Setting the bar high, setting an example for employees and always exceeding expectations — that's what being a leader is."

Converse, who serves as a director at Virginia Hospital Center and member of the community advisory committee for Arlington Free Clinic, had this advice for those aspiring to be leaders in their communities: "Believe in yourself and give every step and position along the way your best effort. I tell all our employees this as they try to climb the career ladder."

Despite the recent challenges of the industry, Converse is excited about the opportunities still ahead.

"I'm very proud that we are the largest community bank

headquartered in Northern Virginia and the second largest in the D.C. area," said Converse, who is bullish on the future of Virginia Commerce. "We're working hard to return to the premier performance we had prior to the recession. It's onward and upward from here."

BUSINESS NOTES

Basim Mansour, CEO and president of Michael and Son Services of Alexandria is the recipient of the 2011 New Dominion Political Action Committee's Outstanding Community Service Award at its annual Candidates Night dinner last month. The committee's mission is to serve as a voice for Arab-Americans in Virginia by strengthening partnerships between the Arab-American community at the state level with elected officials, and by informing those representatives and others about the contributions-of-and-concerns-among the Arab-American communities.



Virginia Commerce Bank CEO Peter Converse will receive the Chamber of Commerce Business Leader of the Year Award Oct. 6.

"Setting the bar high, setting an example for employees and always exceeding expectations — that's what being a leader is."

— Virginia Commerce Bank CEO Peter Converse

Alexandria Gazette Market



STEVEN MAUREN



STEVE HIBBARD



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Second Place in General Makeup

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Alexandria Gazette Packet



JEANNE THEISMANN

Second Place in Headline Writing

Judges comments: Many of the headlines in this group are cleverly written, especially “Some Like it Haute.”

THEATER

What the Dickens?

MetroStage revives 'A Broadway Christmas Carol.'



Tracey Stephens and Michael Sharp in 'A Broadway Christmas Carol' at MetroStage.

BY JEANNE THEISMANN
GAZETTE PACKET

Oh come, all ye faithful fans of musical theater. MetroStage is once again staging the wickedly funny "A Broadway Christmas Carol," an irreverent musical take on the classic novel by Charles Dickens.

"It is absolutely drop-dead funny," said audience member Susan Kellom, who attended the Nov. 20 performance of the show. "My sides hurt from laughing."

A parody of the oft-told Dickens tale, the shameless Broadway spoof follows Ebenezer Scrooge as he is visited by the Ghosts of Christmas Past, Present and Future. Through the inventive work of creator Kathy Feininger, Scrooge is shown the error of his miserly ways through the songs of Rodgers and Hammerstein, Andrew Lloyd Webber and Stephen Sondheim.

"I came up with the idea when I was in graduate school," said Feininger, who attended the Nov. 20 show. "I was watching Mr. Magoo's Christmas show and he saw Scrooge's face in a doorknocker. I started singing 'Look at that Face' from 'War of the Grease Paint' and things just took off from there."

Feininger uses Broadway's finest to lampoon the holiday classic, cleverly creating lyrics for more

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than 30 musical numbers. A talented cast of three takes on the multitude of characters with various backgrounds and personalities.

In the central role of Scrooge is Helen Hayes award-winner Michael Sharp, who also acts as director and choreographer. A versatile performer, Sharp brings his strong vocals and expert comedic timing to the vaudevillian musical numbers.

The Man Who Isn't Scrooge is the inimitable Matthew A. Anderson. Anderson tackles the roles of Bob Cratchit, Scrooge's nephew Fred, the Ghost of Christmas Past and even Tiny Tim with uproarious aplomb.

Tracey Stephens is the Woman Who Isn't Scrooge, playing the ghost of Jacob Marley (yes, as his penance he returns as a woman), the Ghost of Christmas Present, Mrs. Cratchit, Scrooge's fiancé and the woman seeking holiday donations for the poor.

The comically gifted Anderson and Stephens tackle the demanding split-second character and costume changes with astonishing ease while Sharp brings tenderness and vulnerability to the villainous Scrooge. All three have voices that soar throughout the challenging score of Broadway melodies.

Central to the acting perfor-



PHOTOS BY JEANNE THEISMANN/GAZETTE PACKET
Michael Sharp as Scrooge in 'A Broadway Christmas Carol' at MetroStage.



Tracey Stephens and Matthew Anderson as Mr. and Mrs. Cratchit.

mances is the on-stage musical accompaniment by musical director Elisa Rosman. Rosman, who dons a Phantom of the Opera mask to serve as the Ghost of Christmas Future, sets the mood and atmosphere for each scene with skill and panache.

With dozens of inside jokes aimed at theater buffs, part of the fun of "A Broadway Christmas Carol" is recognizing the songs Feininger has transformed for the show.

"Master of the House" from "Les Miserables" is now "Founder of the Feast," Mrs. Cratchit's ridicule of Scrooge and his meager salary for her husband. "Avenue Q's" "It Sucks to be Me" is hilariously transformed into "It Sucks to be Thee" and "Tomorrow"



Michael Sharp and Tracey Stephens in 'A Broadway Christmas Carol' at MetroStage.



Michael Sharp as Scrooge and Matthew Anderson in 'A Broadway Christmas Carol' at MetroStage.

from "Annie" stops the show when brilliantly performed as "I'm Going to Walk Tomorrow" by Anderson as Tiny Tim.

Other creative reinventions include Scrooge singing "I'm in the Money" ("42nd Street"), Anderson as Bob Cratchit jubilantly dancing to "Once-a-Year Day" ("Pajama Game") and Anderson and Stephens singing "A Real Nice Pudding," to the tune of "Carousel's" "Clambake."

There is no better way to kick off the holiday season than with "A Broadway Christmas Carol." The inside Broadway references are clever enough for the theatre cognoscenti but thoroughly entertaining for anyone looking for a lively alternative to traditional holiday entertainment.

"A Broadway Christmas Carol" is playing now through Dec. 18 at MetroStage, 1201 N. Royal St. For tickets or more information, call 703-548-9044 or visit www.metrostage.org.

Alexandria Gazette Market



STEVEN MAUREN



STEVE HIBBARD



JEANNE THEISMANN



MIKE POPE



LOUISE KRAFFT



LAURENCE FOONG

Second Place in Lifestyle Or Entertainment Pages

Judges comments: Nice depth to the section is, no doubt, a go-to place for readers.

Virginia
PRESS
Association

Surprises in Bloom

Historic Garden Tour blooms in Old Town Alexandria.

BY MICHAEL LEE POPE
GAZETTE PACKET

From Egyptian Revival architecture to the a cherry tree once owned by George Washington, this year's Alexandria Historic Garden Tour is full of surprises. Some are whimsical, like the chandelier featuring reindeer heads copied from a Bavarian castle. Others are flights of fancy, like the trompe l'oeil stair railing. Then there's the tea house used as a tool shed.

"This tour is full of surprises," said Twig Murray, co-chairwoman of the Alexandria Historic Garden Tour. "That's what made it so much fun to put together."

MORE Additional details in "Garden Events Sprout" on page 21. The \$40 tickets include six private houses and gardens, rarely seen glimpses into some of Old Town's most historic residences. Ticketholders can also stop by another historic building, St. Paul's Episcopal Church, for refreshments and admire the architecture of Benjamin Henry Latrobe. The price of admission includes entrance to a number of regional historic homes, including Mount Vernon Estate, Gunston Hall, Woodlawn, the Carlyle House and the Lee-Fendall House.

"Dollar for dollar, this is a huge value," said Murray. "And the money goes to help restore historic gardens."

ONE OF THE TOUR'S unforgettable highlights is the Vowell-Snowden Home at 417 South Lee Street, which was the longtime residence of Alexandria Gazette editor



The afternoon light quietly enters the front drawing room of the Chapman home.

Edgar Snowden. Before walking in, pause a moment and admire the sand-casted brass finials. When Supreme Court Justice Hugo Black lived in the house, according to his daughter, the butler polished the finials every day. Step inside and take notice of the Boston Fire Bucket, a family heirloom of modern-day owners Andrew and Tamara

Saltonstall. Step into the parlor and find a William and Mary secretary that the husband bought the wife when they were dating.

"He bought it for me to keep me organized," said Tamara Saltonstall, opening up

the desk and peeking into the cubbyholes one recent afternoon. "We call it William."

Walk through the dining room, pause for a moment and marvel at all the people who Edgar Snowden and Hugo Black must have invited to dinner during their years in the house. Admire the concord grape arbor on the way to the circular rose garden, which features more than 70 different kinds of roses. Then take a moment and marvel at the sheer amount of space in the backyard, which features a swimming pool and a tennis court. Yes, in Old Town.

"In his memoir, Hugo Black says this was a bordello," said Andrew Saltonstall with a wink. "Who knows if it's true or not."

THE TOUR FEATURES a never-ending parade of priceless works of art and one-of-a-kind design features. Take, for example, the rare Egyptian Revival architecture at 217 North Royal Street. The house was originally constructed in 1796 by James McGuire, a house joiner who would later become superintendent of the Market House. Apparently, he was somewhat of a hothead because he was involved in an infamous duel sparked by a disagreement at nearby Gadsby's Tavern. In the 1850s, the



American Greek revival urns at the entryway of a terraced green room at the Chapman Home at 219 North Royal St.



An early American gilded eagle weathervane in front of a portrait of the owner's grandmother.



An antique birdbath is filled with flowers and greens at 219 N. Royal St. in the walled garden.

SEE HISTORIC GARDEN, PAGE 33

ALEXANDRIA GAZETTE PACKET ♦ APRIL 7-13, 2011 ♦ 3

Alexandria Gazette Packet



MICHAEL LEE POPE

Second Place in Personal Service Writing: Obituaries
Judges comments: Well-researched and well-told biographies.
Lots of interest to the community. I have to wonder, however,
what sort of treatment do the less-socially-prominent receive?

OBITUARY

A Watercolor Life

Artist, historian and long-time Alexandria resident Betty Harrington Macdonald dies at 98.

BY MICHAEL LEE POPE
GAZETTE PACKET

Betty Macdonald, a celebrated watercolor painter and longtime Old Town resident, died Feb. 1 at her home on South Lee Street. She was 98.

"Watercolors sort of reflected her view of the world, which is why she could produce them without any effort," said former Vice Mayor Andrew Macdonald, her son. "It fit her way of looking at history by capturing the feel or the mood or the impression of a landscape."

Mary Elizabeth Watson Harrington was born on July 19, 1912 in Dover, Del., to Sarah Godwin and William Watson Harrington. She grew up in a colonial revival house in one of the state's most prominent families, which included several governors. From 1935 to 1950, her father served as chancellor of the state, presiding over the Court of Chancery. Mary Elizabeth, known to friends and family as "Betty," spent her summers riding horses in Rehoboth Beach and developed an artistic sensibility at an early age.

"I have painted ever since I can remember," she said in a 1998 interview.

As a teenager, she attended the Holmquist School in Pennsylvania and the Philadelphia School of Design for Women, now known as the Moore College of Art. A problem with her eyesight nearly ended her artistic career, but her vision improved while she was studying in Philadelphia. In 1936, she was among the first classes to graduate with a four-year degree from Sarah Lawrence College, where she majored in fine art although she rejected the modernist style that was popular with her instructors. After college she studied with noted American painter Harvey Dunn, a student of Howard Pyle, in night classes at Grand Central Station in New York City, where she became influenced by his vigorous painterly style.

While in New York, she developed a talent for painting watercolors. Her earliest successes came in Rehoboth Beach in the late 1930s at the Annual Art Exhibitions initiated by Ethel Leach, another student of Pyle. She was an early member of the Rehoboth Art League, where she became one of its first instructors and taught youth classes in art during the first few summers. She spent the late 1930s traveling with the older sister to the Virgin Islands, Haiti and Hawaii.

After World War II, she met William Warburton Ruly Macdonald, a 1933 graduate of the United States Naval Academy. They were married in 1950. Although he was stationed Boston and San Diego, most of his military career was spent in Washington D.C.

For three years in the 1950s, they lived in Paris, France, where their son Andrew was born. After their return to the United States, they Macdonalds settled in Old Town. A nature lover, Betty Macdonald kept detailed lists of all the birds that visited her garden,

which she made sure was protected by a local preservation easement.

"She was one of a kind," said Marion Young, a longtime friend who lives on Fairfax Street. "She was not the kind of person who was easily persuaded to change her opinions, and she was a great artist."

MACDONALD'S WORK has been shown at the Corcoran Gallery of Art in Washington, D.C., and the Delaware Art Museum. Her pen and ink drawings of historic sites and buildings became books when the Delaware State Society of the Daughters of American Colonists published "*Historic Landmarks of Delaware and the Eastern Shore*" in 1963 and in 1976. In 1998, the Sewell C. Biggs Museum of American Art in Dover honored her with a retrospective exhibit titled "Painting Ever Since She Can Remember."

"Her artwork is characterized by a love for a time past and an interpretation of historic architecture in harmony with nature," wrote Jann Haynes Gilmore in an essay that accompanied the exhibit. "Many of her compositions of landscape and seascape show hallowed man-made structures cradled and framed by remarkably intricate and diverse trees whose great forms are modeled by use of simple line."

She continued to paint the subjects she loved through the 1960s and 1970s in Alexandria and New England, although her passion took another direction in 1980s when she spent years researching the history of shipbuilding in southern Delaware. In 1990, the Milford Historical Society published her book, "Mispillion-Built Sailing Vessels, 1761-1917." As a member of the Alexandria Historical Society, she also wrote an essay titled "The Port of Alexandria" that

was part of a book called "Alexandria: A Composite History," published by the Alexandria Bicentennial Commission in 1975. Her research on the maritime history of Alexandria if part of the Alexandria Library collection. In her later years, she painted watercolors at her summer home in Harrisville, N.H., and commissioned portraits in Alexandria in winter.

"Almost all of her interpretations of early church architecture are composed from the vantage point of their silent forebears' perspective in the nearby church cemetery," Gilmore wrote in the 1998 essay. "While she has had great success as a watercolorist, she professes to have had little training in the medium, having taught herself the technique as she eschewed the modernist instruction of her art teachers."

She was a former member of the Colonial Dames of America, the Historical Society of Delaware and the Potomac Appalachian Trail Club. She loved the outdoors, family and history. She and her husband U.S. Navy retired Capt. W.R. Macdonald enjoyed hiking and traveling. Her husband, two beloved sisters, Sarah and Nancy, and her nephew Dan predeceased her.

"She was very forthright, and she didn't mince words," said Andrew Macdonald, who was frequently seen on the streets of Old Town taking walks with his mother. "She had strong opinions about right and wrong, which she inherited from her father's sense of equity and fairness."

SHE IS SURVIVED by her son, Andrew Macdonald of Alexandria, and stepson Charles Macdonald of Aix-en-Provence, France; granddaughters Lisa



Betty Macdonald



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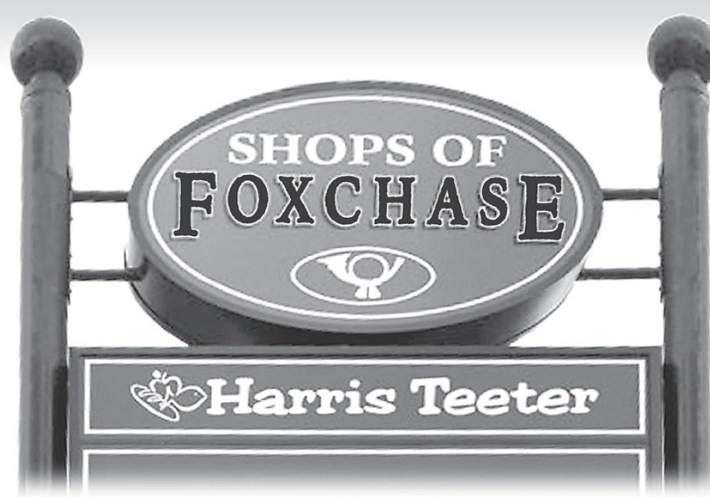
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SEE BETTY MACDONALD, PAGE 25

OPINION



Happy New Year

St. Stephen's & St. Agnes Lower School celebrated the Chinese New Year on Monday, Feb. 7 with an interactive presentation from Wong People of Washington, D.C. Students and faculty were encouraged to wear red, symbolizing good luck.

SSSAS

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

FROM PAGE 24

sion network Alhurra that the results of last November's election were because most Americans are racists who "don't want to be governed by an African-American ...". This latest outburst, coming as we know all too well on a long history of Moran embarrassments, is not only wildly inaccurate, it is un-American.

I do not support many of President Obama's policies because I do not think they are good for our country. Priorities like nationalized healthcare, energy policies that force us to depend upon foreign oil, an \$850 billion "stimulus" package that put more Americans out of work, or slashing military troop levels by almost 10 percent while we are fighting our nation's wars abroad are examples of why I disagree with the Obama administration. The vast majority of Americans who voted for change in November 2010 did so for these and other fact-based, policy-related reasons.

But political views aside, as an American I am very proud that in 2008 we elected an African-American to be our President; it reinforces our creed that all Americans, regardless of race, gender or orientation are entitled to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. It is also a tangible reminder of how far we have progressed as a nation in which slavery was once an institution. We aren't perfect, but we have come a long way. Moran's rant, delivered to an international audience, dismisses this progress and casts us all back to our regrettable pre-14th Amendment past.

Over the years, Northern Virginia and most of America sadly has become accustomed to Mr. Moran's mean-spirited ver-

biage and aggressive behavior, including a pattern of arguably anti-Semitic comments. However, Moran outdid himself this time, going well beyond insulting just one ethnic group or political party. His offensive comments as a sitting U.S. congressman delivered to an international audience demean all Americans regardless of religion, political affiliation or ethnicity. It was a staggering lapse of judgment, divisive and un-American.

Jim Moran should correct the record with Alhurra, and he owes an apology to his fellow countrymen.

Patrick Murray

Murray resides in Alexandria, is a retired U. S. Army Colonel and was the 2010 Republican nominee for Congress in the 8th District of Virginia.

Political Attack

To the Editor:

Del. Adam Ebbin's new bill to curtail the authority of the Commonwealth's attorney general is a short-sighted political attack on current officeholder Ken Cuccinelli that portends more pitfalls than positives for Virginians.

It's clear from Ebbin's statements that HB 2468, which would prohibit current attorney general prerogatives such as filing briefs with the U.S. Supreme Court unless specifically authorized by the governor or General Assembly, is meant to punish Cuccinelli for work on national cases involving illegal immigration and health care reform. But this effort to clip Cuccinelli's wings now is likely to have terrible long-term consequences for the Commonwealth.

Ebbin seems to forget that the legislature

Safety: #1 Priority in Department

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

The Department of Recreation, Parks and Cultural Activities has a firm commitment to safety. Under the leadership of James Spengler, the department now has a newly formed Safety Council. The Safety Council consists of members of different areas within the department: maintenance, administration and recreation services.

RECREATION

Our safety manager, Shuron Putnam, provides meaningful insight on the world of safety and impresses upon all members that safety must be our number one priority, not a part-time practice. She has served in the safety manager capacity for some years now and is pleased to have spearheaded the first annual safety conference scheduled for Valentine's Day. After all, safety should be close to the heart!

The conference is from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., registration begins as early as 8 a.m. at the Lee Center. There are a number of vendors



and interesting facilitators for the conferences including but not limited to: Healthy Living Alexandria, State Farm Insurance, Employment Assistance Services (City of Alexandria), Fastenal, Flippo Safety Vending Trucks, 4-H Extension and Commonwealth One Federal Credit Union.

You too can play a part in making sure that we continue to provide safe environments for leisure and enrichment programs and activities for the community by letting staff know when you perceive a potential safety issue. Surveys are readily available at all neighborhood centers, and if you need assistance one of our friendly customer care representatives at the center can assist you.

MUSE (Music Unites Students Everywhere) has received its musical instrument donation from Hungry for Music where Jeff Campbell is CEO. Five saxophones and one French horn were donated last week and now we are set to begin our music program. Our music teacher, Dr. Eddie Johnson, is a professional musician with experience playing nationally and internationally while serving our country in the Armed Forces. To date we have one piano and four bongos in addition to what was donated.

If you want to donate musical instruments and/or know someone who wants to volunteer their time to teach music please contact the center at 703.746.5533.

is not a full-time body and the governor and attorney general are not necessarily of the same political party as they are now. It's not easy to bring the General Assembly back to Richmond for a special session just to give an attorney general the go-ahead on a legal brief.

This means a partisan governor could block an attorney general's legitimate and productive work for Virginians' interests nationally.

Would Ebbin want a Governor Cuccinelli to hold such sway over a potentially liberal attorney general? Unlikely. Yet that's exactly what HB 2468 has the potential to create.

David W. Almasi
Alexandria

Worth City Council's Time?

To the Editor:

While Vice Mayor Donley isn't lobbying to raise your taxes, he is wasting your

money and City Council's valuable time to address nonexistent issues so he can engage in political pandering.

Yes, dear readers, Donley has taken the first courageous steps to legalize public breastfeeding! So here's a simple question before more time and money is wasted on this issue: How many women have been arrested in the City of Alexandria over the past year for this "crime"? How many over the past five years?

According to one media report, neither city police nor the commonwealth's attorney in Alexandria could recall a single case in which a woman was cited for breast-feeding in public. Mr. Vice Mayor, have you considered using your elected position to address real the issues of our failing school system, high taxes or real crimes?

I urge Alexandrians to keep this idiotic and wasteful effort by the Vice Mayor in mind the next time he tells you about the urgent need for him to raise your taxes.

Bud Miller
Alexandria

Betty Harrington Macdonald

FROM PAGE 7

Macdonald of Singapore and Julia Collins of West Hartford, Conn.; niece Sarah Naradzay of Aberdeen, N.C.; a grand-niece, Catherine Naradzay; several nephews, John Herrick of Sydney, Australia, and Michael Herrick of Poplar Island, Md.

A memorial service will be held at St. Paul's Episcopal Church on Feb. 11 at 11 a.m., and some of her paintings will be

displayed at a reception at the Athenaeum on Prince Street following the service. She will be buried at Arlington National Cemetery, where her late husband is also buried, and her name will be inscribed on her parents' tombstone at Christ Church in Dover. Donations in her memory can be made to the Milford Historical Society, and the Lewes Historical Society of Delaware.

Councilwoman Twinkle

The first day of February could be the night that the lights went out in Alexandria. But not if Councilwoman **Del Pepper** has anything to say about it.

The holiday lights that festoon the trees up and down King Street have been a *cause celeb* for the councilwoman for years, and every budget cycle Pepper fights keep them lit year-round instead of limiting the twinkling lights to the holiday season. Last year, she was unsuccessful. Now the plug is about to be pulled — unless council members have a change of heart.

Tuesday night, Pepper was able to add the item to the docket for the next City Council meeting, when elected leaders will consider appropriating \$4,500 a month to keep the lights on for the rest of the year.

"As you all know, I have a lot of warm feelings about those lights because I think they bring a lot of energy to the whole district," said Pepper. "It's a statement that this is our main street, and that we're open for business."

"Lights are nice," responded Councilman **Paul Smedberg**. "But there are lot more fundamental things in terms of beautification, fixing our tree wells, signage and things like that that \$54,000 could go for other than lights all year round."

Rest of the Story

When asked about why the racial demographics of the public school system don't match the racial demographics of the Alexandria last week during a **Martin Luther King Jr.** tribute at City Hall last week, Mayor **Bill Euille** had this to say: "Some parents are just not ready to have their kids in an integrated environment," he was quoted in last week's Gazette Packet. "Even today." But that's not all of what he had to say. During Tuesday night's City Council meeting, the mayor took a few moments to share the rest of his comments, which were not printed as part of a story about how racial gaps persist in Alexandria.

"Parents are concerned about the lack of quality education at certain schools, so they choose to opt out of the school in their neighborhood — not to mention the fact that we're fortunate to have choices, and you have a choice to put you child in a public school or a private school or a religious institution," he said. "Our schools have made and continue to make progress, and we'll begin to see improved demographics in the near future."

Decent Exposure

Is a breastfeeding mother guilty of indecent exposure? Many people would probably assume that she is, but two Alexandria City Council members are concerned about the possible ambiguities in the law. Last week, Vice Mayor **Kerry Donley** and Councilman **Rob Krupicka** circulated a memorandum asking that the city's indecent exposure ordinance be amended to make sure breastfeeding is OK. "While we are not sure that breastfeeding has been cited in the city," the two elected leaders wrote in the Jan. 21 memo, "we believe this amendment will not only remove any ambiguity in the ordinance, but it will more firmly establish breastfeeding as a positive practice for both mother and child here in Alexandria."

Reagan Day

Councilman **Frank Fannon** can still recall that day in the spring 1988 when President **Ronald Reagan** came to town.

"It was on spring break," said Fannon, who was then a student at Elon College in North Carolina. "And it was very exciting for me to be able to meet the President of the United States of America."

Now Fannon is returning the favor by organizing a celebration of Reagan's birth in the council chambers at noon on Feb. 4. Speakers will former Virginia Sen. **George Allen** and veteran campaign advisor **Charles Black Jr.**, who worked as an aide on the 1980 and 1984 presidential campaigns.

"Reagan was President during my formative years," said Fannon. "And I always felt like when he was President, you knew who was in charge."

— MICHAEL LEE POPE

NEWS

Businessman With a Heart

John Ariail was a prominent attorney, businessman, developer and philanthropist.

John Ariail, a prominent Northern Virginia attorney, businessman, real-estate developer, philanthropist and outdoorsman, died Jan. 20 following complications related to heart surgery. He was 68.

"He was a very successful businessman and a dedicated philanthropist," said Mayor Bill Euille. "I think he'll be remembered not only for his business acumen but also for a kind heart and a big smile."

An active participant in the Episcopal Church of Virginia, Ariail was a member at St. Paul's Episcopal Church and Christ Church as well as serving on the vestry as senior warden of Pohick Church in Lorton. His involvement with the church brought him to Uganda, where he served as co-chair of the Diocese of Virginia's Fifth Century Fund.

"John was a model parishioner," said the Rev. Oran Warder, rector of St. Paul's Episcopal Church. "He was deeply committed to St. Paul's, fully supportive of its mission and extremely faithful in attendance and participation in the life of the congregation. He will be sorely missed."

During the 1970s, he served on the Virginia State Water Control Board, including a two-year stint as chairman. He was a founding board member of the Menokin Foundation in Richmond County, Va., and of the Lorton Arts Foundation, where he recently completed eight years as chairman. Ariail served several times as chairman of the Goodwin House retirement communities in Virginia. Most recently, he helped establish Alexandria in Bloom, a nonprofit organization dedicated to the beautification of Old Town Alexandria.

John Harvey Ariail Jr. was born on Oct. 29, 1942 to John Harvey Ariail and Virginia Simpson Ariail of Greenville, S.C. He received a bachelor's degree from Davidson College then began attending classes at the Law School of the University of Virginia, where he graduated in 1967. Later that year, he married Leslie Ann Smith, who was then a graduate of St. Agnes

School for Girls and Queens College.

Ariail served as a captain in the United States Army before being stationed with the CIA in Salzburg, Austria. Upon his return from Europe, he served as an assistant commonwealth's attorney in Arlington County. He later joined the law firm of Smith, Harrison & Ramsey, which later became Mays & Valentine, and served as the president of the Arlington County Bar Association.

Along with law partner W. Forbes Ramsay, he created the Sport and Health Clubs group in 1973, establishing the Arlington Y Tennis and Squash Club as the first of 24 health facilities in the Washington metropolitan area. Ariail developed many family real-estate ventures with B.M. Smith & Associates, including the ongoing development at Penrose Square complex on Columbia Pike in Arlington. Ariail was also a co-owner of Restaurant Eve in Alexandria.

Ariail was a former member of the boards at St. Stephen's School in Alexandria, St. George's School in Newport, R.I., Davidson College and was a founding board member of Flinto Hill School in Oakton, Va. He was also a member of the Metropolitan Club of Washington, the Angler's Club of New York, the Island Farm Duck Club in Warsaw, Va., and the Old Dominion Boat Club in Alexandria.

He is survived by his wife of 43 years, Leslie Smith Ariail of Alexandria; daughter Allison Erdle and son-in-law Garrett W. Erdle of Alexandria; son John H. Ariail III and daughter-in-law Kimberly Ariail of Alexandria; son, J.E. Shreve Ariail and daughter-in-law Anna Carrington Alvarez of Brooklyn, N.Y.; and three grandchildren. He is also survived by two brothers, Robert M. Ariail of Greenville, S.C., and William Ariail of York, Pa.

A memorial service celebrating his life and friendships will be held on Jan. 27 at 2 p.m. at St. Paul's Episcopal Church. Private internment of his ashes will take place on Jan. 26 at Pohick Church Memorial Gardens in Lorton. In lieu of flowers, donations may be made in his memory to Act for Alexandria or Alexandria in Bloom.



John Ariail

Doug Thurman: A Quiet Force

He worked behind the scenes in city politics and historic preservation.

BY MICHAEL LEE POPE
GAZETTE PACKET

Doug Thurman, a tireless advocate for Republican politics in Alexandria and historic preservation in Old Town, died of lung cancer earlier this month. He was 60.

"It's a great loss to the city," said Republican Councilman Frank Fannon. "Doug didn't have a family, so he was able to devote himself to making this city a better place for everyone."

Never one to seek the spotlight,

Thurman preferred to work behind the scenes and let others take credit. This was true whether he was running Irish restaurateur Pat Troy's political campaigns or working to name an alley after a slain police officer. Friends and associates say he had a relentless political drive and indefatigable love of Alexandria's history, but rarely shared personal information about himself — even with people who knew him well for many years.

"He was the most secretive person I've ever known," said Sammie Collins, who dated



PHOTO BY LOUISE KRAFT

Doug Thurman participates in a wreath-laying ceremony to name Hummer Alley in honor of Alexandria Police Sgt. Elton Hummer.

Thurman from April 2007 to February 2009. "But he was also the SEE DOUG THURMAN, PAGE 9

Doug Thurman: A Quiet Force Behind the Scenes

FROM PAGE 3

kind of person who really went overboard to help other people.”

Thurman served as president of the Alexandria Historical Society, and he served on the boards of Old Town Civic Association, the League of Women Voters, Friends of the Carlyle House and the Historic Alexandria Resources Commission. He was also an original member of the board of directors for Living Legends, a nonprofit organization that honors Alexandrians who have made significant contributions to the city — an honor he declined last year.

“He was erudite and hard working, but also very unassuming,” said Mary Anne Weber, who served with him on the Living Legends board. “So it doesn’t surprise me that he would have rejected the attention.”

DOUGLAS LEE THURMAN was born in Richmond on March 22, 1950. As a newborn baby, he was adopted by Nebraska natives Dale and Helen Thurman, who moved to Arlington during World War II to become government workers. After graduating from Roanoke College in the early 1970s, Thurman got a job at the National Archives — thanks to the help of an uncle who worked in the General Services Administration.

Fresh out of college, Thurman began his

career at the National Archives preserving audiovisual materials. Before long, he worked his way into the office that oversees presidential records, where he stayed for the rest of his career. Thurman was married briefly in the 1970s, but the union ended in divorce after two years. Thurman lived most of his life as a bachelor and never had any children, which left his schedule free to advocate for causes he believed in and political candidates he supported.

“He was a very hard worker, always out knocking on doors,” said Troy, whose two campaigns for Alexandria City Council were managed by Thurman. “He was the kind of guy who seemed to be everywhere and know everything.”

Many times, the work that he did went unrecognized — usually because Thurman worked behind the scenes to make sure he avoided the spotlight. A good example of this is the naming of Hummer Alley in honor of slain Alexandria police Sgt. Elton Hummer in 2008, a campaign that Thurman began and worked quietly behind the scenes to make happen. By the time the signs went up officially designating the alley, which was near his home on Duke Street, Thurman tried to shift the focus away from him and toward the slain police officer — the only Alexandria cop who died in the line of duty whose murder has never been solved.

“I was stunned because the Hummer family lived next door to where I lived,” said Thurman in a 2008 interview. “This is the type of thing people should remember because these guys are risking their lives every day of the year.”

THOSE WHO KNEW him say that he would often quietly donate money to favored causes and volunteer when help was needed. He would also use his connections in Washington to help people find jobs, following in the tradition of his uncle who helped him back in the 1970s. Friends say Thurman was fiercely loyal to Alexandria, making a habit of shopping and dining almost exclusively in the city. And when he got involved with an organization, he was always trying to think of ways to improve it.

“He made sure we always had pipes and drums at all of our events thanks to Doug’s generosity,” said Sarah Coster, assistant historic site administrator at the Carlyle House Historic Park. “And he was always so gracious and humble about it.”

Thurman was among those who tried to shut down the coal-fired power plant owned by Mirant on the waterfront, and he also was part of a group that unsuccessfully tried to save a building on Upper King Street that was later demolished to make room for the

new Lorien Hotel. When St. Paul’s Episcopal Church tried to encapsulate a historic exterior wall to build a handicapped accessible ramp and protect several stained glass windows, Thurman was among those who spoke out against the proposal during a June 2006 public hearing at City Hall.

“Looking back on it, clearly the hand of God was at work,” said the Rev. Oran Warder during Thurman’s funeral homily. “For our conversation, which began on that day, only broadened and deepened, and they continued, and they never stopped. As a result, Doug became passionately involved in the life and ministry of this parish.”

A former Methodist, Thurman was confirmed as an Episcopalian in 2008 at St. Paul’s, where he started attending regular services on Sundays and Wednesdays. Warder said Thurman became so enthusiastic about the church hosting a Head Start program that he quietly subsidized the startup cost to make the transition easy. For those who knew him, that anecdote — shared during his funeral — is just one more example of Thurman’s quiet determination.

“He was always doing whatever he could to make the city a better place without taking credit for it,” said former Vice Mayor Andrew Macdonald. “He preferred to stay in the background, but in many ways that made him more effective.”

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Alexandria Gazette Packet



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25 CENTS

MARCH 31, 2011



The Salute to Women Award winners are, from left, front: Beverly Beidler, Cathy David, Dora Tweneboah and Chryell Bucksell. Back: Deena Disraelly, Kari Galloway, Julie Lineberry, Sandra Hein, Linda Brinker Hafer, Melinda Gray and Krishna Leyva.

Saluting Women

Annual awards ceremony remembers Susan Butler.

BY JEANNE THEISMANN
GAZETTE PACKET

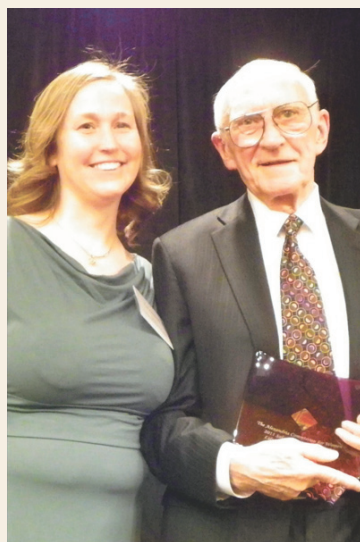
The Alexandria Commission for Women held its 31st annual Salute to Women Awards March 28 in a bittersweet ceremony that paid tribute to long-time women's advocate Susan Butler, who was posthumously awarded the Lifetime Achievement Award that now bears her name.

"She was the love of my life," said Jim Butler, who accepted the award on behalf of his wife who died in De

SEE PRESENTING SALUTE, PAGE 7



City Councilwoman Alicia Hughes, Nya Bucksell and Rising Star Award winner Chyrell Bucksell.



Commission for Women chair Elizabeth Johnson presents Jim Butler with the Lifetime Achievement Award in honor of his wife Susan, who died in December of 2010.

PHOTOS BY
JEANNE THEISMANN/
GAZETTE PACKET



Commission for Women member Laura Zabriskie-Martin congratulates T.C. Williams senior and Youth Community Services award winner Dora Tweneboah.



Beth Bergheim Silver, Nora Partlow and Pat Miller.

Saying Goodbye To John Peterson

Pastor led Alfred Street Baptist Church for 42 years.

BY MICHAEL LEE POPE
GAZETTE PACKET

John O. Peterson, the longtime pastor of Alfred Street Baptist Church who opened doors for women in leadership position and expanded the national profile of his congregation, died last week. He was 76.

"We called him the Godfather of Alexandria because he had so much influence," said Howard-John Wesley, who became pastor after Peterson's retirement in 2006. "He was an intellectual in the grand tradition of Alfred Street Baptist Church."

During his 42 years at Alfred Street, the congregation grew



John O. Peterson, 1934-2011

from less than 200 parishioners to more than 2,800. He expanded the numbers of services that were con

SEE SAYING GOODBYE, PAGE 5

Murder Defendant Pleads Insanity

Prosecutors, public defenders square off on sanity of Ethiopian man.

BY MICHAEL LEE POPE
GAZETTE PACKET

By all outward appearances, Simon Bahta loved his daughter. Neighbors say she lit up when she saw him, and the father had an ever-expanding collection of photographs of the girl. That's why the graphic nature

of the way he killed her — slashing her throat so fiercely that it almost cut the bone — and stabbing her mother 40 times made comprehending the crime so difficult to understand.

"The degree of violence against that child raises the issue of insan

SEE PROSECUTORS, PAGE 26

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Saying Goodbye to the 'Godfather of Alexandria'

FROM PAGE 1

ducted each week and added new choirs, vastly expanding the number of ministries in the process and shepherding the predominantly African-American congregation through the darkest days of the civil rights movement. In 1979, he was asked to leave the Northern Virginia Baptist Association after he ordained a female deacon.

"He was a pioneer," said Patricia Johnson, chairwoman of the church's board of deacons. "He felt that women had just as much of a right to be a leader in the church as men — even when that was not a popular position."

Peterson raised the profile of Alfred Street Baptist Church by becoming involved in state, national and international Christian organizations. His name is listed in "Who's Who in America" as well as "Who's Who in Religion," although he always reminded people of his humble beginnings in rural Virginia. He was a highly sought after revivalist and lecturer as well as counselor to other pastors. His international work took him to more than 27 countries, including 11 republics of the former Soviet Union and nine countries on the continent of Africa.

"He would always portray himself as this simple country boy," said Patricia Wallace, a longtime member of Alfred Street Baptist Church. "But then he would go and negotiate a peace with the rebels in Liberia."

JOHN OTIS PETERSON was born on July 21, 1934 in Horse Head, Va., to Hiram Ernest Peterson Sr. and Marie Haynie Nutt Peterson. It was a humble beginning for a man who would later take on an international profile. Yet members of Alfred Street Baptist Church say he never lost

touch with his roots, frequently reminding people that he was from Horse Head in a remote corner of Northumberland County. Yet he never let that get in the way of challenging his congregation.

"He liked to appeal to the intellect rather than the emotions," said Al Wallace, the church's historian. "He wasn't the kind to jump up and down like you see in a lot of other churches."

He graduated from Julius Rosenwall High School in 1951 as valedictorian and entered Virginia Union University. After graduating in 1956 with a degree in mathematics and physics, he received a master of divinity from Virginia Union's School of Theology, where he learned the traditional approach to crafting a sermon with three points that he used for the rest of his career. He was ordained in 1953 at his home church, First Baptist Church of Heathsville, at age 19.

"I believe very strongly in the fact that it is a calling [that] is placed upon you, and you must accept it," said Peterson in one of the many interviews he conducted in his lifetime. "And in 1953 I gave

into it."

But his education didn't stop at Virginia Union. He also studied at George Washington University, Howard University School of Divinity, Bucknell University, Wesleyan University, John Wesley Theological Seminary and Lynchburg Theological Seminary, where he received an honorary

"He would always portray himself as this simple country boy. But then he would go and negotiate a peace with the rebels in Liberia."

— Patricia Wallace

doctorate. For more than 22 years, Peterson taught mathematics, biological, chemical and physical sciences in the public schools in Warwick and Arlington.

"He was a preacher and a teacher," said Johnson. "I think he'll be remembered more an educator than anything else."

His career took him all over the Virginia. From 1961 to 1962, he was pastor at Mount Hope Baptist Church in Hart, Va. From 1955 to 1964, he was pastor at First Baptist Church, Louisa, Va. Then in 1964, he took a position leading Alfred Street Baptist Church — the seventh man to hold the job since the church since 1859. When Peterson took over, the annual operating budget was less than \$12,000. When he retired in 2006, it was \$3.5 million.

"He had a way with words that could touch the heart," said Geri Baldwin, a member of the church. "He was someone who cared for the local community and communities throughout the world."

PETERSON HELD many leadership positions, including president of the Lott Carey Foreign Baptist Convention; president of the Baptist General Convention of Virginia; vice president of the Baptist World Alliance; chairman of the Northern Virginia Baptist Camp Board; co-founder, secretary, treasurer and president of the Alexandria Baptist Ministers' Con-

ference; member of the Alexandria School Board and Virginia Union University Board of Trustees; chairman of the Alexandria Community Corrections Resources Board; volunteer chaplain of the Alexandria Police Department; and member of the Board of Governors, Virginia Council of Churches. He was also a staunch supporter of the Alexandria Branch NAACP and the Northern Virginia Urban League.

"You would think that following in the footsteps of someone like that would be intimidating," said Wesley. "But he really took me under his wing and let me pastor the church my way."

Peterson is survived by his wife of 54 years, Joyce Keemer Peterson; a daughter, Jewellette McDaniel; a son John O. Peterson Jr.; four grandchildren: Lauren Peterson, Jonathan and Mathew McDaniel, and John Peterson III; two nieces: Angela Neversen and Gwyn Davis; nephew Murray Davis; sister-in-law Leticia Peterson; grandnieces, grandnephews, cousins, as well as adopted sons and daughters, Roslyn M. Brock, Rosette T. Graham, Emmett L. Dunn, and Edward Jackson.

BUSINESS NOTES

Burke & Herbert Bank recently announced net income of \$34.2 million for 2010. This performance represents record earnings for the Bank for the third consecutive year. Earnings per share increased to \$178.05, up from \$170.17 in 2009, and dividends paid per share, at \$72, also increased from the previous year. As with net income, both earnings per share and dividends paid per share grew during each of the last three years. The Bank's earnings gain in 2010 was driven by strong growth in interest income, coupled with a decrease in interest expense. Interest income increased to \$113.6 million, up 6.2 percent, while interest expense decreased by 9.2 percent to \$20.4 million. Overall, the Bank's interest income as a percent of average assets rose to 5.42 percent in 2010, outperforming more than 95 percent of peer group banks.

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Alexandria Gazette Packet



MICHAEL LEE POPE

Third Place in Breaking News Writing: Gen-on Power Plant to be Unplugged
Judges comments: Knowing the background here enabled the reporter to write a thorough explanation of what the closing of the power plant meant. The history of the plant- and efforts opposing it- put things in perspective for the reader. Nice touch to add the quote from the plant opponent who understood what it might mean for the employees.

Alexandria Gazette Packet



25 CENTS

SERVING ALEXANDRIA FOR OVER 200 YEARS • A CONNECTION NEWSPAPER

SEPTEMBER 1, 2011

GenOn Power Plant To Be Unplugged

City and company strike agreement to close Potomac River Generating Station in 2012.

BY MICHAEL LEE POPE
GAZETTE PACKET

Alexandria officials and GenOn Energy have reached an agreement to permanently close the company's Potomac River Generating Station, a longtime goal of city leaders that opens up a valuable spot of real estate on Alexandria's waterfront for redevelopment. Under the conditions of the agreement, the plant will close in October 2012. City leaders say negotiations on the agreement began more than three months ago.

"This is great news not only for the city of Alexandria, but the entire metropolitan region," said Mayor Bill Euille. "The city is pleased that its long-term public health goals and GenOn's business interests were able to come together."

After several years of trying to shut the plant down, city leaders struck a deal with then-owner Mirant in 2008 that would invest \$32 million to reduce particulate matter at the facility. Three years later, that money remains unspent in an escrow account. The Division of Environmental Services was on the verge of signing a contract to install "baghouse" technology that would reduce the amount of particulate matter emitted from the plant in September. But the agreement that was signed Monday,



PHOTO BY LOUISE KRAFT/GAZETTE PACKET

Under the terms of an agreement struck this week, the Potomac River Generating Station will close by October 2012.

Aug. 29, returns that money to the plant unless GenOn is not able to shut the operation down by October 2012.

"Today's announcement of the retirement of GenOn's Potomac River Generating Station is a culmination of many years of hard work by activists and concerned residents," said Sierra Club executive director Michael Brune and Greenpeace Coal Campaigner Robert Gardner in a joint statement. "The agreement between GenOn and the city of Alexandria to retire a major source of pol-

SEE GENON, PAGE 25

Sierra Club field organizer Phillip Ellis speaks at a press conference organized by environmentalists Tuesday to celebrate the announcement that the coal-fired power plant would be closing.



PHOTO BY MICHAEL LEE POPE/GAZETTE PACKET

32 Years Later, Clerk of Court Gains Opponent

Republican Marston gives incumbent Democrat Semonian his first competitive race since 1979.

BY MICHAEL LEE POPE
GAZETTE PACKET

Alexandria Clerk of Court Ed Semonian will have his first competitive race since 1979, with former chairman of the Alexandria Republican City Committee Chris Marston filing papers for the low-profile yet high-powered position last week. Like many lawyers in Alexandria, Marston says he has enormous respect for the long-serving clerk. But he also pledges to do more to drag the office

into the 21st century, pledging to make more documents available online and extending the number of forms that can be filed electronically.

"People aren't limited to bankers' hours when they're banking, and I don't think people should be limited to courthouse hours to do business with the clerk's office," said Marston. "In any case where you aren't required to be physically present, I think you should be able to file electronically."

Semonian is the longest-serving elected official in the city, holding office longer than

U.S. Rep. Jim Moran or Councilwoman Del Pepper. He's been clerk of court longer than several members of the Alexandria Bar As-

sociation have been alive. Yet he says he's ready to wage his first competitive cam-

SEE CLERK OF COURT, PAGE 25

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Clerk of Court Election Finally Competitive

FROM PAGE 1

paigned in more than 30 years. When asked about the politics of the campaign, Semonian downplayed the partisan differences in how the clerk's office is run on a day-to-day basis.

"This is a non-partisan office," said Semonian, who makes \$128,000 a year as the Alexandria Clerk of Court. "There aren't any issues in this office that are political issues."

THE CIRCUMSTANCES that led to Semonian's first election began with the unexpected death of 55-year-old Freddie Jackson, who died during a reelection campaign in 1979. Because Jackson died in late August, the deadline had expired for Republicans or independent to file to be on the ballot in November. That meant that Democrats would have a lock on the election, although it was unclear who would rise to claim the title. Republicans were shut out of the process because the deadline had already passed for the party to put a candidate on the ballot.

"There was no apparent reason to run a candidate against a man who was doing a good job and had the respect and confidence of the community," said state Sen. Wiley Mitchell (R-30) at the time. "But when you have an incumbent who either through death or resignation is removed from consideration, I think we have a whole new set of circumstances."

Seven Democrats threw their hat into the ring that year, including the late clerk's son Freddie Jackson Jr., attorney Joseph McGrail, attorney Blair Brown, attorney Ellen Peck, clerk's office employee John Beall, clerk's office employee Edward Dadurka and United Virginia Bank vice president Ed Semonian. Dadurka and Semonian received the highest evaluation from a select panel of influential Democrats.

The Candidates

Ed Semonian,

77: A native of the District of Columbia, Semonian moved to Alexandria as a child and has spent his entire life in the city. A 1951 graduate of George Washington High School, Semonian studied government at George Washington University before receiving his juris doctorate from George Washington University in 1960. After spending time as a management consultant and a corporate lawyer, he became a general practice lawyer with the firm of Clark, Richard, Moncure and Whitfield. Semonian was vice president of United Virginia Bank when he won a Democratic caucus to replace the late Freddie Jackson, who died during his 1979 reelection campaign.



Chris Marston,

39: A native of Grosse Pointe, Mich., Marston graduated Grosse Pointe South High School in 1992 before studying government at Dartmouth College. In 1996, he moved to Northern Virginia to take a job on Capitol Hill. He's lived in Alexandria since 1997, filtering through a number of political appointments — everything from being a legislative assistant for the Subcommittee on National Security and International Affairs to serving as chief of staff to the Office of National Drug Control Policy. He received his juris doctorate from Georgetown Law School in 2003. From 2004 to 2010, he was chairman of the Alexandria Republican City Committee.



All the candidates were asked to pay \$500 to participate in the caucus.

"This is a fundraising effort in disguise," criticized Democratic committee member and attorney John Carmody at the time.

"It is an entirely appropriate thing to do if the committee to do so," said Alexandria Democratic Committee chairman Don Henry at the time.

IN THE END, six dozen members of the committee met in council chambers at City Hall in a late September meeting, a caucus that would determine the party's candidate. Dadurka and Semonian tied on the first two ballots, although Semonian was victorious on the third vote with only 35 votes. Although the Alexandria Port Packet editorial board wrote it didn't have the "slightest quibble" with the choice of Semonian, the paper said allowing 67 Democrats decide the election was "one of the sorriest substitutes for elective democracy that we have ever witnessed."

"It simply isn't right," the newspaper editorialized.

But it worked. Semonian appeared unchallenged on the November ballot, running without competition in his first-ever general election campaign. He won 7,240 votes with no opposition in that first election, and has subsequently been reelected three times. Each time, he has run unopposed.

Until now.

Marston's entry into the race represents the first time in more than 30 years that Semonian has had any kind of competition, and the first time in his career that he's ever had a Republican opponent in the general election. "Ed Semonian is an institution in Alexandria," said Susan Kellom, former chairwoman of the Alexandria Democratic Committee who is managing Semonian's reelection campaign. "He has transformed the office of the clerk of court into the standard for the commonwealth."

IN SOME WAYS, the race between

Semonian and Marston is a battle of the former party leaders — pitting Kellom's candidate against the man who invented Plunkie the Elephant, the cartoon character Marston invented during the 2009 city election that ousted two Democratic incumbents. The successful strategy involving asking Republicans to engage in "plunking" by casting votes for GOP candidates while leaving other spots on the ballot blank. Some Democrats charged the practice, sometimes known as "plunking" or "bullet voting," as unethical — a charge Marston flatly denies.

"This was a strategy that was created by the civil rights movement," said Marston. "I don't think Democrats in Alexandria would say that the civil rights movement was unethical." The strategy worked, and two Democratic incumbents were defeated. Shortly after the election, the lame duck members of the all-Democratic City Council ended the longtime practice of springtime elections for city offices in favor of moving them to November. Republicans opposed the move as a cynical way for Democrats to take advantage of large Democratic turnout to vote in federal elections for President and Congress.

Now, both parties are adjusting to the new reality. In the days since Marston announced, some have argued that he is setting himself up for another potential race. But that doesn't make sense, Marston said. Why would he try to set himself up to run as a Republican in a City Council election when President Barack Obama will be on the ballot for reelection? Frankly, he said in an interview last week, he has much more of a chance going up against Semonian in a low-turnout election in which the state Senate race is at the top of the ticket. "It's not my intention to set myself up for some other race," said Marston, noting his chances of winning this election are far greater than any other race. "I intend to win."

City, GenOn Agree on Closing Generating Station

FROM PAGE 1

lution in our nation's capital is a huge symbolic step toward moving the nation beyond coal."

ALTHOUGH THE 25-ACRE site will inevitably become one of the hottest redevelopment properties on the waterfront, city leaders do not plan to make any changes to a controversial small-area plan currently under consideration by the City Council. The plan will address three other areas slated for redevelopment, which have been part of the plan all along. City officials say it's too late to bring Pepco, which owns the land, into the small-area planning process. "The other parcels that are part of the current waterfront plan have been active participants in our discussion," said Assistant City Attorney Chris Spera.

"They have participated in that discussion, and the owners of this site have not."

Council members had hoped to pass the plan before the summer recess, but put the process on hold when they couldn't agree as summer approached. Now that another major redevelopment parcel along the waterfront has opened up — much larger than any of the redevelopment sites currently addressed by the plan — some say failing to address it would be a big mistake.

"I think their refusal to consider changing the plan to reflect this shows how weak the plan was to start with," said Boyd Walker, chairman of Citizens for an Alternative Alexandria Waterfront Plan. "A waterfront plan that doesn't include this site isn't much of a plan at all."

The plant opened in 1949 by a company known as the Potomac Energy Company, now known as Pepco. Back then, the

Potomac River Generating Station was situated between the Potomac River Clayworks and the American Chlorophyll Company. But over time the industrial use on the waterfront declined. Pepco eventually leased the plant to Atlanta-based energy company Mirant, which resisted the city's efforts to close the plant.

"We tried everything," Councilwoman Del Pepper told the Upper King Street Civic Association last month. "None of it worked." Until now.

After Mirant became part of GenOn, the Sierra Club launched a major initiative to close the plant. Known as "GenOff," the campaign warned that the Potomac River Generating Station was responsible for 37 deaths, 60 heart attacks and 610 asthma attacks each year. Now that the agreement has been struck to shut the plant for good, environmentalists across the region hailed

the development as a major victory.

"GenOn was facing a growing movement, mounting legal fees, bad public relations and constant involvement of their senior staff," said Mike Tidwell, director of the Chesapeake Climate Action Network. "They made a cost-benefit analysis that closing the plant was the right thing to do."

"I have mixed feelings about this," said North Old Town resident Elizabeth Chimento, who has worked for years to shut the plant down. "It's obviously a victory for people who will not longer have to worry about pollution for the plant, but I'm also concerned about all the people who work at the plant who will lose their jobs in this very difficult economy."

About 120 people work at the plant, 40 percent of whom live in Alexandria.

Alexandria Gazette Market



MICHAEL LEE POPE
Third Place in Business and Financial Writing

Alexandria Gazette Packet

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25 CENTS

APRIL 28, 2011

Hartmann Heads to Florida

Bruce Johnson named interim manager.

BY MICHAEL LEE POPE
GAZETTE PACKET

Outgoing Alexandria City Manager Jim Hartmann has accepted a new job as county manager of Seminole County, Fla., returning to a region where he worked earlier in his career. His last day on the job will be on May 6, when Budget Director Bruce Johnson will become interim city manager.



Jim Hartmann

"I've got mixed emotions about it," said Hartmann, who has an annual salary of \$238,000. "It's sad to leave because I feel connected to the organization and the

SEE HARTMANN, PAGE 10

Valor Awards



K-9 Officer Carlos Rolon and Ajax received a Silver Medal for their actions in subduing a fleeing suspect on the third floor of City Hall.

MORE PHOTOS, PAGE 10

Loss of Virtue

City loses lawsuit challenging private use of Wales Alley.

BY MICHAEL LEE POPE
GAZETTE PACKET

Private Virtue is a public vice. That's the ruling of the Alexandria Circuit Court, which issued a decision on Good Friday that the City Council did not have authority to allow a restaurant to take over half of Wales Alley.

The restaurant, known as Virtue Feed and Grain, is the brainchild of restaurant impresarios Cathal and Meshelle Armstrong — creators of Restaurant Eve, Eamonn's Dublin Chipper, PX and the Magestic. Back in June, the City Council approved an ordinance authorizing the city manager to execute a five-year lease agreement with Virtue that would allow the restaurant to use 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. Last week, visiting judge John 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.

"I would say this is a win-win because both parties got something out of this," said City Attorney James Banks. "The city got a ruling that this is a public alley, and the Boat Club got a ruling that they have a right to be able to move its boats and trailers through

the alley."

What happens next has yet to be determined. Banks said the city is considering appealing the ruling, which would challenge the Boat Club's right to move boats and trailers through the alley. He said the City Council could also accept the ruling and enter into a separate lease agreement that would take up less space, allowing enough space for boats and trailers. A third option would be to use the alley in ongoing negotiations with the Boat Club as part of the waterfront small-area plan, which could be approved as early as

"Basically, the door is still open for the city to conduct ongoing negotiations with the Boat Club," said Mayor Bill Euille. "I wouldn't say it was a mistake for the City Council to approve

the use of the alley because the restaurant agreed to pay for maintenance."

THE HISTORY of Wales Alley dates back to the earliest days of the city in 1789, when a deed of partition was executed between former Alexandria Mayor John Fitzgerald and Maryland businessman Valentine Peers. In his ruling, Judge McGrath suggested that any changes to the ownership of the alley since that time have been "shrouded in the mists" of time, with an overlapping history of commercial, residential and gov

SEE CITY, PAGE 7

"I would say this is a win-win because both parties got something out of this."

— City Attorney James Banks

Watering Down Waterfront Plan

Planners give up on moving Boat Club parking lot and rethink Waterfront Park.

BY MICHAEL LEE POPE
GAZETTE PACKET

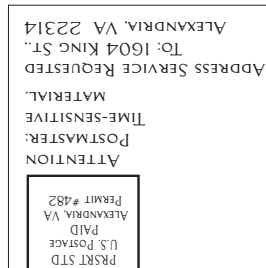
For decades, city officials have been eyeing the waterfront parking lot of the Old Dominion Boat Club. Located at the foot of King Street, the surface lot and boat ramp have been a roadblock to their dream of a continuous walkway along the waterfront. When Planning Director Faroll Hamer released the small-area plan for the waterfront in February, the document called for Boat Club to move its parking lot to a new building that would be constructed at the western edge of Waterfront Park.

There was only one problem — the Boat Club wouldn't budge.

Now, on the eve of a Planning Commission vote on the small-area plan, Hamer is radically changing the proposal. It still increases density and overturns a longstanding ban on waterfront hotels. But it also abandons the idea of Fitzgerald Square, a new public space that would have anchored a 200-foot pier extending out into the waters owned by the District of Columbia. Also gone is the proposed building at the western edge of Waterfront Park, which would have served as a new parking structure for the Boat Club.

"Staff continues to believe that the proposal for Fitzgerald Square, the King Street Pier and Water

SEE PLANNERS, PAGE 32



ON THE CAMPAIGN TRAIL

Back to School

Class is in session. Starting this week, the Alexandria Democratic Committee is conducting a candidate school for folks who are considering seeking office and those who want to help them. It's an idea that committee chairman **Clark Mercer** says was inspired by the Sorensen Institute for Political Leadership at the University of Virginia.

"It's important to have a strong bench," said Mercer. "It's also important to have diversity of candidates, and that's one of the things we hope to accomplish with this."

Classes start this week at the committee's headquarters on North Washington Street, with former City Councilman **David Speck** and Vice Mayor **Kerry Donely** leading the inaugural session, which will focus on what it means to be a candidate and what kind of time commitment is involved. Future sessions will include sessions on outreach, communications, new media, getting out the vote and identifying a universe of voters. And the classes aren't just for potential candidates but also for people who want to serve as campaign managers or communication directors.

"Sometimes all it takes to get people to run for office or to be involved in a campaign is to ask them," said Mercer. "This is our way of asking them."

Graduation is scheduled for September — just in time for a potential special election that could be created if a sitting member of the Alexandria City Council is elected to the Virginia state Senate.

BRAC Attack

The Washington Headquarters Service is the gift that keeps on giving for Arlington School Board Chairman **Libby Garvey**, one of three Democrats in a primary fight to snag the Democratic nomination for the state Senate seat vacated by the retiring Sen. **Patsy Ticer** (D-30). Last month, she issued a press release blasting primary rival **Rob Krupicka** and the rest of the Alexandria City Council for endorsing the Mark Center site as a possible location for the Department of Defense installation. This week Garvey was on the BRAC attack yet again, issuing another statement calling on the Alexandria City Council to file a lawsuit seeking an injunction to prevent the opening of the building, which is expected to cause massive gridlock and traffic delays.

"For transportation reasons alone, it is pure folly to charge ahead," said Garvey in a written statement. "Children will not be able to get to Hammond Middle School. Patients and medical staff will not be able to get to Alexandria Hospital."

When asked about Garvey's statement Tuesday night, Krupicka said Garvey was "Monday morning quarterbacking." He said he wants to make sure the City Council explores every potential way to delay the opening of the Washington Headquarters Service, and that a lawsuit was definitely "on the table." But he held back on calling for one in advance of a legal analysis that will be conducted for Alexandria by outside counsel.

"Libby's right to be mad about the process," said Krupicka. "But she doesn't have any obligation to listen to counsel or follow the advice of counsel."

Half a Quarter

As a member of the Virginia House of Delegates, Del. **Adam Ebbin** (D-49) was at a distinct disadvantage in the first quarter fundraising totals for the Democratic state Senate primary, which were released earlier this month. For almost half of the quarter, the General Assembly was in session and Ebbin was legally prohibited from raising money.

"It's true that the other candidates had an advantage," said Ebbin. "But during the session I'm so busy with legislation I don't have much time to think about it anyway."

Ebbin says he supports the fundraising restrictions, even if it put him at a disadvantage during the first quarter of 2011. If he is successful in becoming a member of the Virginia Senate, Ebbin says he would support other campaign finance reform such as setting a cap for maximum donations and creating a system of public finance.

"I would support limitations that would allow candidates to spend more time meeting voters and less time raising money," said Ebbin.

— MICHAEL LEE POPE

NEWS



ALEXANDRIA DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND ZONING

Virtue Feed and Grain wanted to use half of Wales Alley for outdoor seating, but then a Circuit Court judge said the city could not obstruct the ability of the Old Dominion Boat Club to use the public street.

City Steps Too Far in Alley

FROM PAGE 1
ernment use.

"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."

Fitzgerald and Peers apparently obtained the land through some kind of joint ownership by a deed of conveyance dated Dec. 20, 1781. When the land was partitioned in 1789, the parties agreed to "release and confirm" to each other specified parcels of land. Essentially, Fitzgerald owned the north half and Peers owned the south half. Over the years it's been known as Fitzgerald's Alley, Irwin Alley and ultimately Wales Alley.

"The alley was named for Andrew Wales," said Alexandria historian Ruth Lincoln Kaye. "He had a brewery on the alley, and he sold beer here as early as 1786."

Because the Old Dominion is the successor to a portion of Fitzgerald's property, the Boat Club brought the suit to prevent the city and Virtue from blocking access to half of Wales Alley. Members of the private club say they use the alley to transport boats, which are driven on trailers, to a waterfront parking lot where they are launched into the Potomac River.

"ODBC use of Wales Alley has been constant and uninterrupted from at least Dec. 4, 1935, and longer by its predecessors in title," wrote Boat Club attorney Harry Hart in the complaint, "as such, it has a vested easement of way in Wales Alley that is different in kind from that of the general public."

Back in the spring of 1970, a business known as Dockside Sales erected two wooden fences that

blocked the use of Wales Alley from Union Street to the Stand. City Hall responded by sending a letter to the business complaining that the fences needed approval from the Board of Architectural Review even though they were "on property belonging to Dockside Sales." The board eventually approved of the fences on May 13, 1970. The Boat Club responded by seeking an injunction against Dockside Sales.

"Wales Alley has been an established public way in constant and uninterrupted use by the public and the complainant's predecessors in title for more than 65 years," the Boat Club wrote in a court finding from 1971.

A relative peace was reached in Wales Alley after that, although some of the legal questions about who owned the alley seem to have been unresolved. In 1990, the city paved Wales Alley and installed "No Parking" signs. A public street sign was erected, pot holes were repaired and snow was cleared — all on the city's dime. That caused McGrath to reject the Boat Club's claim to part of the alley.

"There is nothing in the evidence which would show clearly or otherwise that ODBC and its predecessors in title had taken or permitted any action or entered into any contract which would indicate that they had 'dedicated' their right to a 30-foot right of way over Wales Alley," he concluded.

But the judge also concluded that the club did have a right to use the public alley to get its boats to the waterfront parking lot, which is incidentally at the center of negotiations between the city and the Boat Club that could influence the direction of a small-area plan. The April 22 ruling also notes that because the alley has been in public use for more than 200 years, it should be considered as having been dedicated by "long public use."

So what happens now?

"We're looking at our options," said Banks.



PHOTO BY JEANNE THEISMANN/GAZETTE PACKET

Democratic Contenders

The Del Ray Business Association's monthly meeting April 18 was the site of the first formal candidates' forum for City Councilman Rob Krupicka, Del. Adam Ebbin (D-49) and Arlington School Board member Libby Garvey, who will face each other Aug. 23 in the Democratic primary election for the state senate seat being vacated by Patsy Ticer. At left, Ebbin, addresses the DRBA as Krupicka and Garvey look on.

COUNCIL NOTEBOOK

Uncollective Bargaining

Don't expect any dramatic scenes in Alexandria on the order of what's happening in Wisconsin. Unlike workers there, Virginia public sector unions don't have collective bargaining rights and they never have. So there's unlikely to be any kind of showdown to keep rights they never had to begin with.

But that doesn't mean they are happy with City Manager **Jim Hartmann's** proposal for police officers and firefighters to contribute more to their retirement plans. Earlier this month, the city manager presented a proposed budget that would increase the contribution from 8 percent to 9 percent, which would raise about \$400,000 in additional revenue for the city.

"They are trying to balance the budget on the backs of police officers and firefighters," said **Michael Kochis**, president of the police union. "Unless the pension is in trouble, there's no reason to change it."

Kochis said he didn't believe the city was following the right process to make changes to the pension, which does not cover employees of the Sheriff's Office. He said the city manager should have sent the measure through a council subcommittee and called for a 60-day comment period. Failing that, he said, he would have a hard time explaining the change to his members in the police union. "This is not about money," he said. "It's about politics."

'Frivolous' Spending

Despite their partisan differences, members of the Alexandria City Council agree more than they disagree. The divide is most prevalent when money is involved.

Take a recent party-line vote on a grant application for \$20 million. Republican Councilman **Frank Fannon** and independent Councilwoman **Alicia Hughes** voted against the application even though it was supported by the Democratic majority. During a discussion of the docket item Tuesday night, Hughes questioned whether the projects were worthy enough to justify the expense.

"You don't want to put your highest priorities in the grant bucket," replied Vice Mayor **Kerry Donley**. "You want to fund the superfluous stuff through grant funding."

Projects the grant would fund include a handful of new DASH buses, participation in the bicycle-sharing program, bicycle parking at Metro stations, expanding operations of the city's transit store and conducting a transit analysis to determine the performance and needs of the community. Fannon agreed with Donley that the items were superfluous, but he disagreed about spending taxpayer money on them. "If people want to use mass transit, they don't need the government to spend millions to help them do it," Fannon said after voting against the grant application. "They can figure it out on their own."

A New Profile

Alexandria is getting more Hispanic and whiter, according to recent Census data released earlier this month. The fastest-growing areas of the city over the last decade were the Carlyle neighborhood and Cameron Station, which have seen massive amount of growth as the result of new construction. Overall, the city's population has increased by about 10,000 over the last decade.

"When we look at what changed between 2000 and 2010," said **Pat Mann**, an urban planner with the Department of Planning and Zoning, "we see, I think, a substantial shift reducing the share of the black and African-American population around Old Town and along Route One and in Del Ray and an increase in the West End." Alexandria was part of the first Census in 1790, which documented 2,748 people living in the city. Since that time, the population has taken dramatic spikes when sections of Arlington County and Fairfax County were annexed into the city limits. Most of the growth took place in the 1940s and 1950s. Today, the city has a population of 140,000, according to the initial reports. The city is expected to receive a citywide data profile and May and a complete profile in December.

"I don't need to think that we need to be overreacting in terms of some initial numbers," said Mayor **Bill Euille**, adding that he's been inundated with media requests to comment on the initial Census reports. "My only reaction is let's wait until we get everything and see the whole picture."

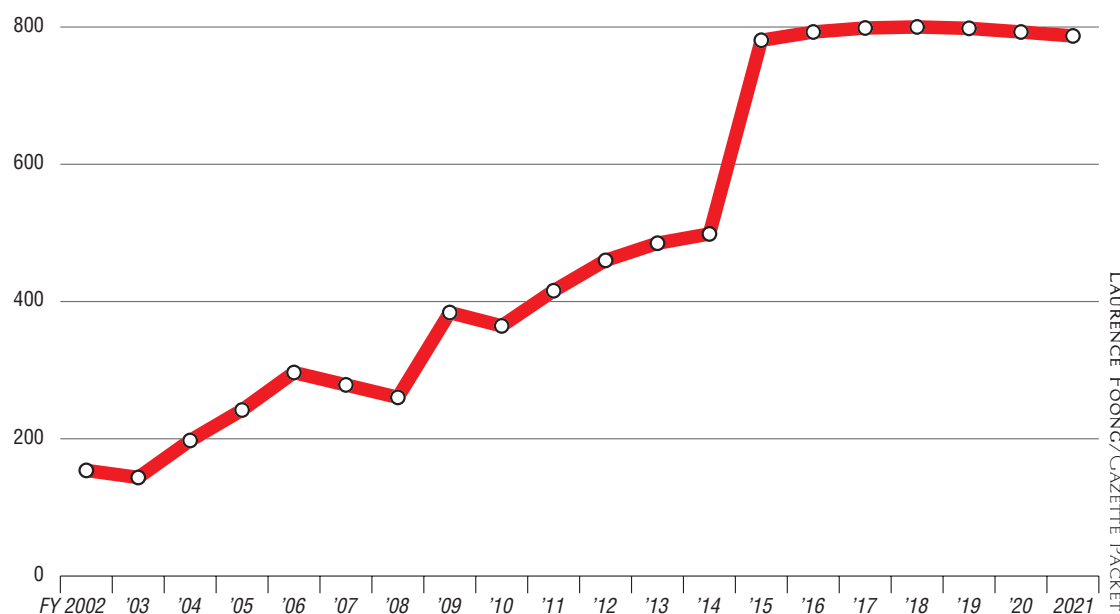
— MICHAEL LEE POPE

NEWS

\$ million
1,000

SOURCE: City of Alexandria

Outstanding Debt



LAURENCE FOONG/GAZETTE PACKET

This chart shows the portion of money dedicated to the school system capital projects versus the city capital projects. The spike in fiscal year 2015 for restricted use funding, which cannot be used for schools, is driven by the Potomac Yard Metro station.

Taking on More Debt

Over the next six years, cost of servicing city's debt will more than double.

BY MICHAEL LEE POPE
GAZETTE PACKET

Servicing the city's growing burden of debt is the largest single increase in City Manager Jim Hartmann's budget for fiscal year 2012.

The proposal he presented to City Council members earlier this month included a 14-percent increase for servicing the city's debt, rising from \$38 million to \$43 million. And more borrowing is on the horizon at City Hall. In the next decade, the city's debt will nearly double. That means the taxpayers will be on the hook for a drastically increased debt burden, which will more than double in the next six years.

"This is a good year to get ahead of projects that have been deferred," said Stephen Fuller, director of the Center for Regional Analysis at George Mason University. "The thing to look for in the future is to

make sure assessments rates are growing faster than the debt burden."

Most of the spike in this year's debt service is driven by the city's new \$90 million police station on Wheeler Avenue, a 118,000-square-foot facility expected to open this fall. Over the last two years, the city issued bonds to pay for the new facility. Now the first payments are due, and the loan has already started accruing interest. During the 2009 City Council campaign, independent candidate Rich Williamson repeatedly criticized the facility as a waste of money — a position most of the other candidates dismissed.

"I don't know if Mr. Williamson is willing to host the Police Department out of his home," quipped Councilman Justin Wilson during one of the debates.

"We don't need more buildings," responded Williamson. "We need to pay our police officers more, and we need more equipment."

CITY LEADERS have taken a guns-and-butter approach — increasing the amount of equipment that will be used in new facilities across the city. And it's been taking on an unprecedented amount of debt to

SEE COST OF SERVICING, PAGE 26

Proposed Capital Expenditures

- ❖ \$9.2 million for construction of a new fire station on Eisenhower Avenue
- ❖ \$7.5 million the city's Information Technology Plan
- ❖ \$7 million for sanitary sewer projects
- ❖ \$7 million for the city's contribution to WMATA
- ❖ \$2.4 million for stormwater management projects
- ❖ \$2.1 million for traffic flow improvements at King and Beauregard
- ❖ \$2 million to improve bus traffic efficiency at the King Street Metro station
- ❖ \$2 million for DASH replacement buses
- ❖ \$2 million for a new police headquarters
- ❖ \$1.9 million for improvements to shared-use paths
- ❖ \$1.9 million for park maintenance throughout the city
- ❖ \$1.2 million to start the Potomac Yard Metro Station design

- ❖ \$1.2 million for roof replacements at the Lee Center
- ❖ \$1.1 million for the city's capital facility maintenance program
- ❖ \$900,000 for traffic signals and signs equipment
- ❖ \$800,000 to replace Fleet Service vehicles
- ❖ \$600,000 to maintain the city's bridges
- ❖ \$500,000 for Four Mile Run stream restoration work
- ❖ \$500,000 for park improvements in Eisenhower Valley
- ❖ \$400,000 for the city's contribution to the Northern Virginia Park Authority
- ❖ \$200,000 for design of Chinguapin Aquatics Center
- ❖ \$200,000 for the city's capital contribution to Northern Virginia Community College
- ❖ \$100,000 for the city's annual contribution to the Peumansend Creek Regional Jail
- ❖ \$75,000 for the Gadsby's light replacement program
- Total: \$74.2 million**

Cost of Servicing City's Debt Will More Than Double

FROM PAGE 3
make it happen. In the summer of 2009, the city issued \$80 million in debt. Then, last summer, the city issued another \$72 million in debt. Although payments on previously issued debt are declining, the increase from these large new bonds are significantly greater.

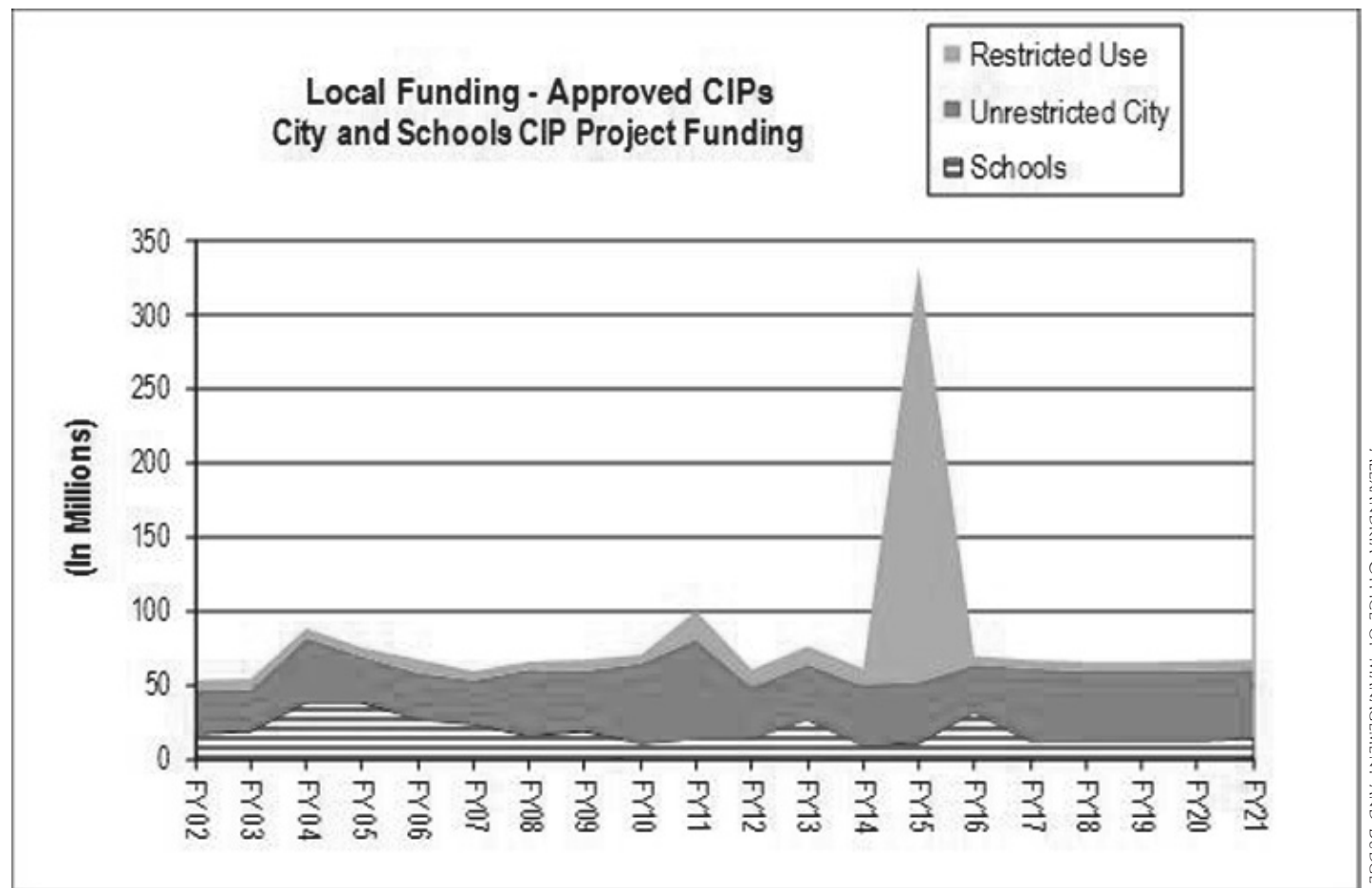
"The way most governments operate is that in good economic times you increase the amount of cash capital and reduce borrowing," said Michael Stewart, a budget analyst for the city. "In bad economic times the ratio reverses and you use less cash and more borrowing."

That's why the projected level of debt levels off in 2014, when the city plans on reducing the reliance on debt and moving toward using cash to fund major projects. City budget officials say this is an approach designed to maintain the city's double AAA credit rating — meaning that two of the three credit rating agencies on Wall Street have given the city a AAA rating. Although other local jurisdictions such as Arlington have received AAA credit ratings from all three rating agencies, Alexandria officials have opted not to seek the triple AAA designation.

"It probably wouldn't get the city better interest rates if city had a triple AAA rating," said Fuller. "But I think it's shortsighted of them not to try because Alexandria is in competition with Arlington for economic development."

OVER THE NEXT decade, the city plans to allocate about \$957 million for its capital improvement plan. That includes about \$275 million for a new Metro station at Potomac Yard, which is projected to open at the end of 2016. Because the city has yet to take out the massive new loans to finance construction of this project, Alexandria taxpayers won't start making payments on servicing this debt until 2016. The cost of servicing that debt will start at \$16.5 million and steadily rise until the annual payment is about \$20 million in fiscal year 2027. Budget officials were able to finance the deal using taxpayer money in addition to developer contributions and a special tax district.

"It would be very difficult to expand the



level of borrowing or cash capital in the [Capital Improvement Program] if the city had to rely exclusively on the General Fund Operating Budget for support," wrote Hartmann in an introduction to the plan. "However, by utilizing targeted special revenue sources, the city has been able to strategically grow the capital program in a responsible manner."

Not everyone agrees with that assessment. Some have criticized the new Metro station as a waste of resources that will burden Alexandria property owners with higher taxes for years to come. They say the finances are a gamble that relies on tax revenue from buildings that have yet to be built. If the assumptions don't pan out, critics point out, taxpayers will be on the hook to make up the difference.

"The city is taking on way too much debt," said A.J. Kearney, co-organizer of the Alex-

andria Tea Party. "The problem with debt is that it pushes responsibility down the road and encourages irresponsible spending."

WHEN CITY COUNCIL members tried to create a special tax district that would have included Potomac Greens last year, neighbors balked and council members backed down. Instead, they adopted what they called "tier one" of the district, which only includes buildings that don't yet exist. Later this year, council members will revisit the issue of whether or not Potomac Greens residents should pay a higher tax bill because they live closer to the proposed Metro station. But opposition remains strong, potentially jeopardizing plans to finance the project and shifting that burden to taxpayers across the city.

"This is an unfair way to conduct business or fund projects," said Mark Anderson,

spokesman for a group calling itself Alexandria's Citizens for Common Cents. "If the public is going to use the Metro station, then the public should pay for it."

In the coming weeks, council members will be faced with whether or not they want to move forward with Hartmann's proposal to increase the amount of debt in the near future, then move to using cash after 2014. If assumptions about rising property values pan out, the gamble will pay off in a steadily rising tax base. But if assessments fall, the debt could become unsustainable and threaten the city's credit rating.

"We are fortunate that we have the financial ability to take on this debt," said Mayor Bill Euille. "I understand the concern this raises among some people, but this is money that will fund essential projects that are needed now and will be used by future residents of the city for years to come."

Libresco Reappointed ARHA Commissioner

The City Council voted to reappoint Brett Libresco as commissioner of the Alexandria Redevelopment and Housing Authority, a public agency that provides affordable housing, social services and economic development programs throughout the city.

In addition to Libresco, who has served as commissioner since February of 2010, City Council also appointed new board members Stanley Richard Vosper and Chynell Bucksell to the ARHA board of commissioners.

Vosper brings more than 15 years of public housing experience to the position. He recently retired from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development in the

Department of Housing and Community Development, where he managed large public housing and HOPE IV redevelopment projects. He also has experience with HUD's Section 8 program as well as HUD's public housing program. Bucksell is an ARHA resident and is a recent graduate of the Parent Leadership Training Institute. She works as a medical administrator for a private physician. The members of the 2011 ARHA Board of Commissioners are: A. Melvin Miller, chairman; Carlyle C. Ring, vice-chairman; Carter D. Fleming; Brett Libresco; Merrick Malone; Derek Hyra; Christopher Ballard; Stanley Richard Vosper, and Chynell Bucksell.

Forums Seek 'Livable Community' Input

The Department of Community and Human Services' Office of Aging and Adult Services will hold a town hall meeting March 3 to discuss strategies for creating a Livable Community for All Ages with a focus on the growing population of older residents.

"The population of older adults in Alexandria will double by the year 2030," said Jane King, chairman of the Alexandria Commission on Aging. "We need to start planning now to address that."

The meeting is scheduled for Thursday, March 3, at 12:30 p.m. at First Baptist Church of Alexandria, 2932 King St.

"Our goal is to hear from as many residents as possible in six areas: housing, transportation, economic development, health and wellness and quality of life," King said. "Ultimately, whatever decisions are made for our aging population are done for everyone."

For more information, contact Debbie Ludington at 703-746-5694.

— JEANNE THEISMANN

At a Crossroads

West End apartment dwellers are looking at uncertain future.

BY MICHAEL LEE POPE
GAZETTE PACKET

Since she was five, a series of garden apartments on the city's West End was the only home Saira has known. Now a 12-year-old student at Hammond Middle School, Saira's neighborhood is falling apart. Neighbors have taken second jobs to pay rapidly increasing rent and utility bills. Some have organized and demanded more reasonable increases. Others struggled to make end meet in a down economy.

"These are our homes," she said one recent humid afternoon. "These are not wealthy people. It's going to be hard for people to find another place."

Developer JBG acquired the property in 2006 from the Mark Winkler Company, a longtime landlord at the series of moderate and low-income housing units adjacent to the Mark Center. The Washington Headquarters Service looms in the distance now as residents here face many threats. Aside from the traffic gridlock facing area commuters, renters here are facing rapidly rising rent and utility payments. Saira said her parents bill spiked from \$80 to \$140.

"We're moving," said Saira. "I don't know what everybody else is doing, but we're leaving."

SIX GARDEN APARTMENTS sprawl across the rugged hills of the West End, crossing a street named after a Confederate general. Their names evoke a bucolic paradise: Hillwood, Stoneridge, Brookdale, Lynbrook, Meadowcreek and Willow Run. For many years people knew the collection as the Hamlets, but people walking the sidewalks here seemed unfamiliar with that name.

"Nobody calls them the Hamlets any longer," said Steban Garces, organizer for Arlandria-based Tenants and Workers United. "That's a name that the city and folks who have been around in that area for some time call them."

For many years the property was owned by the Mark Winkler Company, one of the largest landowners in the city — a time when the properties were known the Hamlets and Fort Belvoir was a distant

neighbor. When JBG became the landlord, residents say they were hit with higher bills for rent and utilities — some as much as a 25-percent increase. Although the city has guidelines that suggest landlords should limit annual increases between 5 and 7 percent, that's not a legally binding mandate on JPG.

"Generally landlords have been cooperative," said Melodie Seau, division chief for landlord-tenant relations in the city's Office of Housing. "But we can't require compliance."

SINCE 1950, the code of Virginia has prohibited localities from enacting rent control. That was a time when the state's political system was dominated by the conservative Byrd machine, a group that wanted to make sure local governments didn't undercut their interests in Richmond and beyond. For the last 20 years, though, the city of Alexandria has been issuing what it calls Voluntary Rent Guidelines.

"These voluntary guidelines provide no enforcement authority against landlords who fail to comply with them," wrote former City Manager Jim Hartmann in a September 2010 memorandum setting the current maximum rates. "Under current Virginia law, the city has no authority to place mandatory limits on rent increases."

Last fall, the Landlord-Tenant Relations Board considered rent data, market forecasts and vacancy surveys compiled by Delta Associates and the Alexandria Office of Housing. They suggested a range of 5 percent to 7 percent increase on their Sept. 1, and the City Council unanimously adopted the suggested rates on Sept. 29. Eight months later, JBG lowered rents by about \$25, although Tenants and Workers said they would like to see a \$100 reduction.

That's a temporary fix, though. And the people who live in these low-slung brick buildings realize that the end is near for the Hamlets. Yet as the Mark Center begins the radical transformation that is about to take place, people here say they have been forgotten in the shuffle.

"It's a disgrace," said Hector Pinedas, who has lived in the Middlecreek apartments since 2005. "They are trying to push us out."



PHOTO BY MICHAEL LEE POPE/GAZETTE PACKET

Residents in six garden apartments on the West End are facing an uncertain future now that a developer has purchased the land and dramatically increased the cost of rent and utilities.

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Alexandria Gazette Packet



MARY KIMM

Third Place in Editorial Writing

Judges comments: Mary Kimm's editorials are sharp and on point. Great work.

Remembering on Memorial Day

A time to honor those in military service.

On Memorial Day, we remember all of those who have died in military service, more than 400,000 in World War II, more than 30,000 in Korea, more than 50,000 in Vietnam.

Earlier this month, the number of U.S. military deaths in Iraq and Afghanistan since Sept. 11, 2001, exceeded 6,000. Nearly 50,000 U.S. military service members have been wounded, although that number is likely to be revised upward.

On Memorial Day, we honor and thank all those who have served in the military, in times of war and peace. It is also a time to reinvigorate efforts to provide the best services and opportunities to our veterans. The Post-9/11 GI Bill dramatically increases the educational benefits extended to members of the military who have served at least three months of active duty since Sept. 11, 2001. Steps to provide better, faster and more responsive health care to veterans, including mental health care are underway, but have a long way to go. This is one place where we must commit the resources to do better.

More than 175 U.S. military service personnel from Virginia have been killed in Iraq and Afghanistan, including several in the last year.

Capt. Charles A. Ransom, 31, of Midlothian was one of eight airmen who died April 27, 2011, at the Kabul International Airport, Afghanistan, from gunfire. Sgt. Sean T. Callahan, 23, of Warrenton was one of two Marines who died April 23, 2011 in combat in Helmand, Afghanistan.

Sgt. 1st Class Anthony Venetz Jr., 30, of Prince William died Jan. 28, 2011 in Afghanistan, in a non-combat incident. Venetz had been seriously wounded months before.

Spc. Sean R. Cutsforth, 22, of Radford, Va., died Dec. 15, 2010 in Afghanistan, when insurgents attacked his unit using small arms fire.

Spc. William K. Middleton, 26, of Norfolk, was one of two soldiers who died Nov. 22 in Afghanistan, when insurgents attacked with an improvised explosive device.

Staff Sgt. Christopher F. Cabacoy, 30, of Virginia Beach, was one of two soldiers who died July 5, 2010, in Kandahar, Afghanistan, when insurgents attacked their vehicle with an improvised explosive device.

Pfc. Benjamin J. Park, 25, of Fairfax Station, Va., died June 18, 2010 at Zhari district, Kandahar, Afghanistan, of injuries sustained when insurgents attacked his unit with an improvised explosive device.

May 12, 2010, Donald J. Lamar II, 23 of Fredericksburg, was killed in Afghanistan. Christopher D. Worrell, 35 of Virginia Beach, was killed in Iraq on April 22, 2010. Steven J. Bishop, 29 of Christianburg, was killed March 13, 2010 in Iraq. Kielin T. Dunn, 19 of Chesapeake, was killed Feb. 18, 2010 in Afghanistan. Brandon T. Islip, 23 of Richmond, was killed Nov. 29, 2009, in Afghanistan. Stephan L.



AIR FORCE MORTUARY AFFAIRS

Mace, 21 of Lovettsville, died Oct. 3, 2009 in Afghanistan.

Bill Cahir, 40 of Alexandria, died Aug. 13, 2009 of a gunshot wound while conducting combat operations in the Helmand Province of Afghanistan. After 9/11, Cahir decided to leave his career as a journalist and join the Marine Corps. After his application to become a Marine had originally been denied because of his age, he lobbied members of Congress to get a special exemption. "We all thought he was crazy," said Brett Lieberman, a former colleague at Newhouse News Service.

Fairfax Station resident Pfc. Dillon Jutras, 20, was killed in combat operations in Al Anbar Province of Iraq Oct. 29, 2005. Dillon Jutras's younger brother, Hunter Drake Jutras, now a middle school student, helped us remember. Hunter wrote: "My brother Dillon who was a Ranger in the U.S. Army. He deployed to Iraq for Operation Iraqi Freedom. He was killed in action on Oct. 29, 2005. I miss him very much."

Lance Cpl. Daniel Ryan Bennett, 23 of Clifton died Jan. 11, 2009, in Helmand province, Afghanistan. "He loved his country, and we're so proud of him," said his mother.

2nd Lt. Sean P. O'Connor of Burke died Oct. 19, 2008 while stationed at Hunter Army Air Field, Savannah, Ga. O'Connor was an athlete in soccer, baseball and football who attended Fairfax County Public Schools and was a 1999 graduate of Bishop Denis J. O'Connell High School in Arlington.

Pfc. David Sharrett, 27 of Oakton, died Jan. 16, 2008 in Iraq. On Oct. 24, 2008, his father, David H. Sharrett, was on hand along with former U.S. Rep. Tom Davis (R) as the Oakton Post Office on White Granite Drive was renamed to honor his son.

Army 1st Lt. Thomas J. Brown, a George Mason University graduate and Burke resident, died on Sept. 23, 2008, while serving in Iraq. His unit came under small arms fire, and Brown, 26, died from his wounds.

HERE ARE the names of some of the local men and women who have died in Iraq and Afghanistan. We repeat these names at least twice a year on Memorial Day and Veterans Day to honor their service and to keep their

A U.S. Army carry team transfers the remains of Army Pfc. Benjamin J. Park, of Fairfax Station, at Dover Air Force Base, Del., June 20, 2010.

memories in our consciousness.

If you know of someone who should be included in this list, or if you would like to share how you are honoring the memory of a family member or friend lost, or about the progress of someone injured, please let us know.

Sgt. Scott Kirkpatrick, 26, died on Aug. 11, 2007, in Arab Jabour, Iraq. Kirkpatrick, who graduated from Park View High School in Sterling, and also considered Herndon and Reston as his hometowns, was a champion slam poet. His father, Ed Kirkpatrick, calls him the "warrior poet," and he and his wife help injured vets at Walter Reed through the Yellow Ribbon fund (www.yellowribbonfund.org).

Ami Neiberger-Miller of Sterling lost her brother, U.S. Army Spc. Christopher Neiberger, in August 2007 when he was killed by a roadside bomb while serving in Baghdad, Iraq. He was 22 when he died. Since her brother's death, Neiberger-Miller has devoted herself to the Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors (www.taps.org), which provides emotional support and other services for families of the fallen.

Staff Sgt. Jesse G. Clowers Jr., 27, of Herndon, died when an improvised bomb exploded near his vehicle in Afghanistan on Aug. 12, 2007. Jonathan D. Winterbottom, 21, of Falls Church, died in Iraq on May 23, 2007, when an IED exploded near his vehicle.

Nicholas Rapavi, 22, of Springfield, died Nov. 24, 2006, of wounds received during combat in Anbar province in Iraq. Army Cpl. Andy D. Anderson, 24, was killed by enemy fire in Ar Ramadi, Iraq on Tuesday, June 6, 2006.

Airman 1st Class LeeBernard E. Chavis, 21, was killed Oct. 14, 2006, by sniper fire in Iraq, trying to protect civilians from a roadside bomb.

Spc. Robert Drawl Jr., 21, a 2003 graduate of T.C. Williams High School, was killed by a bomb in Kunar, Afghanistan, on Aug. 19, 2006.

U.S. Army Specialist Felipe J. Garcia Villareal, 26 of Burke, was injured in Iraq and flown to Washington Hospital Center, where he died Feb. 12, 2006. He was a graduate of Herndon High School.

Capt. Shane R. M. Mahaffee, 36, a 1987

SEE HONORING SACRIFICE, PAGE 11

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OPINION

Honoring Their Sacrifice

FROM PAGE 10

graduate of Mount Vernon High School, died May 15, 2006. He was a lawyer, married, with two children. His parents live in Alexandria.

U.S. Marine Lance Cpl. Nicholas Kirven, 21, was killed in Afghanistan in 2005 during a firefight in a cave with insurgents. He enlisted while still in high school after 9/11. Maj. William F. Hecker III, a 1987 graduate of McLean High School, was killed in action in An Najaf, Iraq, Jan. 5, 2005. Staff Sgt. Ayman Taha, 31, of Vienna, was killed Dec. 30, 2005, when an enemy munitions cache he was prepping for demolition exploded. Army Capt. Chris Petty of Vienna was killed Jan. 5, 2006.

Staff Sgt. George T. Alexander Jr., the 2,000th soldier to be killed in Iraq, was literally born into the Army here in Northern Virginia, at DeWitt Army Hospital at Fort Belvoir. Alexander died at Brooke Army Medical Center in San Antonio, Texas, Oct. 22, 2005, of injuries sustained in Samarra, Iraq, Oct. 17.

Lt. Col. Thomas A. Wren, 44, of Lorton, died in Tallil, Iraq on Nov. 5, 2005. Marine Capt. Michael Martino, 32 of the City of Fairfax, died Nov. 2, 2005, when his helicopter was brought down in Iraq.

1st Lt. Laura M. Walker of Oakton was

killed on Aug. 18, 2005, in Kandahar, Afghanistan. CW4 Matthew S. Lourey of Lorton died from injuries sustained on May 26, 2005 in Buhriz, Iraq.

Operations Officer Helge Boes of Fairfax was killed on Feb. 5, 2003, while participating in counterterrorism efforts in eastern Afghanistan.

Among other local lives lost: Lance Cpl. Tavon Lee Hubbard, 24, of Reston; 1st Lt. Alexander Wetherbee, 27, of McLean; 1st Lt. Jeff Kaylor, 25, of Clifton; Coast Guard Petty Officer Nathan B. Bruckenthal, 24, of Herndon; Army Chief Warrant Officer Sharon T. Swartworth, 43, of Mount Vernon; Command Sgt. Maj. James D. Blankenbecler, 40, of Mount Vernon; Capt. James F. Adamowski, 29, of Springfield; Sgt. DeForest L. Talbert, 22, of Alexandria; Marine Cpl. Binh N. Le, 20, of Alexandria; Staff Sgt. Russell Verdugo, 34, of Alexandria. Army Capt. Mark N. Stubenhofer, 30, from Springfield; Marine Gunnery Sgt. Javier Obles-Prado Pena, 36, from Falls Church; Marine Sgt. Krisna Nachampassak, 27, from Burke; Army Staff Sgt. Nathaniel J. Nyren, 31, from Reston; Marine Lance Cpl. Tenzin Dengkhim, 19, from Falls Church, Navy Chief Joel Egan Baldwin, 37, from Arlington; Maj. Joseph McCloud, of Alexandria; Major Gloria D. Davis, 47 of Lorton.

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Northern Virginia Pays Again

Commonwealth reaps economic benefits of Dulles, National airports, forces costs on Northern Virginia residents.

Driver in Northern Virginia are justifiably concerned about tolls. The cost of driving from Leesburg to Woodbridge on existing and proposed toll roads would run between \$30 and \$40 at some times of the day.

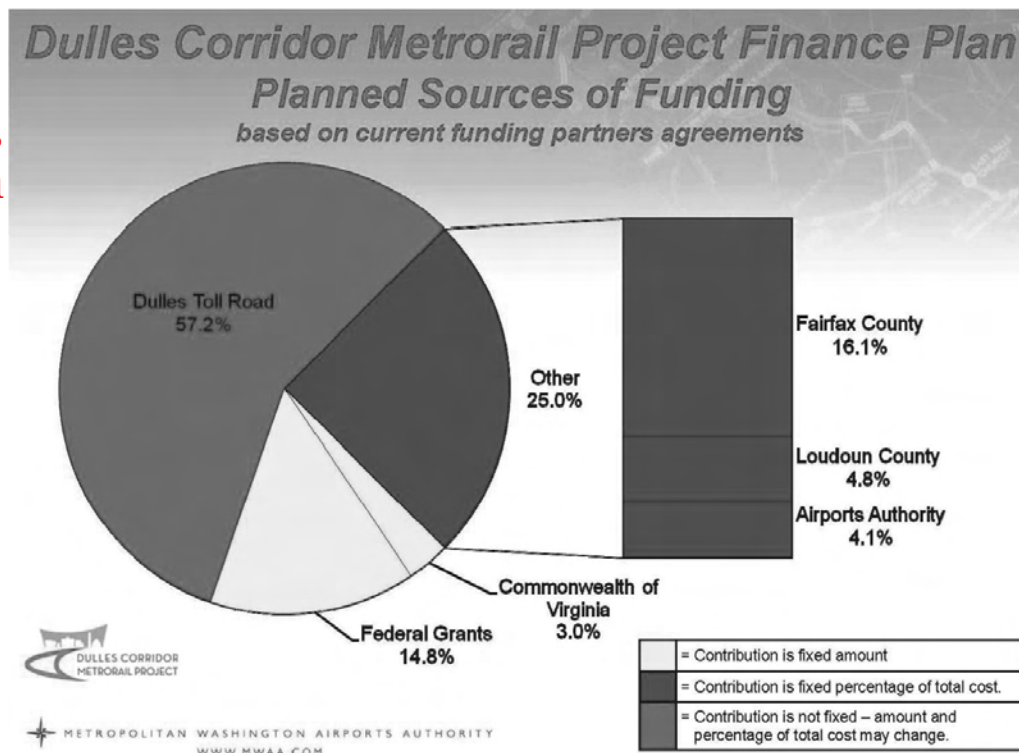
The Greenway in Loudoun leads to the Dulles Toll Road to Beltway HOT Lanes to Interstate 95 Corridor HOT Lanes. In each case, a driver would theoretically have an alternative, Route 7 along the Greenway and Dulles Toll Road, the regular lanes of Interstates 495 and 95.

But recent vitriol about tolls on the Dulles Toll Road is misplaced. This is one more example of the Commonwealth of Virginia feeding on revenues from the economic vitality of Northern Virginia, then forcing Northern Virginia residents to pay for the infrastructure of that economic activity out of local funds and personal pockets.

The Virginia Department of Aviation report in August attributes \$17.5 billion in annual economic activity in Virginia to Dulles International (IAD) and Ronald Reagan National airports, with Dulles providing the majority of that.

The Commonwealth collects most of the tax revenue that results from this activity, but pays only 3 percent of the \$6.2 billion cost of rail to Dulles. This will force more than 80 percent of the costs of building rail to Dulles to local drivers and property owners.

Having major airports adequately served by rail and other transportation options is more



EDITORIAL

than an amenity, it is part of sustaining the economic benefit that comes from major airports. The question is not whether we should be building rail to Dulles, but about who benefits and who pays.

So yes, it makes sense to pressure MWAA to proceed to make cost-effective decisions. Yes, it is maddening that tolls could climb to the point of pushing drivers off the Toll Road and onto Route 7.

But when you hear that the state wrapped up last fiscal year with a surplus, you can realize one more time that Northern Virginia residents are paying for the Commonwealth's prosperity coming and going. No relief is in sight. The state collects the income tax from the good jobs generated here in Northern Virginia by the airports, by the high tech firms, by the business innovators, by proximity to the Pentagon

and the federal government.

The current funding structure for rail to Dulles, based on a projected total project cost of \$6.2 billion, is:

- ♦ Fairfax County, Loudoun County and Airports Authority contribution, 25 percent (Fairfax County pays most of this, 16 percent)
 - ♦ Federal contribution, 14.8 percent, based on a fixed grant for Phase 1 of \$900 million.
 - ♦ The Commonwealth contribution, 3 percent, which is based upon a fixed contribution of \$275 million.
 - ♦ Dulles Toll Road contribution, more than 57 percent, provides the remaining amount.
- And drivers beware, HOT Lanes ahead.

— MARY KIMM

MKIMM@CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM, ON
TWITTER @MARYKIMM

Breast Cancer: You're Not Alone

BY CHRISTINE CANDIO,
RN, FACHE
CEO, INOVA ALEXANDRIA HOSPITAL



“Unless you've had breast cancer, you just don't understand what it's like to have to wait.”

Lisa Baker knows now. But three years ago, she assumed she had a “pass” from getting breast cancer: She had no family history of the disease and had spent the last eight years raising funds to help others with breast cancer by coordinating the City of Alexandria's annual “Walk to Fight Breast Cancer” in her role as director for the City's former Office on Women (now part of the Department of Community and Human Services).

Then everything changed. She discovered a lump in her breast and was subsequently diagnosed with Stage 2 breast cancer. She sought

treatment at Inova Alexandria Hospital and is now a proud spokesperson for breast cancer awareness.

At Inova Alexandria Hospital, we know first-hand the devastating effects of a breast cancer diagnosis: It touches your whole family; it's touched our hospital's employees' families, too. But you don't have to walk that road alone.

Inova's Breast Care Institute offers a multidisciplinary team of more than 100 physician experts throughout Northern Virginia to coordinate patient care through diagnosis, treatment and recovery. Our Breast Care Navigator nurses provide a personal touch, guiding patients and their families through the care process and the myriad of information and treatment decisions they must suddenly confront. They can help find the right doctor, coordinate office visits, research clinical trials,

and find transportation and financial options. They are your personal resource experts.

We're taking that level of care one step further with the October opening of the Inova Advanced Imaging Center in Alexandria, located at 1800 N. Beauregard St at Mark Center. The comprehensive diagnostic outpatient imaging center — a service of Inova Alexandria Hospital — will offer a full complement of imaging studies, in addition to a dedicated Women's Imaging Service that includes digital mammography, bone densitometry and stereotactic biopsy. And, we are so excited that our radiologists will offer same-day readings on mammography. As Lisa Baker knows — the waiting can often be the hardest part.

I hope to see many of you at this year's annual Walk to Fight Breast Cancer on Saturday, Oct. 22 at the AMC Hoffman Center in Alex

SEE NOT ALONE, PAGE 29

Alexandria Gazette Packet

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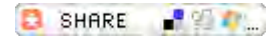


Editorial: Opportunity about To Be Squandered

Once-a-decade redistricting offers a chance to do it right; no one with power seems interested.

By Mary Kimm

Tuesday, March 22, 2011



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Have you seen what our political districts look like?

It's as if the clown who makes balloon animals has gone mad. And it could be amusing if it didn't matter so much.

Our once-a-decade exercise in partisan hubris is about to unfold. Next week we'll likely see proposals that seek to protect Democratic seats in the Virginia Senate, Republican seats in the Virginia House of Delegates. The status quo in Fairfax County will get another 10-year term. Virginia's incumbents in Congress will get some reassuring padding, even if it means districts that look like boa constrictors that are digesting a couple of meals and have been run over by a car in one or two places.

We are not likely to see districts that best represent residents. No one with power is talking about how to draw lines that increase voter participation and citizen involvement.

Political districts should be drawn by a non-partisan commission that looks at providing communities with representation that works. What works is keeping communities of interest together, so that one town or community is encompassed in some of its political districts. Each resident is represented locally by one member of Congress, a state senator, a state delegate, and then by a county board or city or town council.

The Democratically-controlled Senate and Republican-controlled House of Delegates appear to have a gentleman's agreement in place to focus on their own branch of the legislature and not interfere with each other's lines. So Democrats will gerrymander the senate lines and Republicans will gerrymander the delegate lines.

In Northern Virginia, many of these districts sprawl and crawl out like amoebas to capture a given precinct if it will help or hurt partisan balance. Instead districts should be designed for good representation, shared high school boundaries, shared land use concerns, shared traffic challenges, shared public safety concerns. It's unrealistic to think that part-time legislators will be able to master the nuances and needs that spread out across three or more jurisdictions, as some delegate districts do.

Delegate districts in particular are the smallest unit of representation for many people, with about 80,000 residents to be included in the newly drawn districts. These districts can and should focus compactly on communities.

Meanwhile, in Fairfax County local government, the likely outcome of redistricting will be the status quo, with nine supervisor districts, even though Fairfax County's population has grown by more than 10 percent and so could easily support another district. An additional district would allow for elected officials, both supervisors and school board members, to focus on a smaller number of residents, roads, schools and issues. Fairfax should also consider adding a couple of at-large seats in the future to balance the power of a single supervisor.

Arlington's county board is elected entirely at-large, but should consider changing to have some political districts that could broaden representation for minorities — ethnic minorities, economic minorities and political minorities. No one actually making decisions seems to be interested in creating districts



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Alexandria Gazette Packet



MICHAEL LEE POPE
Third Place in In-Depth Or Investigative Reporting



TC students Claudia Dejes, Martha Lazo, Ashley Durrette, Kieron Allgood and Kalaya Stroud dressed as Pokemon figures to sell buttons, origami birds and more at the school fair.



Indya Weaver and Miranda Jones giggle at the rise in sales of cotton candy.

Titan Expo

Vocational scholarships benefited as families worked their way to the ticket sellers and booths at Sunday's Titan Expo. The vocational scholarships are under the auspice of long-time Key Club and student activities director Larry Trice. The club set up bake sales, bingo games and an array of test-your-talent to include even a pie smashing contest.

PHOTOS BY LOUISE KRAFFT/
GAZETTE PACKET



Destiny Santos and her mom smile and laugh as Destiny takes yet another plunge to capture an apple in the bobbing tank.



Jamilah Boston and Genesis Babatunde.



Lester Schonberger, a senior at TC, decided that the year would not be complete without some pie in his face.



Julia Wagner tries her arm at car bashing.

Waterfront Crossroads

City Council delays final decision, but action is expected in June.

BY MICHAEL LEE POPE
GAZETTE PACKET

Although they did not take final action last weekend on a plan that would reshape the waterfront for decades to come — overturning a longstanding ban on hotels along the waterfront and expanding density at three sites slated for redevelopment. A final vote is expected in June, despite widespread opposition to the plan and a lawsuit charging that the Planning Commission failed to adhere to public-notice require-

ments.

"This development is not going to occur in a year or two years," said Mayor Bill Euille. "It's over a 10-, 15-, 20-year time period."

Perhaps the most dramatic moment in the marathon public hearing was the announcement by Harry Hart, a lawyer representing the Old Dominion Boat Club, that he expects a final agreement to be negotiated by June 15. At issue is the Boat Club's parking lot at the foot of King Street, which the city has been eyeing for years in an effort to provide continuous ac-

SEE COUNCIL, PAGE 7

Taking Stock Of Sherman

Three years into his tenure, mixed reviews for superintendent of schools.

BY MICHAEL LEE POPE
GAZETTE PACKET

Few public figures in Alexandria are as divisive as school Superintendent Morton Sherman. Privately, some parents describe him as arrogant and imperious — rushing through with radical changes without concern for gathering input or achieving

consensus. In public, the conversation is much more stilted. Teachers are afraid to say anything negative about him, and School Board members declined repeated requests to speak on the record about his tenure in office.

"His feeling is that if it isn't done his way, it's the wrong way," said

SEE COMMUNITY, PAGE 34

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Community Offers Varied Evaluation of Superintendent

FROM PAGE 1

former School Board member Pat Hennig. “He’d better start realizing he’s not in the North any more and start playing nice.”

Since his first day as superintendent in 2008, Sherman has taken charge with an intensity that is admirable even to his detractors. He’s seen as a hard-charging idea man — the kind of leader who is on top of trends in the world of education and conversant on a wide range of topics. Yet some say that sense of determination can be draining, scattering his employees in different directions and leaving a sense of weariness.

“He’s a flurry of activity, but none of it seems very well planned,” said Larry Golemon,

parent of two students at George Washington Middle School. “His style seems to be designed to manipulate the public and the School Board to get his way.”

SHERMAN IS the highest paid city employee with an annual salary of \$240,000. His contract began on Aug. 15, 2008 and extends through June 30, 2012, and School Board members are required to conduct a yearly performance evaluation. That process started last week, with a closed-door executive session and is expected to continue for the next several weeks. Legal constraints prohibit School Board members from speaking about what happened in executive session, which explains some of the reluctance for

the elected leaders to provide perspective on their thoughts about his tenure in office.

“I don’t want to sabotage the process,” said School Board Vice Chairwoman Sheryl Gorsuch. “Sometimes the dialogue that goes into this process is just as important as what’s happened in the past.”

Among parents and teachers, three concerns have emerged as potential sources of concern about Sherman’s time in office. One is a lack of communication, a theme expressed by parents on issues ranging from reorganizing the middle schools and changing the calendar to allowing a developer to encroach on land at Jefferson-Houston Elementary School. Another is a concern that hundreds of eligible students were not receiving services available to those who speak English as a second language. Finally, the lingering problems with serving students with disabilities — an issue that has prompted two audits of the school system in recent years.

“He’s not an education reformer,” said Andrew Campanella, a school researcher who lives in Alexandria. “It’s fundamentally unfair that poor and working-class parents are forced to send their children to chronically failing schools year after year with no way to escape.”

SHERMAN HAS a cadre of strong supporters who feel that he has led the school system through a difficult time. They point to his hard-charging style as an asset, one that was desperately needed after a previous School Board fired former Superintendent Rebecca Perry. Many parents say that Sherman is the best thing that could have happened to a school system that seemed to many to be stuck on auto-pilot.

“Maybe some people don’t agree with the changes he’s made,” said Bob Goss, president of Ramsay Elementary School Parent-Teacher Association. “But I think he’s done an excellent job.”

Those who are critical of Sherman often point to problems with communication. Perhaps the best example of this is the proposal earlier this year to begin the school year before Labor Day and extend the number of hours in each school day. Many parents said they felt blindsided by the issue, unable to fully respond because the process took place without proper time for input. The debate about whether or not the changes should happen eventually became overshadowed by a conversation about the process, leaving many parents feeling

their concerns had been overlooked. In March, the Virginia School Board rejected Sherman’s plan to start before Labor Day.

“The plan may have been a good idea, but we didn’t know that because it was rushed through,” said Neal Learner, president of the Barrett Elementary School parent-teacher association. “We were caught off-guard and didn’t know how to respond.”

Teachers have also been critical of a lack of communication, although they are reluctant to speak on the record for fear of losing their jobs. Last year, for example, Sherman upset math teachers at T.C. Williams by suggesting they change Ds and Fs to an I for incomplete. Perhaps the biggest source of concern is the number of consultants, which has tripled during his tenure in office.

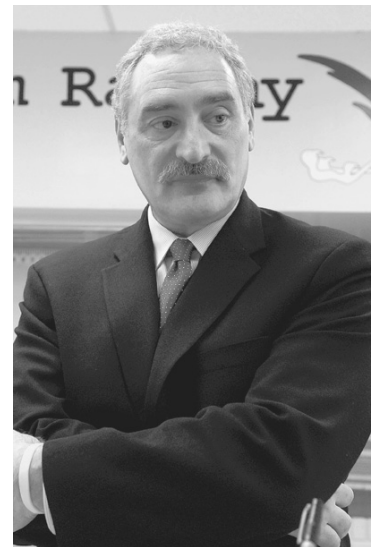
“Typically the conclusion is that the money isn’t well spent,” said Delbert Wilson, president of the Alexandria Retired Teachers’ Association in an interview last year. “In general, when you bring in all the consultants and all that kind of thing, the feeling is ‘oh, here we go again.’”

IN MARCH, the Office of Student Services issued a report that pointed out serious deficiencies for students who speak English as a second language. An examination of the first quarter grades from the current school year revealed that 82 percent of students who speak English as a second language earned grades below a C and that 53 percent had at least one F.

“The graduation rates for [English Language Learner] students in ACPS are lower than those for all students and for ELL students statewide,” the report concluded. “It is evident that we have to move beyond the one-size fits all model and tailor our academic instruction and non-academic supports to meet the varying needs of a diverse ELL student population.”

At T.C. Williams High School, the report noted, teachers lack “a sense of ownership” for students who speak English as a second language. Because the role of each teacher has not been clearly defined, according to the report, the result is an environment where ELL teachers feel marginalized to the role of assistants. At the middle school level, the report added, teachers and ELL teachers don’t have common planning time, which would allow for a better coordination of efforts.

“It’s just not a priority for this administration,” said Golemon. “A lot of middle school teachers I’ve



Superintendent of Schools Morton Sherman

spoken with don’t even know who the ELL students are until the middle of the year.”

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES have posed the most complicated challenge to Sherman. Three years ago, the Virginia Department of Education issued a scathing report pointing out six areas where the public-school system failed to meet federal standards. That was also the conclusion of an audit conducted by the Virginia Association of School Superintendents, a group that returned in March to take a measure of how the system had progressed since then.

“It’s very, very hard to see where progress has been made,” said Paul Wilson, a member of the Special Education Advisory Committee. “There are still a lot of warning signs.”

The most recent testing data from the Virginia Department of Education show that 69 percent of these students passed the English test and 64 percent passed the math test. Those numbers are well below the federal benchmarks outlined in the No Child Left Behind Act and lower than the statewide averages. Sherman has taken a number of efforts to address the problem, including making evaluation of individualized education plans part of the performance reviews of teachers and implementing new behavioral modification programs to address the disproportionate nature of discipline extended to students with disabilities. More recently, the superintendent has outlined plans for addressing autistic students and including students with disabilities into the general population.

“I’m really optimistic about this,” said Gorsuch. “The inclusion plan and the autism plan are the best plans I’ve seen to date.”

Legal Notices

Obituary

Gordon A. Noe

On Saturday, May 14, 2011 at home after a long illness. He is survived by his wife, Kathleen, two sons, Ross R. and Gordon D. Noe, one daughter, Elizabeth Cochran, two grandchildren, Chase Noe and Nash Cochran, and a host of other relatives and friends. Friends may call on Friday, May 20th at the St. Paul Episcopal Church, 228 S. Pitt Street for a memorial service at 1 p.m. In lieu of flowers, send contributions to the St. Paul's Church Foundation, 228 S. Pitt Street, Alexandria, VA 22314.

NOTICE OF TRUSTEE'S SALE OF REAL ESTATE LOCATED IN CITY OF ALEXANDRIA, VIRGINIA

In execution of a Supplemental Construction Deed of Trust from Calvert Homes, Inc., dated August 31, 2005, and recorded in the Clerk's Office of the Circuit Court of the City of Alexandria, Virginia, as Instrument #050030976, pursuant to Modification of Credit Line Deed of Trust dated August 31, 2005, and recorded in the said Clerk's Office as Instrument #050030975, and Construction Deed of Trust originally recorded in the Office of the Circuit Court Clerk of Fairfax County, Virginia, in Deed Book 11326, at Page 1997, the undersigned Trustee, will offer for sale at public auction the following-described property, to-wit:

ALL that certain lot or parcel of land together with improvements thereon, situate, lying and being in the City of Alexandria, Virginia, and more particularly described as Lot Five Hundred Twenty Nine (529), as per plat of resubdivision of Lots 23 and 29, Block One (1), of plat of re-dedication of Lots 1 through 15, Block One (1), and all of Block Two (2), Section Two (2), DELTA SUBDIVISION, attached to a deed duly recorded in Liber 704 at Page 518, said original plat of re-dedication recorded in Liber 661 at Page 372, among the land records of Fairfax County, Virginia.

aid property being known as Tax Map No. 050.04-07-27, having an address of 131 N. Donelson Street, Alexandria, VA

Sale shall be held on May 25, 2011, at 10:00 o'clock a.m. at the premises.

Terms of Sale: Cash.

A bidder's deposit of \$40,000.00 shall be required of the successful bidder, and the balance due within twenty (20) days after the date of sale.

Said sale of the property is in "as is" condition, and no warranties with respect to the property will be given to the purchaser other than a Trustee's Special Warranty Deed.

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Notice is hereby given to members of the NY, nonprofit, American Society of Clinical Oncology, Inc., that the 2011 ASCO Annual Business Meeting will be held on June 6, 2011, 12:00 PM-1:00 PM at the Hyatt McCormick Place, Regency Ballroom, in Chicago, IL. Members with questions can call 571-483-1316.

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The Honorable Mel Flanagan
Case Code 30404 (Foreclosure of Mortgage)
The amount claimed exceeds \$5000.00
Wells Fargo Bank, N.A., 3476 Stateview Boulevard, Fort Mill, SC 29715, Plaintiff vs. Baaba B. Andoh and John Doe Andoh, 2687 Arlington Dr., Apt. 203, Alexandria, VA 22306-3660, Defendants
THE STATE OF WISCONSIN
To each person named above as a defendant: You are hereby notified that the plaintiff named above has filed a lawsuit or other legal action against you. Within 40 days after May 5, 2011 you must respond with a written demand for a copy of the complaint. The demand must be sent or delivered to the court, whose address is 901 N. Ninth Street, Milwaukee, WI 53233-1425 and to Gray & Associates, L.L.P., plaintiff's attorney, whose address is 16345 West Glendale Drive, New Berlin, WI 53151-2841. You may have an attorney help or represent you. If you do not demand a copy of the complaint within 40 days, the court may grant judgment against you for the award of money or other legal action requested in the complaint, and you may lose your right to object to anything that is or may be incorrect in the complaint. A judgment may be enforced as provided by law. A judgment awarding money may become a lien against any real estate you own now or in the future, and may also be enforced by garnishment or seizure of property. Dated this 25th day of April, 2011. David M Samson, State Bar No. 1082271, Gray & Associates, L.L.P., Attorneys for Plaintiff, 16345 West Glendale Drive, New Berlin, WI 53151-2841, (414) 224-8404, (414) 224-8182. Gray & Associates, L.L.P. is attempting to collect a debt on our client's behalf and any information obtained will be used for that purpose. If you have previously received a discharge in a chapter 7 bankruptcy case, this communication should not be construed as an attempt to hold you personally liable for the debt.

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PHOTOS BY LOUISE KRAFT/GAZETTE 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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City Schools' Scores Lowest in Northern Virginia

FROM PAGE 1

"The bottom really fell out this year," said Charles Pyle, director of communications for the Virginia Department of Education. "This was a watershed."

SCORES FELL dramatically across Virginia this year. According to documents released last week by the Department of Education, 687 of the commonwealth's 1,838 schools made adequate yearly progress. That's less than 40 percent, compared to 61 percent last year.

Virginia Superintendent Patricia Wright said that this year's standardized test results indicated No Child Left Behind had outlived

SCHOOL NOTES

Theresa A. Meehan of Alexandria, a member of the Spring 2011 class at Trinity College in Hartford, Conn., has received Faculty Honors for the 2011 spring semester.

Katherine J. Bednarek, a resident of Alexandria, graduated with a Bachelor of Science degree in biology from the University of Mary Washington.

Eric J. Rolander, a resident of Alexandria, graduated with a Bachelor of Science degree in business administration from the University of Mary Washington.

Duy K. Bui, a resident of Alexandria, graduated with distinction with a Bachelor of Professional Studies from the University of Mary Washington.

its usefulness and needed to be overhauled.

"Accountability is not advanced by arbitrary rules and benchmarks that misidentify schools," Wright said in a written statement. "During the coming weeks, I will begin a discussion with the state board on creating a new model for measuring yearly progress that maintains high expectations for student achievement, recognizes growth — overall and subgroup — and accurately identifies schools most in need of improvement."

Despite the decreasing performance review, Sherman was upbeat about the performance of city schools. He praised the teachers and administrators at T.C. Williams High School, which was designated as a "persistently lowest achieving school" last year. This year it failed to meet federal standards once again, although Sherman pointed out that only one subgroup — English scores for students with disabilities — failed to make the grade so the entire school is labeled as failing.

"T.C. Williams had a phenomenal year," said Sherman.

"You see the numbers there?"

The superintendent pointed to email he sent to School Board members boasting of "remarkable" progress at the high school, describing the 94 percent pass rate in English and 95 percent pass rate in Math as "the highest levels ever" since No Child Left

Behind was created. He also noted that math achievement at Cora Kelly School for Math, Science and Technology had the highest-ever math pass rate for math in Alexandria, which was 97 percent.

"A trend which is clear in the area of reading ... our elementary schools' reading scores are not moving in the direction we know they should," Sherman wrote to School Board members. "This will be the major area of focus for this coming year."

MANY PARENTS are skeptical that the standardized test results reflect what's happening in Alexandria classrooms. One of the chief complaints shared by parents across the city is the expectation that 100 percent of the students will meet minimum standards by 2014, a goal that some see as idealistic while others disparage as unworkable.

"It seems like an unrealistic expectation to me," said Julie Forsht, president of the Cora Kelly Parent-Teacher Association. "There's got to be a better way that takes a holistic approach rather than just relying on one high-stakes test that stresses the kids out."

Students with disabilities posted the lowest test scores of any subgroup, with 51 percent of the students passing the English test and 49 percent passing the Math test.

Alexandria Test Scores

English Pass Rates

White	95 percent
Black	78 percent
Hispanic	76 percent
Economically Disadvantaged	76 percent
Limited English Proficiency	74 percent
Students with Disabilities	51 percent

Math Pass Rates

White	94 percent
Black	73 percent
Hispanic	73 percent
Limited English Proficiency	73 percent
Economically Disadvantaged	72 percent
Students with Disabilities	49 percent

source: Virginia Department of Education

That's significantly lower than the statewide average, which was 67 percent for English and 66 for Math.

It's also a significant drop from last year, when Alexandria's special-education students posted a 69 percent pass rate in English and a 64 percent pass rate in Math.

"This is really disturbing news," said Paul Wilson, a member of the Special Education Advisory Committee.

"We're spending \$25 million a year, so it's frustrating that we just can't seem to get our arms around this."



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Sue Sullivan, Nancy and Melissa Hunt and Jeanne Plitt open a discussion with a troop of Brownies about their personal experiences in scouting.



Chris Lloyd leads a discussion on the life of Girl Scout founder Juliet Gordon Low.

Her Story At Lyceum

The assembly room at the Lyceum was filled with Girl Scout Brownies on Saturday afternoon. Chris Lloyd of the Lyceum, Sarah Watson and Kim Hurley of the Alexandria Office on Women and a panel of present and past Girl Scouts led the girls in discussions and projects fulfilling the requirements for the Her Story "Try It" badge.



A completed "Peace Tree" from Brownie Troop 4291.

Grave Injustice

City Council members move toward making amends for desecrating African-American burial sites.

BY MICHAEL LEE POPE
GAZETTE PACKET

In life, just as in death, timing is everything. That's why the irony was striking at City Hall Tuesday night when City Council members directed budget officials to add \$75,000 to the budget to finish a baseline archeological study of African-American graves that have long been desecrated by city vehicles driving and parking over them.

The reason city officials put a maintenance yard over the neglected black graves was to construct Fort Ward Park in time for the centennial. Now that the sesquicentennial is upon us, the pendulum is swinging in the other di-

rection. And city officials are trying to right the wrong that was done many years ago when the African-American community was condemned and taken by the city to construct a park featuring the Union artillery fort protecting the Alexandria turnpike.

"This is what the Civil War was all about — giving freedom to people," said Kathleen Pepper, chairwoman of the Alexandria Archeology Commission. "So it's ironic that these people were displaced by the centennial."

Since the long-forgotten graveyards first hit the news in 2009, archeologists have used ground-penetrating radar and elbow

SEE COUNCIL, PAGE 4

Waiting for a Culture Shift in Schools

Officials will be in Alexandria next week to audit city's special education services.

BY MICHAEL LEE POPE
GAZETTE PACKET

Three years ago, the state of the city's services to students with disabilities was dismal. And that wasn't just an opinion offered by parents of students whose individualized

achievement plans were being ignored. It was also the conclusion of the Virginia Department of Education, which issued a scathing report pointing out six areas where the public-school system failed to meet federal standards. It was also

SEE OFFICIALS, PAGE 7

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Officials To Audit Schools' Special Education Services

FROM PAGE 1

the conclusion of an audit conducted by the Virginia Association of School Superintendents, which called for a culture shift.

"I think the culture has shifted since then," said Superintendent Morton Sherman, who took charge of the school system in 2008. "We're now at a tipping point."

On Monday and Tuesday, six officials with the Virginia Association of School Superintendents will be in Alexandria's classroom and administrative offices to conduct a follow-up audit. When they arrive, they'll find a school division that has made many changes since the last time they were here. Principals are now evaluated, in part, on the performance of special education students and behavior modification pro-

"We're now at a tipping point."

— Superintendent Morton Sherman

grams designed to reduce the disproportionate number of disciplinary actions against them. But they'll also see many of the same patterns that have plagued the system for years, including failing test scores and low graduations rates.

"It's very, very hard to see where progress has been made," said Paul Wilson, a member of the Special Education Advisory Committee. "There

Students with Disabilities

ENGLISH PASS RATES

	2008	2009	2010
Alexandria	44	67	69
Virginia	67	73	73

MATH PASS RATES

	2008	2009	2010
Alexandria	42	58	64
Virginia	65	71	73

SOURCE: Virginia Department of Education

are still a lot of warning signs."

ONE AREA where school administrators have had success is compliance. According to the Virginia Department of Education, Alexandria is now in full compliance of the federal requirements it failed to meet in 2008. That's when officials with the Virginia Department of Education found six areas where the city was found to be out of compliance with federal regulations under the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. Alexandria school officials responded by submitting a corrective-action plan to address a number of deficiencies, which led to an audit from the Virginia Association of School Superintendents.

"That was an issue of minimal compliance," said Sherman. "The least we should be doing is following the law."

Another area that has changed is behavioral. When the last audit was conducted, a special education student in Alexandria was three times as likely to be suspended than a student without a disability. When auditors arrive in Alexandria next week, they will find two new programs in place that Sherman says have been successful in reducing the number of discipline referrals

Monday Public Meeting

Alexandria City Public Schools and the Virginia Association of School Superintendents are hosting a public meeting for parents of students with disabilities at 6 p.m. on Monday, March 28 in the media center at Minnie Howard Ninth Grade Center. The purpose of the meeting is to gather information about services provided to students with disabilities and allow parents to comment. The meeting will begin with open-microphone comments and conclude with a focus group to find common themes.

for special-education students. One is called Positive Behavioral Intervention Support and the other is called Response to Intervention.

"This week we heard about a case where an ADHA student was spinning a chair around and almost got suspended," said Wilson. "There's got to be a little bit of tolerance with these kids."

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES have the lowest pass rates of any other group of students in Alexandria. The most recent test data, which was released by the Virginia Department of Education last month, show that 69 percent of these students passed the English test and 64 percent passed the math test. Those numbers are well below the federal benchmarks outlined in the No Child Left Behind Act and lower than the statewide averages. Closing this achievement gap is one of the major concerns members of the advisory committee outlined in their annual report.

"For ACPS students with disabilities there is a persistent, multi-year achievement gap for SOL passing rates, reading and math scores, in comparison to the state scores and other jurisdictions in Northern Virginia," wrote committee co-chairs Vickie Cattaneo and Sandra Strachan-Vieira in the

organization's annual report. "Since it took over a year to hire the first literacy coach, SEAC hopes the central office will put urgency into finding the second literacy coach."

One policy shift that has taken place since that time involves "individual action plans" known as IEPs. The VASS report suggested that principals should be held accountable for how these documents are implemented. To accomplish a greater sense of accountability, the report suggested, implementation of these plans should be part of performance evaluations for principals in Alexandria. School Board member Mimi Carter raised this issue during her 2009 campaign, and now administrators say they have changed the evaluation process to make sure principals are held accountable during their performance evaluations.

"Principals need to have a real comprehension of what the requirements of the IEPs mean," said Carter in a 2009 interview. "In order for that to happen, our principals need more training in terms of how these plans should be implemented."

NOW THE SYSTEM will once again be under the microscope as auditors from the Virginia Association of School Superintendents will be in Alexandria. When they interview administrators, they'll hear about how the performance evaluation system has changed. When they talk to teachers, they'll hear about behavioral intervention programs. Yet when they talk to parents, they'll probably hear many of the same complaints. Overall, Sherman says, the audit will reveal a complex situation without easy answers.

"We're not where we need to be," Sherman acknowledged. "For a long time, this city accepted large gaps in achievement. And it's going to take some time to turn that around."

Hopkins House Presents Heart of the Community Awards

Holly Sloan honored for advocacy, efforts on behalf of children.

More than 135 people turned out Feb. 11 for the 18th annual Hopkins House Heart of the Community Awards luncheon, raising more than \$51,000 for the organization's Children's Scholarship Fund.

"These funds go directly to the Children's Scholarship Fund," said Hopkins House president Glenn Hopkins. "This fund allows the children of low-income families to afford the tuition to attend Hopkins House and have access to the quality early childhood education offered at our two preschools."

Honored at the luncheon was Holly Sloan, who was presented

with the 2011 Helen Miller Community Heart Award for her advocacy, leadership and efforts on behalf of children and families in the community. BAE Systems was the recipient of the 2011 Heart of the Community Award.

Held at the Carlyle Club, the event featured entertainment by the Boys and Girls Choir of Harlem Alumni Ensemble.

"In total, we raised over \$71,000 thanks to the generosity of our supporters," Hopkins said. "They are truly the heart of our community and our commitment at Hopkins House."

— JEANNE THEISMANN



Hopkins House president Glenn Hopkins addresses the crowd at the Heart of the Community Awards Feb. 11 at the Carlyle Club.



Holly Sloan, center, is presented with the 2011 Helen Miller Community Heart Award by WJLA anchor Cynee Simpson and Hopkins House Board of Trustees chair James McNeil.

Alexandria Gazette Packet



LOUISE KRAFFT

Third Place in Pictorial Photo:

Kool Academy Graduate Inaugural Class

Judges comments: Nice moment caught.

CONNECTION NEWSPAPERS 2011 AWARDS

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