



Bonnie Baxley, left, is presented a photograph signed by Community Lodgings program participants by Operations Director Katrina Wiggs and former board chair Chris McMurray as part of a Nov. 10 tribute to her eight years of service as Executive Director for the organization.



PHOTOS BY JEANNE THEISMANN/GAZETTE PACKET

Helping the Homeless

Community Lodgings raises \$25,000 in Baxley tribute.

BY JEANNE THEISMANN
GAZETTE PACKET

If there is a face in the fight against homelessness in Alexandria, it is Bonnie Baxley, who for eight years has served as executive director of Community Lodgings, a non-profit that provides programs and affordable housing to help struggling families transition to stability and independence.

"When I started as executive director, we were serving 120 people a week," said Baxley, who was honored Nov. 10 for her service to the organization. "Today, Community Lodgings programs touch the lives of more than 400 people each week through our expanded Learning Center."

Held at the Old Town Theatre, more than 150 people turned out to celebrate the accomplishments of Baxley, who will be stepping down from her position Jan. 31, 2014.

"I have loved my time here and am proud of the quality of programs that we have," said Baxley, who served for five years on the organization's board of directors before taking on her current role. "But I am ready to do some traveling and spend more time with my husband, who lives in the Virginia Highlands."

The event featured catering by Bittersweet Café and raised more than \$25,000 to help support the many programs offered through the Community Lodgings Learning Center.

"On behalf of a grateful city, I say 'thank you' to Bonnie Baxley," said Vice Mayor Allison Silberberg. "Because of her efforts, we are getting more people in this community back on their feet."

Baxley stressed the importance and success of the programs offered through Community Lodgings.

"We think education is the ticket out of poverty and homelessness," Baxley said. "The Learning Center, originally a place to teach computer skills to homeless adults, began its children's programs by serving seven kids. Now we serve over 160 children a day with individualized education support and academics."

Baxley knew her efforts were making a difference when one of her foundation grant applications was approved for \$10,000 more than she had requested.

"I knew then that people were finally getting the message of the impact we were having in the community," Baxley said. "They saw the need and also the quality of our programs, which address the individual needs of each adult and child that we serve."

Baxley was overwhelmed by the outpouring of support to the mission of Community Lodgings.

"I can't thank our sponsors and supporters enough," Baxley said. "Tonight is about Community Lodgings and the fight against homelessness and it was a wonderful event. Celebrating my service wasn't necessary but it truly was a wonderful evening."

For more on Community Lodgings, call 703-739-5856 or visit www.communitylodgings.org.



Virginia Rocen bids on Producer's Circle tickets to the New York City production of "Jersey Boys" during the live auction for Community Lodgings.

New Focus on Mental Health

Deeds family tragedy creates new spotlight on social services.

BY MICHAEL LEE POPE
GAZETTE PACKET

The upcoming session of the Virginia General Assembly is likely to feature a new debate about the state of the commonwealth's mental health services, one prompted by the attempted murder and suicide of a state senator. Last week, the 24-year-old son of state Sen. Creigh Deeds (D-25) stabbed the senator in the face and upper body before killing himself with a rifle. The tragic story has opened new questions about the availability of mental health services in Virginia, even for a well-connected family with political ties that reach across the commonwealth.

"What we have to do is to make sure that we are providing as comprehensive a set of services as we can to help people with mental illness stabilize themselves," said

state Sen. George Barker (D-39). "We need to help them get on the road to recovery so they can manage their situation as best as they can and hopefully never get to that crisis."

Shortly after the Virginia Tech massacre, a commission recommended that more than \$40 million in additional spending be added to the mental-health budget every year. Legislators took a strong first step by adding about \$30 million to the annual budget the first year, but then the economic downturn tightened spending. Funding levels fell down to where they were before the Virginia Tech massacre. In the last two years, some funding has been added, but the commission's financial recommendation remains unfulfilled. Now that a state senator's son was unable to get a psychiatric bed before an emergency cus-

SEE NEW FOCUS, PAGE 9

Usury Explosion

Northern Virginia becomes hotbed for car-title lending industry.

BY MICHAEL LEE POPE
GAZETTE PACKET

In the last three years, dozens of new car-title lending businesses have popped up in neighborhoods across Northern Virginia — the result of recent regulations opening the door to a business that charges as much as 264 percent a year on loans. Since

2010, when the Virginia General Assembly gave the green light to the industry, the total number of locations has more than doubled from 184 to 395. And locations are opening every week.

"It's a trap, and although it's presented as a loan it's really loan-sharking," said Jay Speech, executive director of the Virginia Pov-

SEE REGION, PAGE 28

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War of Upper King Street

Members of the Alexandria Traffic and Parking Board are caught in the crossfire of an ongoing war between automobiles and bicycles, one that has escalated in recent weeks and even appeared in the pages of the Wall Street Journal. The front lines in the war are along a portion of King Street west of the George Washington Masonic Temple, where homeowners use a series of parallel parking spaces to accommodate guests.

Bicycle enthusiasts and city officials want to eliminate the spaces and create a bike lane along the heavily traveled thoroughfare. Homeowners say they want to keep their parking spaces. During a heated session this week, both sides traded volleys and the board decided to defer a final decision. That means the war of King Street will continue, at least until concerns expressed from the community can be incorporated into the plan.

"The best way to do that is to get rid of this damn plan," said Katy Cannady, who lives in Rosemont. "This is war on the homeowners."

City staff is recommending removing 27 parking spaces on King Street from West Cedar Street to Hyland Street.

"We got a lot of input from the community that traffic calming was needed on the street and that bicyclists didn't feel safe without a bicycle lane," said Carrie Sanders, bicycle and pedestrian coordinator. "We feel that these bicycle lanes provide a buffer for the sidewalk and increase pedestrian safety."

No Unity

Last year, for the first time since 2003, Mayor Bill Euille did not organize a Unity Breakfast. For nine years, the annual event was held on the Wednesday before Thanksgiving. Schoolchildren created centerpieces for the tables, and a series of speakers presented charges to the city. It was a feel-good event aimed at creating some sense of unity heading into the holiday season, employing the mayor's "One Alexandria" theme into an opportunity for fellowship and danishes.

But then, last year, the unity ceased.

Euille said the 2012 election — which included the mayor and City Council members during a November election for the first time in the history of Alexandria — stressed donors who usually bankrolled the event. People were charged admission, although the mayor said the money was to cover the cost of putting the event together. One year, he said, there was about \$150 left over when all the checks had been written. So the organizing committee donated it to a senior services organization.

Euille said he hoped to put together some kind of unity event in 2012, but that never happened. Next year, he said, he may put together some kind of unity event in May. It may be a lunch instead of a breakfast, he said. The mayor said he's hoping to shake up the format a bit to create a new sense of excitement.

"Not that it hasn't been successful, but if you keep on doing things the same way year after year, people tend to lose interest," said Euille. "So we're looking at doing it differently."

Challenging the Revote

For opponents of the controversial waterfront plan, the legal strategy has been to file a series of challenges and appeals to slow down the process. Now that the plan has been adopted twice, opponents are challenging the process leading to the second vote — one in which members of the City Council created a self-imposed supermajority after Democrats swept the two Republican opponents out of office when the city elections were moved from May to November.

In the next few weeks, the Alexandria Circuit Court will hear an argument that the City Council should have delayed the March 2013 vote because an appeal was filed by three Old Town homeowners who have come to be known as the Iron Ladies, April Burke, Beth Gibney and Marie Kux.

At issue is an appeal the three women filed in advance of the vote, challenging their ability to move forward with the second vote. City officials dismissed the appeal, so the Iron Ladies are now appealing to the Circuit Court. If the judge agrees with the Iron Ladies, a trial will be scheduled for April. If the judge agrees with the city, opponents have already signaled they are willing to take the case to the Virginia Supreme Court.

"This is another example of the city not following its own process," said Mark Mueller, one of the chief supporters of the Iron Ladies. "I guess they feel they don't need to be accountable to the citizens. This is really a city government gone wild."

— MICHAEL LEE POPE



Deborah Johnson, left, signs a copy of her book "How Did They Do That?" at a launch party at King Street Blues Nov. 18. Attending the reception are Janet Barnett, Walter Clarke and Mimi Rolph.

PHOTOS BY
JEANNE THEISMANN
GAZETTE PACKET

Tales of Triumph

Dominion Power's Johnson launches new book.

BY JEANNE THEISMANN
GAZETTE PACKET

Sherman Parker was 14 years old when he was selected as one of two African American students to desegregate King George County schools in rural Virginia in the 1960s. Shunning a police escort, he still remembers the angry crowds that greeted him on his first day of school.

"A crowd of angry students and their parents stood on the steps leading to the school doors," Parker recalled. "My father grabbed my hand and walked us straight toward the crowd. The walk up those stairs was an unforgettable experience. My father was holding my hand and I know God was holding his."

Parker's experience with prejudice and discrimination and his subsequent rise to become a Fortune 100 executive is one of 12 profiles of courage and success in the book "How Did They Do That? Career Highlights, Challenges and Triumphs" by Deborah Tompkins Johnson.

"I was inspired by the stories of everyone I interviewed," said Johnson, a government affairs manager for Dominion Power. "I wanted others to hear in their own words what led to the success of these 12 individuals from varied backgrounds."

Other individuals profiled in the book include actor Blair Underwood, former T.C. Williams High School football coach Herman Boone and former Virginia governor L. Douglas Wilder.

"No question education, education, education



Sherman Parker, a subject of the book "How Did They Do That?" by Deborah Johnson, attended the book signing with his wife Leslie. Parker was one of two African American students to desegregate Virginia's King George County schools in the 1960s.

is the great equalizer," Johnson said at a Nov. 18 book signing at King Street Blues in Old Town. "Almost everyone profiled in 'How Did They Do That?' mentioned the importance of a solid educational foundation for success."

Johnson, who has been with Dominion Power for more than 20 years, volunteers much of her time with civic, education and leadership organizations. She serves on several boards including First Night Alexandria and is an active member of Antioch Baptist Church in Fairfax Station.

"African American male youth are lacking in role models today," said Parker, who attended the book signing with his wife Leslie.

"But Deborah's book helps give them inspiration and hope."

Visit www.howdidtheydothat.org.

"African American male youth are lacking in role models today. Deborah's book helps give them inspiration and hope."

— Sherman Parker, subject of "How Did They Do That?"

Bows, Baskets and Bikes ACVA “gets out and gives back.”

BY JEANNE THEISMANN
GAZETTE PACKET

The Alexandria Convention and Visitors Association held its second annual Bows, Baskets and Bikes event Nov. 21, bringing together area event planners and hotel partners to help build bicycles for needy families.

Held in the auditorium of Historic Christ Church, the assembled bikes will be donated to the Christ Church Christmas market for low-income families, which allows families to purchase gifts at a fraction of retail value.

The event is part of the ACVA Alexandria Cares program, a partnership with the non-profit Get Out and Give Back that offers corporate groups the opportunity to include service projects in their Alexandria-based business meetings. “AVCA puts clients in touch with me,” said Get Out and Give Back founder Jane Hess Collins. “And while corporations are charged a fee for the service event, all proceeds go back to the community through the Hess Collins Family Fund with ACT.” Local bike shops Wheel Nuts and Bike and Roll participated in the event, lending expert bike mechanics to help volunteers assemble bikes. Wheel Nuts also supplied bells, lights and locks for each bike.



PHOTO BY JEANNE THEISMANN/GAZETTE PACKET

Meeting planners and hotel representatives celebrate after building bikes for low-income families at the ACVA-sponsored Bows, Baskets and Bikes event Nov. 21 at Christ Church.

Cares, call 703-652-5369 or visit www.MeetAlexandriaVA.com. To learn more about Get Out and Give Back, visit GetOutandGiveBack.com.



Bim Mamber, Alexandria Town Crier Ben Fiore-Walker and Kevin Sampson, of the local TV show and podcast Picture Lock, were all smiles during the opening reception for the Alexandria Film Festival on Nov. 7 at the Old Town Theater on King Street. Mamber's film Ta (Grandfather) was named best foreign film during the four-day festival.

At the Movies

Northern Virginia native Daniel Stein's film about a surreal evening in a winery took won top honors at the Alexandria Film Festival.

“Grape” was named Best of the Fest by the festival, which wrapped up its seventh year on Sunday, Nov. 10. More than 60 films were screened between Thursday and Sunday, ranging from inspiring to chilling.

Other winners include “Dream” from Betsy Cox, which looked at a group of adults who were part of the I Have a Dream Foundation in the late 1980s and early 1990s, which won the audience award; “Hearts and Minds” by Charlie Guillen, which won the special jury award; “Ta (Grandfather)” from Kingstowne resident Bim Mamber, which won best foreign film; and honorable mentions were given to “Baby Chicken,” a short film from Azod Abedikichi; “Roter Schnee (Red Snow)” from Luka Popadic; and “Trials of a Scientific Mind” by Matthew Lucas.

— AMBER HEALY



PHOTOS BY AMBER HEALY/GAZETTE PACKET

Alexandria City Vice Mayor Allison Silberberg joins Patti North, executive director of the Alexandria Film Festival, during the festival's opening reception.

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Where's Best Decorated Door?

Annual holiday decorating judging returns.

Members of the Old Town Walled Garden Club will be strolling down the streets of the Old and Historic District of Alexandria the week of Dec. 8, identifying the most striking door decorations in town, and choosing the winners of the 46th Annual Holiday Door Decorating Contest.

The first, second, and third place and honorable mention winners will be awarded prizes from Greenstreet Gardens on Braddock Road, BRABO Tasting Room on King Street, Joe Theismann's Restaurant on Diagonal Road, and Le Tastevin on King Street, respectively. In addition to these prizes, photographs of the winning doors will be featured in a holiday issue of the Gazette Packet.

Contest rules are as follows: Except for bows and ribbons, decorations must be made from natural materials by the homeowners themselves; purchased professional arrangements are not eligible to win. Judging criteria include originality of design, scale, color, contrast, and attractiveness from the street.

Choosing the winners is never easy. "Old Town residents show a lot of imagination with their wreaths," said Cathy Cotell, president of the Old Town Walled Garden Club, and a former judge. "We've seen doors adorned with traditional evergreens, boxwood and magnolia with unusual accents



PHOTO BY LOUISE KRAFT/GAZETTE PACKET

201 Duke Street took an honorable mention in last year's holiday door decorating contest.

SEE DOOR DECOR, PAGE 6

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Congratulations Bonnie for Eight Great Years!

For more information about Community Lodgings go to www.communitylodgings.org

Door Decor

FROM PAGE 5

including seashells and kumquats. One year a winning wreath had blooming narcissus bulbs nestled in its greenery."

Vice president of the club and chair of the Door Decorating Committee Jim Logan added that there's a bit of mystery to the contest. "No one knows exactly which day the judges will be out and their identities are kept secret until after the Gazette Packet publishes photos of the winners," said Logan. Some people plan their decorations with the competition in mind, but sometimes winners only learn there is a contest when they get a phone call congratulating them.

For more information, contact the Old Town Walled Garden Club at OTWGClub@gmail.com.

BULLETIN BOARD

Email announcements to gazette@connectionnewspapers.com. Deadline is Thursday by noon. Photos welcome.

HOLIDAY NEEDS

Toys, Gift Card Donations. Every year the Domestic Violence Program organizes a holiday party for mothers and children who have been served by the shelter. They enjoy a holiday meal with shelter staff and friends and have their photos taken with Santa Claus. Each parent also receives a bag of gifts for their children to be taken home, wrapped and placed under the tree. Annually, more than 100 families participate in this event, which is made possible by the community's donations. To donate to the Children's Holiday Party, bring unwrapped toys and gift cards to the Domestic Violence Program, 421 King St., Suite 400. The office is open Monday through Friday, 8 a.m.-5 p.m. All donations must be received by Monday, Dec. 16. Contact Neeley Hughey at 703-746-4911 or Neeley.hughey@alexandriava.gov.

Toy Drive. Weichert, Realtors are holding a toy drive through Dec. 13. Drop off a new, unwrapped toy to any of the offices. They will be delivered throughout the holidays in conjunction with local charities that assist financially and physically disadvantaged children. To make a donation, visit any Weichert, Realtors sales office or to find your local

SEE BULLETIN, PAGE 8

Correction

In "Kitchen Gets Monumental Makeover" [Gazette Packet, Nov. 14-20], the story failed to give credit to Alexandria architect Kim Robbert who was responsible for the major structural designs for the addition to the home that included the skylight and center island. Also involved in the kitchen build was RMI Remodeling, also omitted from the article.

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Hand Recount

Alexandria ballot scanners don't meet recount standards.

BY MICHAEL LEE POPE
GAZETTE PACKET

Alexandria election officials may be going back to the future in the next few weeks, pouring over thousands of paper ballots by hand as part of a recount effort in the hotly contested race for attorney general. Although other jurisdictions with paper ballots will be reprogramming their scanners for a potential recount, election officials say the Hart InterCivic machines currently in use in Alexandria and Charlottesville have some key limitations that prevent them from being reprogrammed.

"It's not like that would happen in a split second by feeding them through the machine," said Deputy Registrar Anna Lieder. "So we are prepared to do a hand count if that's what's required."

Election officials say the Hart InterCivic machines have two problems that would lead to a hand recount of all paper ballots. One is that the scanners must be able to conduct a recount for the race in question without also doing a recount for all the other races on the ballot, one of the limitations of the brand purchased by city officials. Another problem is that the scanners must be able to separate ballots where the voter has written in a name and under vote ballots, where no vote was registered for the attorney general race. Election officials say the stack of undervote ballots are likely to include a number of ballots where a voter may have written the name of a candidate or marked it in a way that was not picked up by the electronic scanner.

"All these scanning devices have benefits and drawbacks," said Lieder. "These are much more precise and easier to mark in the initial voting process."

AFTER THE 2005 recount of the race for attorney general between Bob McDonnell and Creigh Deeds, the Virginia General Assembly made some changes that will influence how recounts work in the future. One key difference is how paper ballots are



Paper ballots that were filled out in booths like these may have to be hand counted in Alexandria.

counted. Although Deeds wanted all of the paper ballots to be fed throughout the scanners again, a judge determined that was not called for under the existing code. So paper ballots were only fed through scanners in a few precincts that were challenged. Deeds himself introduced legislation to change that, so now all the paper ballots are required to be sent through the scanners once again.

"I think it's true that most people, when they envision a recount, they think of Florida and holding up ballots looking for hanging chads or counting each individual ballots one by one," says Alexandria registrar Tom Parkins. "That was old technology."

During a recount, though, the scanners must be programmed differently. On Election Day, the scanners only separated overvotes. That meant that if a voter had selected more than one candidate in a race, the scanner would spit it back out while the voter was still at the precinct. So election officials could work with the voter to cast a

ballot that would be logged by the scanner. Overvotes, on the other hand, were not spit back out by the scanners on Election Day.

That means that many voters may have thought they cast a ballot for attorney general and walked out of the voting precinct without knowing their vote did not count. Election officials say a number of scenarios exist where an undervote could be deter-

mined to be an actual vote for a candidate. Voters with poor eyesight sometimes mark the ballot outside of the oval. Sometimes voters might circle the name of a candidate, another scenario that would lead to an undervote. In other cases, voters have been known to draw an "X" somewhere on the ballot instead of marking the oval.

"The undervotes are where the action is going to be," said Arlington County Registrar Linda Lindberg. "And we're likely to see a number of undervotes where the intent of the voter is clear, which will change the final tally of the election. What we don't know is whether or not that will be enough to change the outcome of the election."

MANY JURISDICTIONS have electronic machines, similar to ones that were once used in Alexandria. In the event of a recount, the percent totals from Election Day will be cross-checked with numbers that were reported to the State Board of Election to make sure they match. That kind of cross-checking was also the extent of a recount for paper ballots until the 2005 recount. Now that the law has changed as a result of that election, more scrutiny will be aimed at paper ballots and the removable storage cartridges that count the votes.

"The cartridges that were used in the election cannot be used in the recount," said Lindberg. "So jurisdictions are talking to their vendors about purchasing additional cartridges or renting cartridges, which is what we are doing."

PHOTO BY MICHAEL LEE POPE/GAZETTE PACKET



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

Catholic Athletes for Christ

Bishop Ireton High School seniors Megan Reilly and David "Jamie" Senft were awarded the Catholic Athletes for Christ High School Award. Megan is a midfield soccer player and Jamie is a forward basketball player. Two student athletes from each of Arlington Diocese's four Catholic High Schools were awarded this honor at a ceremony on Nov. 13 in Arlington. They received the award because of their commitment to their teams, to sportsmanship, and to their faith. Above, they are joined by Fr. Edward Bresnahan, Bishop Ireton chaplain and Dr. Thomas Curry, Head of School.

On Jeopardy!

Bryce Johnson, T.C. Williams 2002 graduate will appear on Jeopardy! as a contestant on Friday, Nov. 29 at 7:30 p.m. ABC (Channel 7). He graduated from the University of Virginia in 2008 with a bachelor's degree in economics and Oregon State University with a bachelor's degree in botany (summa cum laude) in 2010. As he says in the show, he resides in Corvallis Oregon, and gives his current occupation as a "wine cellar rat." He is shown here after the show was filmed with his sister, Christy Johnson, T.C. Williams 2006 graduate.



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

New Playground To Inspire, Encourage Creativity

Beverly Hills Church
Preschool ready for
project to shape.

BY ASHLEY CLAIRE SIMPSON
GAZETTE PACKET

After years of planning and waiting for the opportune time, construction of the new Beverly Hills Church Preschool playground is slated to start this week. The recession in 2008 stopped the planning in its tracks, but the fundraising processes are finally over and the ground breaking of this natural playground is about to begin.



The new playground for the new Beverly Hills Church Preschool will replace the castle and the rest of the old playground.



“The new natural playground will be a wonderful place for the entire community.”

— Margaret Moran, Director, Beverly Hills Church Preschool

“The funding is all taken care of, and the latest news from the company is that we are going to start construction Nov. 22,” Playground Committee co-chair Jennifer Ware said. “Hopefully that date will stand.”

Beverly Hills Church Preschool Director Margaret Moran said she is ready and grateful that this next phase is beginning.

“Our fundraising for the playground officially concluded at the end of our fiscal year last year, which is July 2013,” Moran said. “We were extremely successful in reaching out to our current families, alumni, and to the greater community and are very grateful to all the families who are supporting our project.”

The preschool selected The Natural Playgrounds Company to design and build the playground, and the

construction will take eight to ten weeks.

“The existing castle is still up, so the Natural Playgrounds Company will take it down with their next step of the project,” Ware said. “If Nov. 22 holds, the demolition of the old playground should start then.”

When the construction is finished, Moran said the community will have a playground that emphasizes the importance of nature in a child’s early education.

“The new natural playground will be a wonderful place for the entire community,” Moran said. “It will, hopefully, inspire children to use their creativity a bit more while at play. We hope that it will provide a way for children and adults to re-connect with nature and to inspire them to want to spend more time with their families in nature. Our teaching staff views the outdoor space as a third classroom, and we are very excited about the opportunity to find ways in which to inspire the children’s innate curiosity about their world in the new space.”

While awaiting the building process, Ware said members of the community have been working on other projects for the site of the future playscape.

“I have been reaching out to Boy Scout troops and there are two boy scouts that are working toward their Eagle Scout products who are going to do some work for us — picnic tables, collection boxes for the

kids, etc,” Ware said.

The committee has also been planning for aesthetical elements for the playground area; they will be utilizing the talents of a local artist to keep consistent with the spirit and mission of the Beverly Hills Church Preschool.

“We are in talks with Pamela Underhill, a local sculptor, part of the Del Ray Artisans Group,” Ware said. “She loves to take current natural materials with the up cycle principle. She will take pieces of metal from the construction and make sculptures out of them. She will be working with current elements in this playground and using those in a sculpture we will have on display in the next playground.”

The preschool’s families have also been working to make their mark. There has been a project where families build small boxes for the playground so that children have a place to store enticing things they find in nature.

“They are called storage trees, and they have been mounting them onto posts so we will be able to put them throughout the playground at child’s height,” Ware said. “They can put natural items in them that they want to save — they can hide them for the next round of kids on the playground to see.”

The playground has historically been a

unifier in the community surrounding the Beverly Hills Church. It is a playground for the entire Alexandria community, and Ware said the school has kept this in mind when seeking input for the new design. The committee has asked for input from all groups who use the Beverly Hills Church space.

“A kids club [for children under middle school age] uses the church space for tutoring and homework and activities with the kids,” Ware said. “We have had several discussions with that group on how they can be involved with the new playground This is the next connection we are trying to grow.”

Moran also said the new playground has potential for uniting and enhancing the community far beyond the preschool’s students and neighborhood.

“This dream has been in the works for many years and we are all so very grateful and excited that construction is finally beginning,” Moran said. “We have planned each element and section of this natural playground very intentionally and carefully, and I believe it will not only be a beautiful area, but an outdoor learning environment that is wholly reflective of our educational philosophies and of our community values. The project has been a collaborative effort from the start, and I am hopeful that the result will be a source of joy and wonder

NEIGHBORHOOD

Taylor Run

NEW NEIGHBORS

Jennifer and Pamela Mielnik threw a wonderful housewarming with delicious food. Park Road neighbors who were there were the Gallaghers, the Kendalls, the O’Briens, the Swindells, the Beckmanns, Richard Bussey, Eric Smith and Rita Jupe. Other guests were Amir Asmir, Scott Currier, Ronald Weaver, Jack and Christine Garner, Christine Downs, Sergio and Renee Laverde, Jeff Deans, Darren Block, David Newell, Mike Manuel (the realtor who sold Pam the house), Jeremy Glesner, Laura Brooks, Attilie and Eamon Cawig, Becky and Jonathan Rankin, and Joshua and Brittany Trice (from Oklahoma).

— LOIS KELSO HUNT

BULLETIN BOARD

FROM PAGE 6

office, visit www.weichert.com/offices/.

Toy Drive. Sheehy Auto Stores will hold a toy drive to benefit the U.S. Marine Corps Toys for Tots Program. Runs through Dec. 15. Donate a new, unwrapped toy to Sheehy Honda of Alexandria, 2434 Richmond Hwy.

Sponsor a Resident or Family. The Alexandria Department of Community and Human Services Holiday Sharing Program seeks sponsors for 83 senior or disabled residents and 109 families with children. Gifts may be delivered directly to recipients or brought to the city’s Community and Human Services Center, 2525 Mount Vernon Ave. for distribution by staff. Contact Suzanne Kratzok at 703-746-5663, holidaysharing@alexandriava.gov or register at www.alexandriava.gov/holidaysharing.

Holiday Volunteers Needed. The Department of Community and Human Services is also seeking volunteers to help sort and deliver gifts at the Community and

Human Services Center at 2525 Mt. Vernon Ave. on Dec. 16, 17 and 18 in shifts from 9 a.m. to 7:30 p.m. Volunteers for the Community Partners for Children toy distribution are also needed for hosting collection bins for toy donations, sorting the toys on Dec. 20 and 21 and assisting parents to select toys for their children, also on Dec. 21 at the Mt. Vernon Recreation Center, 2601 Commonwealth Ave. Contact Suzanne Kratzok at 703-746-5663 or holidaysharing@alexandriava.gov.

TREE SALE

Christmas Tree Sale. The Alexandria Police Youth Camp is hosting a sale from Nov. 30-Dec. 5 at 110 Callahan Drive. Hours are weekdays from 4-8 p.m. and weekends from 10 a.m.-8 p.m. Proceeds will help fund scholarships for children to attend the camp. Visit www.alexpyc.org for more.

THURSDAY/NOV. 28

City Offices Closed for Thanksgiving.

Blood Drive. 9 a.m.-2:30 p.m. at Alexandria Chapter House, 123 N. Alfred St. The American Red Cross Greater Chesapeake and Potomac Blood Services is holding blood drives throughout the region. Donors are encouraged to call 1-800 RED CROSS.

FRIDAY/NOV. 29

Inaugural Trolley Ride. 9 a.m. near the Alexandria Visitors Center and Market Square at the corner of King and N. Fairfax streets. Alexandria’s Town Crier will join visitors for the first ride to Mount Vernon Estate from Old Town. \$25/adult; \$8/child includes a round-trip trolley ride and admission to Mount Vernon Estate. Tickets can be purchased at www.trustedtours.com or 202-832-9800.

Open Level Pilates Mat Class. 11:15 a.m. at Studio Body Logic. Free. This class will raise awareness for the Pilates for Wounded Soldiers program. Donations welcome. Visit clients.mindbodyonline.com for more.



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

Day of Gratitude

The local March of Dimes held a Day of Gratitude event at Inova Alexandria Hospital's Neonatal Intensive Care Unit this month. It was an opportunity for the March of Dimes staff, parents of preemies and volunteers to express thanks to the doctors, nurses and other health care professionals for all that they do each day as they care for these tiny babies and their families. Hospital staff was presented with a plaque to commemorate their efforts to support the March of Dimes mission to improve the health of babies.

New Focus on Mental Health

FROM PAGE 1

tody order expired, legislators are preparing themselves for a new fight on familiar territory.

"This happens repeatedly across Virginia," said Alexandria Community Services Board executive director Michael Gilmore, who spent 20 years running social services in rural Bath County. "We have emergency staff that are really struggling."

ASIDE FROM FUNDING, a number of legislative proposals are emerging as a result of the situation involving Deeds and his son. One is to lengthen the time that individuals can be detained under an emergency custody order. Back in 2007, this was one of the key recommendations of the Commission on Mental Health Law Reform, which suggested a maximum of eight hours. Because the senator's son was released when time ran out rather than finding a bed, a number of potential reforms are emerging as a result. One would be that police could detain someone indefinitely against his or her will, which is unlikely to receive support from civil rights advocates. Another possibility would give magistrates the ability to issue temporary detention orders even though a psychiatric bed has not been located yet.

"When someone has been shot, the emergency room doesn't deny the patient service because a bed isn't available," said Del. Rob Krupicka (D-45). "That shouldn't happen in a mental-health context either."

Legislators may end up debating which part of the safety net is most in need of reform. For example, is

the emergency custody order in need of reform or does the temporary detention order need to be modified? Krupicka and others have called for changes to the emergency custody orders. But Barker says the temporary detention order should be expanded beyond 48 hours, a time he says is not sufficient before a judge issues a commitment order detaining a person for a more long-term period of time.

"That is the shortest in the nation. There is no state that has a shorter maximum period of time in which someone can be detained," said Barker. "I put a bill in last year to increase that from 48 hours to 72 hours, which has now been supported by the governor's school safety task force so I think there's strong support moving forward on that."

SOME OF THE POTENTIAL changes are being suggested by the law-enforcement community. Incoming Alexandria Commonwealth's Attorney Bryan Porter is working with Krupicka to craft legislation that would create more time for mental health workers to track down a psychiatric bed. One bill would allow magistrates to issue successive two-hour extensions for emergency custody orders if they can show good cause. Another change would allow magistrates to issue temporary detention orders without first identifying a psychiatric bed.

"These changes would allow a person in crisis to be held until a bed could be found, subject to review by the judicial branch," said Porter. "This will keep both the community and the person in crisis safe."

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Saturday Evening
5:00 pm Vigil Mass
6:30 pm Vigil Mass (en Español)
Sunday
7:30 am; 9:00 am (with Sign Language Interpreter & Children's Liturgy of the Word); 10:30 am; 12:00 Noon; 2:00 pm (en Español); 6:30 pm

Weekday & Saturday Mornings: 9:00 am Mass, followed by Rosary (on First Friday, Mass followed by Eucharistic Adoration)
Thursday & First Friday of the Month: 7:30 pm Mass en Español

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Be a Part of CHILDREN'S GAZETTE PACKET

During the last week of each year, the Alexandria Gazette Packet devotes its entire issue to the creativity of local students. The results are always remarkable, and the editions have won many awards. It is a keepsake edition for many families.

We publish artwork, poetry, essays, creative writing, opinion pieces, short stories, photography, photos of sculpture or gardens or other creative efforts.

We ask that all submissions be digital so they can be sent through e-mail or delivered on CD or flash drive. Writing should be submitted in rich text format (.rtf). Artwork should be provided in .jpg format. Identify each piece of writing or art, including the student's full name, age, grade and town of residence, plus the name of the school, name of teacher and town of school location. Please provide the submissions by Friday, Dec. 6 for publication the week of Dec. 26.

E-mail submissions to:
smauren@connectionnewspapers.com

To send CDs or flash drives containing artwork and typed, electronic submissions, mark them clearly by school and hometown and mail the CD to Children's Gazette, 1606 King Street, Alexandria, VA 22314.

Alexandria
Gazette Packet



OPINION

Holidays Are About Giving

So many needs, so many great organizations, give locally where your heart leads you.

The holidays are about giving. They are about children. The holidays are about sharing, about joy, about alleviating suffering for others. The holidays are about being thankful and about faith and appreciation.

Most of us live in neighborhoods that are very homogenous. There are exceptions, but most people reading this live in affluent areas where the houses are mostly in the same price range, and while there might be some ethnic diversity, there is little in the way of economic diversity.

It's easy to forget that there are massive unmet needs, hungry children, homeless families most with at least one working parent, homeless individuals with jobs and without jobs, people who don't know for sure whether they will have enough to eat or be

able to be warm enough, people who are choosing between medical care and car repair when forgoing the car repair could mean losing a job.

In Alexandria, nearly 8 percent of the population lives below the poverty line. That's \$19,500 for family of three.

In Alexandria Public Schools, 8,100 of the system's 13,000 students qualify to receive free or subsidized meals, a significant measure of poverty. This is about 60 percent of all students enrolled in the public schools, although some schools have a much higher percentage of poor students. At William Ramsay Elementary School, Patrick Henry, Jefferson-Houston and Cora Kelly, more than 80 percent of students are poor.

Many elementary schools staff are discovering that for some of these students, a majority

of students in some schools, they only meals the can count on are breakfast and lunch on school days.

Nonprofits, school staff and individuals have been working to send backpacks of healthy, kid-friendly food home with students on the weekend. For example, the Assistance League of Northern Virginia provides weekend bags of food for 1,200 poor students once a month at six elementary schools around Northern Virginia, including Cora Kelly.

It's hard to imagine more than 8,000 students going hungry in Alexandria; it's obvious that children who aren't sure they will be able to eat when they are hungry are not going to have joyous holidays filled with family meals, gifts and special activities.

There are literally hundreds, probably thousands, of ways to give locally this season. Here are a few ideas. We welcome suggestions for other groups.

— MARY KIMM,

MKIMM@CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM

Alexandria: Where to Give Locally

ALIVE! 703-837-9300 www.alive-inc.org, Emergency food assistance, emergency financial assistance, shelter, year-round preschool, furniture and housewares.

Literacy Council of Northern Virginia, 703-237-0866, www.lcnv.org, Teaches adults the basic skills of reading, writing, speaking and understanding English. Offers one-to-one tutoring programs for adult learners as well as beginning-level ESOL and Family Learning adult programs.

Senior Services of Alexandria, 703-836-4414, www.seniorservicesalex.org, Support

services for elders enabling them to age with dignity.

Tahirih Justice Center, 703-575-0070, www.tahirih.org, Legal services, public policy advocacy, and education for immigrant women and girls.

Animal Welfare League of Alexandria, 703-746-4774, www.alexandrianimals.org, Pet adoptions, spay and neuter assistance, education and community service and outreach.

Stop Child Abuse Now (SCAN) of Northern Virginia, 703-820-9001, www.scanva.org, Parent education,

public education-re: child abuse and court advocacy for abused and neglected children.

Rebuilding Together Alexandria, 703-836-1021, www.RebuildingTogetherAlex.org, Home repair and maintenance for vulnerable veterans, elderly, disabled and families with children.

ACT for Alexandria, 703-739-7778, www.actforalexandria.org, Nonprofit and donor services.

Alexandria Community Services Board, www.alexandriava.gov/mhmrsa, Crisis intervention services, elderly needs, mental health,

substance abuse, mental retardation and developmental disabilities.

Arlington-Alexandria Coalition for the Homeless, 703-525-7177, www.aachhomeless.org.

Carpenter's Shelter, 703 548-7500, www.carpentersshelter.org, Homeless services and programs including education and case management.

The Campagna Center, 703-549-0111, www.campagnacenter.org

Center for Alexandria's Children, 703-838-4381, www.centerforalexandriaschildren.org, Child abuse & neglect and parent support.

Child and Family Network Centers, 703-836- 0214, www.cfnc-online.org

Community Lodgings, Inc., 703-549-4407 Transitional and affordable housing, youth education, adult education, bilingual staff assistance.

Computer C.O.R.E. 703-931-7346, www.computercore.org, Adult education, computer training and career development.

Hopkins House, 703-549-8072, www.hopkinshouse.org, Preschool academy, family budgeting and literacy, family education and youth summer enrichment camp, Early Childhood Learning Institute.

Northern Virginia Family Services, 703-385-3267, www.nvfs.org, Employment and job training, healthcare, housing, mental health, foster care and Healthy Families (home visitations to new parents).

Volunteer Alexandria, 703-836-2176, <http://volunteerallexandria.org>, Volunteer recruitment and placement, court-referred community service placement, community awareness events, and volunteer management training. See www.achsova.org.



Alexandria Gazette Packet

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ARLINGTON \$3,995,000 | ttrsir.com/id/AR8207559
Offering dramatic views of DC and the Potomac, this 30th floor Waterview Residences penthouse provides elegant spaces suited for both entertaining and private relaxation.
ROB CARNEY +1 703 927 4290



ALEXANDRIA \$3,700,000 | ttrsir.com/id/AX7731151
George Washington spent his last 4th of July in 1798 in this residence when it was once a tavern. The half-acre lot features a 2-car garage, swimming pool, and carriage house.
ROY MELLONI +1 703 863 0077
ROXANE NUNES +1 703 470 9903



ALEXANDRIA \$2,900,000 | ttrsir.com/id/21064841
Exemplifying the heritage of beautiful Virginia architecture, yet embracing today's design elements, this home offers 5 bedrooms, pool and cabana on 1.3 acres, and is only minutes from Old Town.
KAREN BARKER +1 703 928 8384
WETHERLY BARKER +1 703 965 9613



ARLINGTON \$2,825,000 | ttrsir.com/id/AR8191145
This Colonial in Lyon Village has 6 BRs, 5.5 BAs, approx. 6,400 sf, gourmet kitchen, full-house entertainment system, outdoor kitchen, walk to metro, shops and restaurants.
JOHN ERIC +1 703 798 0097



ARLINGTON \$2,289,000 | ttrsir.com/id/AR8121613
This 29th-floor residence overlooks the Potomac with a floor plan perfect for entertaining or enjoying the views. The home features hardwoods and a gourmet kitchen.
DEBBIE SHAPIRO +1 703 407 1600
STEPHANIE WHITE +1 703 489 5045



ALEXANDRIA \$1,999,999 | ttrsir.com/id/AX8173147
This 5 BR, 3.5 BA 4,200 sf stone house circa 1945 has been renovated with a new addition to offer this architecturally designed, contemporary unique house with European panache.
FLEUR HOWGILL +1 202 425 9403



ALEXANDRIA \$1,998,000 | ttrsir.com/id/AX8202960
This stunning end-unit townhome in Old Town waterfront community offers 3 BRs, library, chef's kitchen, and a family room that leads to a brick patio. 2-car garage.
VICTORIA KILCULLEN +1 703 915 8845



ALEXANDRIA \$1,495,000
This renovated historic home offers an amazing blend of modern and traditional design, 3BR, 3BA, top-of-the-line kitchen, dramatic master suite, spacious L.I. family room, rear yard and off-street parking.
HEATHER COREY +1 703 989 1183
MAXWELL RABIN +1 202 669 7406



ALEXANDRIA \$1,425,000 | ttrsir.com/id/AX8203644
This Federal-style home, on the most charming block of Prince Street, offers refinished original hardwood floors, beautifully landscaped back garden, and a spacious dining room and library.
DAVID DeSANTIS +1 202 438 1542



SOLD
ALEXANDRIA \$975,000
This Charles Goodman designed home in Hollin Hills has been expanded and renovated, featuring 5 BRs, 3 BAs, floor-to-ceiling windows throughout, flooding each room with natural light.
RUSSELL FIRESTONE +1 202 271 1701



SOLD
ALEXANDRIA \$939,500
This meticulously maintained 3BR, 2.5 BA home in Old Town offers off-street parking, exposed brick walls, custom built-ins, new HVAC and roof, Pella windows, and updated kitchen and baths.
HEATHER COREY +1 703 989 1183



SOLD
ALEXANDRIA \$915,000
This fabulous townhouse half a block from Founders Park and the Potomac features living room with 12' ceilings, fireplace, brick patio, eat-in kitchen, one-car garage, L.I., and attic.
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OPINION

The Meaning of Vox Populi?

BY HARRY M. COVERT

There is something called vox populi. In Alexandria apparently, the voice of the people doesn't seem to mean a thing to those holding leadership roles in council chambers.

Despite overwhelming opposition to the municipal takeover of property belonging to the historic Old Dominion Boat Club, mere moments passed and City Council quickly voted to put a gun to the head of the club officials.

This boat club's parking lot and adjacent areas is located near the foot of King Street is the subject of the fight.

COVERT MATTERS

Council agreed to a 90-day negotiation period with the caveat — the threat of taking the property by eminent domain.

In other words, the city is determined to take the property regardless of widespread citizen opposition. There is plenty of it. In fact, people are angry at the idea of "stealing the property."

More than 70 speakers appeared at the recent public hearing. Only two supported the takeover. The others might as well have stayed home.

There was no question it was an irritating night especially for Bill Euille, the longtime mayor presiding over the meeting. It was a 6-1 vote. Only the vice mayor, Allison Silberberg, opposed the motion.

The deal is this: The city and boat club have 90 days to solve the matter. Or else. The "or else" is simply, the city will seize the property.

This will become a political issue par excellence and bring about an intra-party squabble first class, as well as a city-wide debate.

At present, Alexandria is a democratically controlled municipality and does what the politicians decide, with or without public support.

Since the lively hearing in City Council chambers, during which the mayor turned off audio in what appeared as a fit of pique, political talk has gained attention. Most realize the next council election is 2015, but somehow the high-handedness — probably should be called low-handedness of council — will become a big issue.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Time To End TCW's Marching Mandate

To the Editor:

One of the most common explanations for why talented Alexandria musicians drop out of band before high school is a little known but antiquated school mandate that in order to participate in T.C. Williams High School band programs students must join the marching band.

For a high school of its size, T.C. Williams has one of the smallest band programs in Northern Virginia. It doesn't have to be this way. In fact the TCW band program is significantly smaller than the band programs of GW and Francis Hammond middle schools. The problem occurs after 8th grade when the numbers show that many talented band students drop out of band — sometimes forever, sometimes to pursue their love of music outside of high school.

Although some student musicians love marching, it's common knowledge among Alexandria's band families that the marching band requirement is responsible for smaller numbers of musicians participating in high school concert band, wind ensemble and jazz band. If the mandate was removed and



It is interesting that longtime political leaders, both the ins and outs, have maintained a silence. The question comes up to why Mr. Mayor is so determined to strip the boat club? Is it his legacy?

Many people figure that Hizzoner will not seek another term either as mayor. No one wants to be quoted but it's no secret others would like to be mayor and think the current president has had the post long enough.

The city seems to have decided that the boat club's property is "the last link" in the waterfront development, which also has stirred up the property owners and others along the Potomac River. It is expensive property and makes Old Town Alexandria a desirable place to live, work and enjoy.

It is rather puzzling that so much determination has been expended to strip the 273-year-old boat club. Imagine the furor if city hall wizards, planners and designers set their sights on such landmarks as Christ Church, opened in 1773, or the majestic George Washington Masonic National Memorial.

Or remember the ugliness when a New England-born former mayor removed the bronze statue of a defeated Confederate soldier, his back turned solemnly to the north? The statue, protected by state law, was returned to its rightful spot located over Washington and Prince streets in Old Town. It was first placed there in 1889.

Rewriting history is not a good thing. Neither is forgetting history, good or bad. Alexandria's waterfront, mostly in Virginia at the low water mark, is magnificent and should be enjoyed. While municipalities have used and do use eminent domain, it's not always proper and should be used sparingly.

This matter need not reach either state or federal courts. It's headed that way unless the city acts responsibly, drops its heavy-duty threats, and use the art of politics. That is to compromise.

At present, Mr. Mayor and his cohorts aren't being honorable and are not working in the best interests of populus.

What does marching band have to do with the ability to play an instrument? Very little. The requirement is not a state Board of Education mandate based on objective curriculum standards. The origins of the requirement come from a state association of band directors. The requirement reflects a "feeling" that students of band instruments must learn to march in order to receive a comprehensive education in their instrument. This is largely a subjective and self-serving judgment by high school marching band advocates. Few colleges require marching band experience as a condition of acceptance to a department of music.

Several years ago the Alexandria City School Board addressed part of this problem. The board acted to exempt student athletes participating in fall athletics from the marching band requirement. Under this exemption which exists today, TCW band directors were prohibited from excluding student musicians from seated band if they participated in a fall high school sport.

This exemption worked fine for our son and the TCW Band program. He lettered in cross country for

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LETTERS

FROM PAGE 12

four years and graduated in 2013 as Boys' Cross Country captain. He also lettered in band without marching and went on to earn all state honors in jazz and band, the first such accomplishment by a TCW band student. The exemption allowed him to support his school through athletics but to also continue his love of music. He is currently attending college pursuing a degree in music. At no time did any of his prospective colleges ask about his lack of marching band experience. Indeed, what the schools of music wanted to evaluate was his proficiency and poise as a musician revealed through challenging auditions.

We believe the current athletic exemption doesn't go far enough.

There are talented band students who are fully engaged in year-round sports training for such sports as crew or swimming that are necessary to prepare them to represent their school community in winter and spring sports. There are others who eschew marching band to pursue opportunities to participate in local youth orchestras which expose students to symphonic music not offered in TCW's band ensembles. The simple point is that marching band is not an experience that is objectively necessary to be a successful musician. If this policy is changed, student musicians who decline to march would still need to pass skill-based auditions to win

SEE LETTERS, PAGE 14

Tree Light Season Extended

To the Editor:

I simply want to express my gratitude to those who helped raise the money to sustain the tree lights on King Street from March 31, 2014 through June 2014. It will be exciting to see the lights on through that time.

Here is a list of contributions in the order that they were made: Frank Fannon, George Seghers from The Masonic Memorial, Ann Dorman with First Night, Andrew Palmieri, Lynn Hampton, Franco Landini with Landini Brothers Restaurant and Fish Market, The Enchanted Florist, Walker Real Estate, Hard Times Cafe, The Creamery, David Baker, Joan Renner, Maginniss & DelNinni Architects, Don Simpson with Simpson Properties, John Porter with ACT for Alexandria, Phil Hollywood, Randall Larrimore, Helen Sullivan-Kumar, Phillip Hollywood, Lana Slack, P N Clopper, John and Elizabeth Chimento, Joseph Resende, Margaret Wholler, C.R. Hollywood, Councilwoman Del Pepper, Seaport Properties, William Moyer, Sara Pearson, Councilman Tim Lovin and John Norton.

I have raised \$4,300 of the \$6,750 needed to sustain the lights year round, leaving \$2,400 more to be raised. If you are interested in helping keep the lights on, please make your donations to the Alexandria Chamber of Commerce Foundation Inc. and mark the check "tree lights." Checks can also be sent to me at Gold Works Inc., 1400 King Street, Alexandria VA 22314 and I will see that they are immediately deposited with the Chamber.

Thank you to everyone who has helped keep the tree lights illuminating King Street turned on through next June.

David Martin
Alexandria



PHOTO BY DAVID MARTIN

The tree lights on King Street will now remain lit through June 2014.

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LETTERS

FROM PAGE 13

placement in a seated band.

Recently a number of concerned TCW and middle school parents pleaded with ACPs faculty to address this longstanding problem. The efforts met strong resistance from the faculty members who have for too long relied on the mandate as a crutch to guarantee a minimum quota of student marchers. In an Nov. 20 email, the school division's designated K-12 Arts Coordinator Shawn Thorpe admonished parents: "We need to remember that band is a skill just like crew, swimming, volleyball and dance. We do not want to change a structure around 'time on task' that would affect the overall performance of a child in any of the programs."

What Mr. Thorpe fails to appreciate is that participation in sports is voluntary for aspiring athletes ... unlike marching band for aspiring musicians.

It is time for the school board to get involved in this issue. In Alexandria we pride ourselves on offering students greater not fewer choices. It is time to end the marching band mandate and embrace the musical talents of all students based on auditions and skill. If students have the talent to perform in TC's top band, the Wind Ensemble, they should be welcome whether or not they choose to march.

Going forward, students should be recruited for marching band the old fashioned way ... voluntarily. Those who teach marching band should recruit students by promot-

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PHOTO BY LOUISE KRAFT/GAZETTE PACKET

Snapshot

4:10 p.m., Nov. 23: Northern Virginia Braggin Rights Classic at George Washington Middle School.

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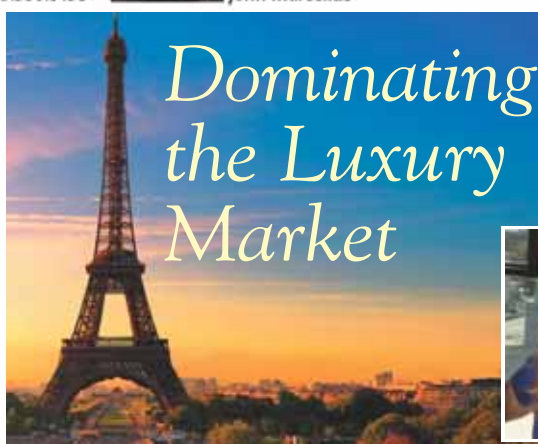
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wood-burning fireplace in living area with decorative wood mantle, plus tile hearth and surround. Built-in bookcases/shelves and office alcove complete the bedroom with walk-in closet.

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PEOPLE



Artist Mary Ciske and a few of her handmade dolls. The dolls are available online at www.dollsbymary.net



Bruce Ciske displays some of his recent hand-worked pottery at the bazaar.



Donna Lighlle and Martha Savage display their hand-made wreaths at the school bazaar. The wreaths will also be for sale at the Rock It Grill on King Street "Jingle Mingle" after the annual Scottish Christmas Walk on Dec. 7.

St. Mary's School Hosts Annual Christmas Bazaar

The annual St. Mary's School Christmas Bazaar got underway at 10 a.m. on Saturday morning, Nov. 23.

The gymnasium was lined with rows and rows of tables laden with gift ideas. Jewelry, children's clothes, handmade dolls, new books for young readers, head and hair accessories, night lights made from empty spirit bottles, holiday wreaths and decoration and

more.

Boy Scouts from the St. Mary's Troop #301 sold assorted chocolate bars and sets of Advent candles to raise funds for the troop's planned High Adventure trip to Sea Base in Florida.

Classrooms on the first floor were outfitted for games and activities for the younger crowd. Games, dress-up and photo opportunities and craft workshops were included in the activities.



Creator and author of "Literal Lily" and "Fickle Fiona," Kate Hanscom is joined by her sister-in-law Cara Hanscom a first grade teacher at St. Mary's School. Hanscom's book may be purchased online at Barnes&Noble.com and Amazon.



Kathy Stefanik's night light's from Mixed Up Art.



Fine artist and Alexandria resident Oenone Hammersley displays a number of her paintings made into scarves, gift cards and more. Hammersley also wrote and illustrated a children's book, "A Wild and Wonderful Journey." There will be an exhibition of Hammersley's recent paintings at Patrick's fine linen and home décor from Dec. 12 -31. For more information visit www.oenonehammersley.com. Patrick's is located at 106 N. St. Asaph St. in Alexandria.



Disabled veteran William Kavchak designed and created a High Speed Low Drag writing pen. Part of the proceeds from the sale of the pens is donated to the Wounded Warriors Project.

PHOTOS BY
LOUISE KRAFFT
GAZETTE PACKET



Heidi and Ella dressed up as Mary and the angel at the Nativity scene in a first floor classroom last Saturday at the St. Mary's Christmas Bazaar.



Troop #301 Boy scouts Daniel Wozniak, Carson Carr, Henry Monroe and Sam Scalsoi offer chocolate bars and sets of Advent candles for sale at the school bazaar.



Games of chance and skill filled the classrooms on the school's first floor for the younger set to enjoy.

ENTERTAINMENT

'Tis the Season

“A Broadway Christmas Carol” returns to MetroStage.

BY JEANNE THEISMANN
GAZETTE PACKET

Oh come, all ye faithful fans of musical theater. For the fourth year running, MetroStage is staging the wickedly funny “A Broadway Christmas Carol,” an irreverent musical take on the classic novel by Charles Dickens.

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.

Feininger uses Broadway’s most memorable productions to lampoon the holiday classic, cleverly creating lyrics for more than 30 musical numbers. A talented cast of three takes on the multitude of characters with various backgrounds and personalities.

“I dropped a few songs and added a few songs to this year’s production,” said returning director and choreographer Michael Sharp, who also starred as Scrooge in last year’s production of the show. “Not being on stage makes a difference in being able to concentrate on the show, which is better than ever this year.”



PHOTO BY CHRIS BANKS

Peter Boyer, Tracey Stephens and Russell Sunday take on all the roles in MetroStage’s “A Broadway Christmas Carol.”

Returning to the central role of Scrooge is Peter Boyer, who originated the role at MetroStage in 2010. A versatile performer, Boyer brings his expert comedic talents to the vaudevillian musical numbers while his strong tenor vocals particularly shine in “Send Him Home,” a send up of “Bring Him Home” from “Les Miserables.”

Russell Sunday returns as The Man Who Isn’t Scrooge, tackling the roles of Bob Cratchit, Scrooge’s nephew Fred, the Ghost of Christmas Past and even Tiny Tim with uproarious aplomb.

Tracey Stephens is back as The Woman Who Isn’t Scrooge, playing the ghost of Jacob Marley, the Ghost of Christmas

Present, Mrs. Cratchit, Scrooge’s fiancée and the woman seeking holiday donations for the poor.

The gifted Sunday and Stephens handle the demanding character and split-second costume changes with ease while Boyer brings tenderness and vulnerability to the villainous Scrooge. All three have voices that soar throughout the commanding score of Broadway melodies.

Central to the acting performances is the on-stage musical accompaniment by musical director Howard Breitbart, who dons a Phantom of the Opera mask to serve as the Ghost of Christmas Future.

With dozens of inside jokes aimed at the-

ater buffs, part of the fun of “A Broadway Christmas Carol” is recognizing the songs Feininger and Sharp have transformed for the show.

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 theatre connoisseurs and thoroughly entertaining for anyone looking for a lively alternative to traditional holiday entertainment. Even if you’ve seen it before, see it again. It’s that good.

“A Broadway Christmas Carol” is playing through Dec. 22 at MetroStage, 1201 N. Royal St. For tickets or more information, call 703-548-9044 or visit www.metrostage.org.

CALENDAR

E-mail announcements to gazette@connectionnewspapers.com. Photos and artwork are encouraged. Deadline is Thursday at noon.

ONGOING

Life Drawing. Del Ray Artisans offers a range of open life drawing sessions to hone figure drawing skills. Drop-in with your supplies to draw live models. Fee: \$8-12. View the calendar at www.TheDelRayArtisans.org.

The **West End Farmers Market** will run Sundays from 8:30 a.m.-1 p.m. through November. Located at Ben Brenman Park, browse food, crafts and more. Visit www.westendfarmersmarket.org.

Photography Workshop. 10:30 a.m.-noon at Multiple Exposures Gallery on 105 N. Union Street. Photographers and enthusiasts of all skill levels are invited to share work, ideas, and questions at this free workshop held on the last Sunday of each month, except December. No reservations. Call 703-683-2205.

Book a Librarian. At the Charles E.

Beatley, Jr. Central Library, 5005 Duke St, for help with research or to better understand the library’s databases and resources. Make an appointment by calling 703-746-1751.

Computer Tutoring. At the Charles E. Beatley, Jr. Central Library, 5005 Duke St. Individual assistance from a librarian. Call 703-746-1751.

Encore Chorale. Mondays 10:30 a.m.-noon at the George Washington Masonic National Memorial, 101 Callahan Dr. Register now for Encore Chorale’s fall season. The group of singers, ages 55 and up, practice classical and holiday songs to prepare for December performances. \$150 tuition. Visit encorecreativity.org or call 301-261-5747.

Art Exhibit. Through November, see Jenna Fournel’s work at Huntley Meadows Park. Hours are Monday, Wednesday-Friday from 9 a.m.-5 p.m. and Saturday-Sunday from noon-5 p.m. Visit www.jenna4nel.com for more.

Art Exhibit. See “Del Ray Dozen Invitational Photography Show” at Del Ray Artisans, 2704 Mount Vernon Ave. Subject matter ranges

from landscapes to portraits and a little bit of everything in between and the select photographers approach their craft in different ways—as traditional film shooters, digital image-makers, darkroom junkies, print makers, and experimentalists. Exhibit runs Nov. 1 through Dec. 1. For more information, visit www.TheDelRayArtisans.org.

Art Exhibit. Photographer Everitt Clark presents “Cities in the Air” from Nov. 7 through Dec. 2 in the Art League at Torpedo Factory, 105 N. Union St. The exhibit will reveal how Richmond, Va., past and present intertwine. Free. Hours are Monday-Wednesday and Friday-Saturday from 10 a.m.-6 p.m.; Thursdays from 10 a.m.-9 p.m.; and Sundays from noon-6 p.m. Visit www.theartleague.org or 703-683-1780.

Art Exhibit. See “Portent” in the Athenaeum Gallery, 201 Prince St., from Oct. 24 through Dec. 8. The works attempt to visually come to terms with, reflect or represent the magnitude of natural events. Free. Visit www.nvfaa.org for more.

Theater Performance. Through Sunday, Dec. 22, see “A Broadway

Christmas Carol” at MetroStage, 1201 N. Royal St. Wednesday, Nov. 27 at 7 p.m.; Thursday-Friday at 8 p.m.; Saturdays at 3 p.m. and 8 p.m. and Sundays at 3 p.m. and 7 p.m. This show is a cross between the classic Dickens’ tale and song parodies of more than 30 Broadway show tune favorites. \$50/adult; \$25/student or child. Visit www.metrostage.org for tickets.

Theater Performance. See The Little Theatre of Alexandria’s “A Christmas Carol” from Dec. 5-22 at the theatre, 600 Wolfe St. Performances are Thursdays-Fridays at 8 p.m. and Saturdays-Sundays at 3 p.m. and 5 p.m. \$15. Visit www.thelittletheatre.com or 703-683-0496.

Tickets Now on Sale. Buy tickets for the Alexandria Candlelight Tour with special early-bird pricing. \$15/adult; \$12/senior if purchased before Dec. 1. Tour Gadsby’s Tavern Museum, Carlyle House Historic Park, Lee-Fendall House and Lloyd House by candlelight and enjoy decorations, entertainment and more on Saturday, Dec. 14 from 6-9 p.m. or Sunday, Dec. 15 from 3-6 p.m. Tickets

purchased after Dec. 1 are \$20/adult; \$15/senior and \$5/child. Tickets can be purchased at shop.alexandria.gov or 703-746-4242. Visit www.historicalalexandria.org for more.

Art Exhibit. Potomac Fiber Arts Gallery presents “Holiday Sizzle” in Studio 18 at Torpedo Factory Art Center, 105 N. Union St. Exhibit starts on Nov. 19, additional items will be added Dec. 9 and the exhibit closes Jan. 5. Free. Some items will be for sale. Visit www.potomacfiberarts.com or 703-548-0935.

Art Exhibit. Artist John Gascot of Studio 4, 218 N. Lee St., suite 101, creates an art exhibit to honor the life journeys of transgender individuals. It will be on display through January. Gallery hours are Thursday-Saturday, noon-7 p.m. and Sunday from noon-5 p.m. or by appointment. Visit www.studio4oldtown.com for more.

African American Activists Exhibition. Through Saturday, Jan. 4, 2014, Living Legends of Alexandria is an ongoing photo-documentary project created in 2006 by artist-photographer Nina Tisara to identify, honor and chronicle people

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ENTERTAINMENT

making current history in Alexandria. This free exhibit is at the Alexandria Black History Museum, 601 Wythe St. The museum is open Tuesday through Saturday, 10 a.m.-4 p.m. Visit www.alexblackhistory.org or call 703-746-4356.

Art Exhibit. "Small Works," juried by Irene Owsley will run Nov. 26-Jan. 5, at the Multiple Exposures Gallery in the Torpedo Factory Art Center, 105 N. Union St. Visit www.torpedofactory.org for more.

"The Street Sense Project." Thien-Kim Pham presents "Portraits of People Who Live and Work on the Streets" in studio 21 at the Torpedo Factory, 105 N. Union St. The exhibit runs Dec. 5 through Jan. 6. A portion of the sales will be donated to a local charity related to the subject matter depicted in the piece. Visit www.theartleague.org or 703-683-1780 for more.

Art Exhibit. "Small Worlds," a multi-media juried exhibition with a focus on artists who work in miniature or small scales will run Dec. 6-Jan. 12, at the Target Gallery in the Torpedo Factory Art Center, 105 N. Union St. Visit www.torpedofactory.org for more.

CLASSES

Introduction to Machine Sewing for Children. 4:15-6:15 p.m. on Tuesday, Dec. 3 at Art at the Center, 2804 Sherwood Hall Lane. Learn how to operate a sewing machine and beginning sewing skills while turning a t-shirt into a tote bag. For children ages 8 and up. \$35/child. Visit www.artatthecenter.org or 703-201-1250.

Introduction to Quilting: Parent/Child Class. 9 a.m.-noon on Saturday, Nov. 23 and Saturday, Dec. 7. Parents and children ages 7 and up can learn how to use a sewing machine and then learn how to quilt. Bring a yard of cotton fabric and smaller pieces of cotton fabric (at least 6-inch squares) to create patches. \$120. With registration, if you have a sewing machine, say so. Visit www.artatthecenter.org or 703-201-1250.

Christmas Cooking Class. 11 a.m.-2 p.m. on Saturday, Dec. 14 at Osteria Marzano, 6361 Walker Lane, Suite 140. Chef Carmine Marzano will teach participants how to cook an Italian Christmas meal, then dine on the creations. \$85/person. RSVP to info@osteriamarzano.com or 703-313-9700.

Life Drawing. Del Ray Artisans offers a range of open life drawing sessions for anyone to develop life-drawing skills further. Just drop-in for the session and bring your supplies to draw or paint our live models. Fee ranges from \$8-\$12. All skill levels are welcome. Del Ray Artisans is located at 2704 Mount Vernon Ave. Visit www.TheDelRayArtisans.org for a schedule.

CHRISTMAS TREE SALES

Christmas Tree Sale. The Alexandria Police Youth Camp is hosting a sale from Nov. 30-Dec. 5 at 110 Callahan Drive. Hours are weekdays from 4-8 p.m. and weekends from 10 a.m.-8 p.m. Proceeds will help fund scholarships for children to attend the camp. Visit www.alexpyc.org for more.

Christmas Tree and Wreath Sale. Pick out a freshly-cut North Carolina Fraser Fir while enjoying some hot cider and cookies. Ten percent of the sale will go back to a designated PTA. Runs Saturdays and Sundays at St. Aidan's Episcopal Church, 8531 Riverside Road, through Dec. 15. Visit www.staidansepiscopal.com or 703-360-4220.

Christmas Tree Sale. Saturdays, Dec. 7, 14 from 7 a.m.-5 p.m. and Sundays, Dec. 8, 15 from noon-4 p.m. in the parking lot adjacent to Trinity United Methodist Church, corner of Cameron Mills and Allison. Sponsored by the North Ridge Citizens Association. \$25-\$90 for a tree, \$16 for wreaths, \$20 for garland and \$25 for tree stands. Call Bruce Johnson at 703-548-9604.

THURSDAY/NOV. 21

Concert. 7:30 p.m. at the Birchmere Music Hall, 3701 Mount Vernon Ave. Joe Ely and Paul Thorn perform. \$35. Visit www.birchmere.com or call 703-549-7500.

Story Telling. 7 p.m. at The Athenaeum, 201 Prince St. Ellouise Schoettler will tell the story of "Finding Gus." \$10/person. Visit www.nvfaa.org for more.

Illustrated Lecture. 7:30 p.m. at Lloyd House, 220 N. Washington St. "Volusia: Civilian, Slave and Soldier Experiences in the Civil War" presented by Amy Bertsch, former Office of

Menorah Kindling

Chabad Lubavitch of Alexandria-Arlington invites the entire community to celebrate the Festival of Lights at a public Menorah kindling ceremony. The grand Chanukah celebration will take place on Sunday, Dec. 1, 5 p.m. at the Crowne Plaza Hotel, 901 N Fairfax Street. Mayor William D. Euille will be honored with lighting the six foot Menorah. Following the kindling, hot potato pancakes and doughnuts, the traditional

foods of Chanukah, will be distributed free to everyone. The program will also feature professional family entertainment, a free Chanukah raffle for a NOOK HD, Chanukah gifts and treats, lively Chanukah music and more. In its Chanukah outreach campaign, Chabad Lubavitch of Alexandria-Arlington joins thousands of Chabad centers across the globe that are staging similar public displays of the Menorah and its symbolic lights. Bring the children and make this a special Chanukah celebration. Contact Rabbi Mordechai Newman at 703-370-2774 or visit www.chabadAA.org.

Historic Alexandria public information office. The presentation involves research into a rare photograph of enslaved people taken in Alexandria, and reveals how the Civil War impacted three groups of people on a large Duke Street property, then known as Volusia, and today known as Foxchase in Alexandria's West End. Free. Visit www.historicalexandria.org or 703-746-4554.

Theater Performance. 7:30 p.m. at Burgundy Farm Country Day School, 3700 Burgundy Road. Watch the seventh-graders put on "The Princess Bride." \$5/adult; \$1/child.

FRIDAY/NOV. 29

Shop Local. More than 50 independent boutiques will open early with shopping deals. Participating stores will offer discounts starting at 6 a.m. Also enjoy free parking during the day and restaurants opening early with discounts and more. Visit www.blackfridayalexandria.com for a list of participating businesses.

Archaeology Open House. 1-5 p.m. at the museum, 105 N. Union St., #327. Free. Visit www.alexandriaarchaeology.org or 703-746-4399.

Shop Local. More than 50 independent boutiques will open early with shopping deals. Participating stores will offer discounts starting at 6 a.m. Also enjoy free parking during the day and restaurants opening early with discounts and more. Visit www.blackfridayalexandria.com for a list of participating businesses.

Tree Lighting Ceremony. 6 p.m. at Market Square in front of City Hall, 301 King St. The Mayor and Santa Claus will light the city tree. Enjoy music, caroling and more. Free. Visit www.visitalexandriava.com for more.

FRIDAY-SATURDAY/NOV. 29-30

Music Performance. 7:30 p.m. at The Birchmere Music Hall, 3701 Mount Vernon Ave. The Seldom Scene & Dry Branch Fire Squad will perform. \$35. Visit www.birchmere.com or call 703-549-7500.

FRIDAY-SUNDAY/NOV. 29-DEC. 22

Pictures with Santa and Mrs. Claus. Children can take pictures at Rashmi Pappu Photography Studio, 210 N. Lee St., on Saturdays from 9 a.m.-4 p.m., except for Dec. 7 when hours are 1-5 p.m. and Sundays from noon-5 p.m. \$15/5x7 photo print. Visit www.oldtownsanta.com or 571-331-0702.

FRIDAY-MONDAY/NOV. 29-JAN. 6

Christmas at Mount Vernon. Daily from 9 a.m.-4 p.m. at George Washington's Mount Vernon, 3200 Mount Vernon Memorial Highway. Enjoy themed decorations, chocolate-making decorations, tour the third floor of the mansion and meet Aladdin the camel. \$17/adult; \$8/child; 5 and under free. Visit www.mountvernon.org or 703-780-2000.

ENTERTAINMENT

SATURDAY/NOV. 30

Author Book Signing. 2-4 p.m. at St. Elmo's Coffee Pub, 2300 Mount Vernon Ave. Alexandria resident Kathie Truitt will discuss and sign copies of her book "The Hillbilly Debutante Cafe." Free.

Book Launch. 1-5 p.m. at Art at the Center, 2804 Sherwood Hall Lane. Enjoy crafts, book signing and more. Visit www.artatthecenter.org or 703-201-1250.

SATURDAY-SUNDAY/NOV. 30-DEC. 22

Mount Vernon by Candlelight. Saturdays and Sundays from 5-8 p.m. at George Washington's Mount Vernon, 3200 Mount Vernon Memorial Highway. Take candlelight tours, enjoy fireside caroling and festive treats. Tickets are \$22/adult; \$15/child. Visit www.mountvernon.org or 703-780-2000.

SUNDAY/DEC. 1

Civil War Sunday. 1-5 p.m. at Alexandria Archaeology Museum in Torpedo Factory Arts Center, 105 N. Union St. See an original May 26, 1861, edition of "The New-York Tribune" detailing Colonel Elmer Ellsworth's death in Alexandria, a Peeps diorama illustrating Ellsworth's death, a TimeTravelers Passport exhibit featuring the Civil War drummer boy, a diorama of a heating system constructed in Alexandria to warm Civil War hospital tents during the winter of 1861, a cocked and loaded Wickham musket discarded in a privy during the 1860s, and an exhibit on a Lee Street archaeological site during the Civil War. Free. Visit www.alexandriarchaeology.org or call 703-746-4399.

Chanukah Festival of Lights. 5 p.m. at the Crowne Plaza Hotel, 901 N. Fairfax St. Watch as the six-foot Menorah is lit by Alexandria Mayor William D. Euille. Hot potato pancakes and donuts will be handed out as well. There will also be entertainment, a raffle and more. Visit www.chabadAA.org or contact Rabbi Mordechai Newman at 703-370-2774.

SUNDAY-WEDNESDAY/DEC. 1-25

Holiday Advent Calendar Art Celebration. Each day at sundown the store will reveal "advent art" featuring holiday creations by local artists and organizations. These canvases will be available for auction, visitors can place bids inside the store. Proceeds will benefit The Reading Connection. Visit www.christmasattic.com or 703-548-2829.

MONDAY/DEC. 2

Tavern Toddlers: Rhythm and Music. 10:30-11:30 a.m. at Gadsby's Tavern Museum, 134 N. Royal St. Toddlers through 36 months can enjoy storytime, dancing, crafts and more. \$7/group of three. Visit www.alexandriava.gov/ GadsbysTavern for more.

TUESDAY/DEC. 3

Theater Performance. 10:30 a.m. at W-3 Theatre at the Workhouse Arts Center, 9601 Ox Road, Lorton. Arts on the Horizon presents "Drumming with Dishes: The Holiday Edition." \$8/child and adults. Visit www.artsonthehorizon.org for tickets.

Library Tour. 1:30 p.m. at Mount Vernon Estate. Tour the new Fred W. Smith National Library for the study of George Washington. Led by Mount Vernon tour guides and Library staff members, this new tour will offer access to the main floor of the center for scholarship about George Washington, Colonial America, and the Revolutionary Era. View rare books and manuscripts, special collections and art, research resources, and one-of-a-kind design details such as custom-created

busts of the Founding Fathers. Tours are included in admission to the Estate, but are limited in capacity and are on a first-come, first-served basis. Visit www.MountVernon.org or 703-780-2000.

Artist Lecture. 6-8 p.m. at Morrison House, 116 S. Alfred St. Enjoy a salon-style discussion series exploring Alexandria's heritage and culture through talks with artists, authors and archaeologists from Alexandria and the Torpedo Factory. Free. Visit www.morrisonhouse.com or 703-838-8000.

Theater Performance. 10:30 a.m. at W-3 Theatre at the Workhouse Arts Center, 9601 Ox Road, Lorton. Arts on the Horizon presents

"Drumming with Dishes: The Holiday Edition." \$8/child and adults. Visit www.artsonthehorizon.org for tickets.

WEDNESDAY/DEC. 4

Theater Performance. 10 a.m. or 11:30 a.m. at W-3 Theatre at the Workhouse Arts Center, 9601 Ox Road, Lorton. Arts on the Horizon presents "Drumming with Dishes: The Holiday Edition." \$8/child and adults. Visit www.artsonthehorizon.org for tickets.

Magic Show. 7 p.m. at Bishop Ireton High School, 201 Cambridge Road. See a performance by International Brotherhood of Magicians Ring 50. Bring a canned food item or toy that will be donated to the Alexandria Citadel of the Salvation Army. Visit www.ibmring50.blogspot.com.

Theater Performance. 10 a.m. or 11:30 a.m. at W-3 Theatre at the Workhouse Arts Center, 9601 Ox Road, Lorton. Arts on the Horizon presents "Drumming with Dishes: The Holiday Edition." \$8/child and adults. Visit www.artsonthehorizon.org for tickets.

THURSDAY/DEC. 5

Theater Performance. 10:30 a.m. at W-3 Theatre at the Workhouse Arts Center, 9601 Ox Road, Lorton. Arts on the Horizon presents "Drumming with Dishes: The Holiday Edition." \$8/child and adults. Visit www.artsonthehorizon.org for tickets.

Holiday Shopping Event. 4-8 p.m. at Reunions Gifts and Antiques store, 1709 Centre Plaza. Enjoy champagne, snacks, raffle, trunk show by local artist Janine Bland. Twenty percent of all sales will be donated to Senior Services of Alexandria. Visit seniorservicesalex.org for more.

Ballet Performance. 5:30 p.m. Alexandria Community Dance and West Potomac Academy present "The Nutcracker" at West Potomac High School theater, 6500 Quander Road. More than 100 students from local schools and performers ranging from age 4 to adult will perform. \$12/adult; \$10/student in advance or \$15/adult; \$12/student at the door. Visit www.alexandriadance.com for tickets.

A Peter White Christmas. 7:30 p.m. at Birchmere Music Hall, 3701 Mount Vernon Ave. Features Mindi Abair & Rick Braun. \$49.50. Visit www.birchmere.com or 703-549-7500 for tickets.

FRIDAY/DEC. 6

Theater Performance. 10 a.m. or 11:30 a.m. at W-3 Theatre at the Workhouse Arts Center, 9601 Ox Road, Lorton. Arts on the Horizon presents "Drumming with Dishes: The Holiday Edition." \$8/child and adults. Visit www.artsonthehorizon.org for tickets.

Holiday on the Avenue. 6-9 p.m. at the Del Ray Farmer's Market at Mount Vernon Avenue and E. Oxford Ave. Watch as the Del Ray Christmas tree is lit up, enjoy a visit from Santa Claus and a stroll down Mount Vernon Avenue which is illuminated by thousands of candles. Free. Visit www.visitdelray.com or 703-683-2570 for more.

Ballet Performance. 6:30 p.m. Alexandria Community Dance and West Potomac Academy present "The Nutcracker" at West Potomac High School theater, 6500 Quander Road. More than 100 students from local schools and performers ranging from age 4 to adult will perform. \$12/adult; \$10/student in advance or \$15/adult; \$12/student at the door. Half-price tickets for all Boy and Girl Scouts. Visit www.alexandriadance.com for tickets.

Holiday Open House. 6:30-9 p.m. at the Torpedo Factory Arts Center, 105 N. Union St. Enjoy food, refreshments and music while browsing items for purchase. Door prizes will be given. Visit www.torpedofactory.org for more.

Music Performance. At Birchmere Music Hall, 3701 Mount Vernon Ave. Bo Bice will perform as a special guest vocalist with Blood Sweat & Tears. Visit www.birchmere.com or 703-549-7500.

FRIDAY-SATURDAY/DEC. 6-7

Scottish Christmas Walk Weekend. Celebrate Alexandria's Scottish heritage with the 43rd Annual Campagna Center Scottish Christmas Walk Weekend. Start the weekend with the Christmas Marketplace and Heather and Greens sale from 9 a.m.-5 p.m. on Dec. 6 at the George Washington Masonic Memorial. Deck the Hall with Santa from 1-3 p.m. on Dec. 6 at the George Washington Masonic Memorial. The



The Campagna Center

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Scottish Walk Parade
A Taste of Scotland
Heather & Greens Sales

Holiday Designer Tour of Homes
Deck the Halls with Santa
A Christmas Marketplace

Parade: Saturday, Dec. 7th at 11:00 a.m.

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ENTERTAINMENT

Taste of Scotland is from 8-11 p.m. on Dec. 6 at the George Washington Masonic Memorial. On Dec. 7, enjoy the Scottish Christmas Walk at 11 a.m. and the Tour of Homes from 11 a.m.-4 p.m. Visit www.scottishchristmaswalk.com for tickets and more information.

SATURDAY/DEC. 7

Holiday Craft Fair. 9 a.m.-3 p.m. at Gadsby's Tavern, 400 Cameron St. Alexandria Unit 24 of the American Legion Auxiliary will host the event. There will also be a bake sale. All proceeds will support veterans, military and their families in the community.

Holiday Market. 10 a.m.-4 p.m. in the Colasanto Center, 2704 Mount Vernon Ave. The Del Ray Artisans will offer handmade work from local artists, handmade ornaments and bake sale items to benefit the Animal Welfare League of Alexandria. Free. Visit www.TheDelRayArtisans.org for more.

Theater Performance. 10:30 a.m. at W-3 Theatre at the Workhouse Arts Center, 9601 Ox Road, Lorton. Arts on the Horizon presents "Drumming with Dishes: The Holiday Edition." \$8/child and adults. Visit www.artsonthehorizon.org for tickets.

Scottish Walk Parade Open House. 11 a.m.-4 p.m. at Stabler-Leadbeater Apothecary Museum, 105-107 S. Fairfax St. Enjoy free tours and browse items that were used during the time of George Washington. Visit www.alexandriava.gov/historic/apothecary/default.aspx or 703-746-3852.

Watercolor Show and Sale. 4-7 p.m. at Hollin Hall Senior Center, 1500 Shenandoah Road. Over 50 participating artists from the Torpedo Factory will be selling their works. All artists are students of Gwendolyn C. Bragg. Free. 703-765-4573, TTY: 711.

Country-Western Dance. Lessons start at 6:30 p.m., dancing from 7:30-10 p.m. at Lincolnia Senior Center, 4710 N. Chambliss St. A DJ provides music. Couples and singles welcome. \$10/NVCWDA member; \$12/non-member; \$5/child. Visit www.nvcwda.org or 703-860-4941. Bring own non-alcoholic drinks.

Music Concert. 7 p.m. at St. Aidan's Episcopal Church, 8531 Riverside Road. Canadian folk singer James Keelaghan will perform. \$18/general; \$15/advance. Visit www.focusmusic.org for more.

Honky Tonk Holiday Show. Bill Kirchen & Too Much Fun performs at The Birchmere Music Hall, 3701 Mount Vernon Ave. Visit www.birchmere.com or 703-549-7500 for tickets.

Benefit Concert. 8:15 p.m. at Immanuel Church-on-the-Hill, 3606 Seminary Road. The Singers' Theater of Washington will perform popular

arias from composers including Rossini, Puccini, Wagner and more. \$20/admission is suggested. Visit www.singerstheatre.com for more.

Father Christmas Photos. 10 a.m.-3 p.m. at Gadsby's Arcade, 320 King St. Children and dogs can take photos with Father Christmas. \$10 for polaroid-like photos and \$5 donation for your own photos. Proceeds benefit Gadsby's Tavern. 703-746-4242.

Kwanzaa Family Fun Workshop. 11 a.m.-12:30 p.m. at Alexandria Black History Museum, 902 Wythe St. Learn about Kwanzaa through games, songs and more. \$5/person. Visit oha.alexandriava.gov/bhrc/ or 703-746-4356.

Christmas at Carlyle House. Noon-4 p.m. at Carlyle House, 121 N. Fairfax St. Tour a holiday-decorated house, talk to soldiers from the 1st Virginia Regiment during 1761, enjoy demonstrations, samples and more. \$5/person. 703-549-2997.

Winter Wreath Workshop. 1-3 p.m. at Green Spring Gardens, 4603 Green Spring Road. Create a beautiful winter wreath to take home for your front door after Green Spring staff demonstrate the dazzling possibilities. Greens, forms, ribbons and cones included with additional \$20 supply fee. Code: 290 484 6901, \$35/person. Register on-line at www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/greenspring or call Green Spring Gardens 703-642-5173.

Ornament Decorating Workshop. 1-4 p.m. at Alexandria Archaeology in the Torpedo Factory, 105 N. Union St. Families can decorate an artifact-shaped dough ornament. Free. 703-746-4399.

Home for the Holidays Pops Concert. 2 p.m. or 7:30 p.m. at Alexandria Singers, 1801 N. Quaker Lane. The Alexandria Singers will perform. \$25/reserved seats; \$20/general; \$15/group, senior or military; \$5/child age 6 and under. Visit www.alexandriasingers.com/ or 703-941-7464.

Ballet Performance. 2:30 p.m. and 6:30 p.m. Alexandria Community Dance and West Potomac Academy present "The Nutcracker" at West Potomac High School theater, 6500 Quander Road. More than 100 students from local schools and performers ranging from age 4 to adult will perform. \$12/adult; \$10/student in advance or \$15/adult; \$12/student at the door. Military members can get tickets for \$10 with proper ID for the 6:30 p.m. show. Visit www.alexandriadance.com for tickets.

Holiday Boat Parade of Lights. Festivities start at 3 p.m. with the parade at 5:30 p.m. at the waterfront at Cameron Street. More than 50 boats will illuminate the Potomac. Special appearance by Santa. Free. Visit www.visitalexandriava.com or 703-746-3301.

SUNDAY/DEC. 8

Theater Performance. 11 a.m. at W-3 Theatre at the Workhouse Arts Center, 9601 Ox Road, Lorton. Arts on the Horizon presents "Drumming with Dishes: The Holiday Edition." \$8/child and adults. Visit www.artsonthehorizon.org for tickets.

Breakfast with Santa. 10:30 a.m. or 1 p.m. at the Hotel Monaco, 480 King St. Metropolitan School of the Arts will host the breakfast. Tickets range in price from \$35-\$45/person. Visit www.metropolitanarts.org for tickets.

Holiday Market. Noon-4 p.m. in the Colasanto Center, 2704 Mount Vernon Ave. The Del Ray Artisans will offer handmade work from local artists, handmade ornaments and bake sale items to benefit the Animal Welfare League of Alexandria. Free. Visit www.TheDelRayArtisans.org.

Watercolor Show and Sale. Noon-4 p.m. at Hollin Hall Senior Center, 1500 Shenandoah Road. Over 50 participating artists from the Torpedo Factory will be selling their works. All artists are students of Gwendolyn C. Bragg. Free. 703-765-4573, TTY: 711.

Gardeners' Holiday Open House. Noon-4 p.m. at Green Spring Gardens, 4603 Green Spring Road. This festive day is for gardeners of all ages, individuals and families. Admission is free. There will be a Holiday Puppet Show by Bob Brown (tickets for the 2 p.m. show are \$3/person and can be purchased in advance using Code: 290 489 4301), festive greens and tree ornaments for sale, a vintage train display, seasonal breads for sale, and complimentary refreshments. There will be a whimsical gingerbread house contest. Get your Gingerbread House contest entry form at www.greenspring.org on the Special Events page. Call 703-642-5173 for more information.

"Christmas in Cape Breton." 7:30 p.m. at Birchmere Music Hall, 3701 Mount Vernon Ave. Natalie MacMaster is an award-winning fiddler. \$39.50. Visit www.birchmere.com or 703-549-7500 for tickets.

Chorale Performance. 4 p.m. at Alexandria Campus of Northern Virginia Community College, 3001 N. Beauregard St. New Dominion Chorale will perform works by Benjamin Britten and Thomas Beveridge. Special guest chorus World Children's Choir will perform along with other guests. \$30/adult; \$25/senior; \$5/student, child; \$20/groups of 10 or more. Visit www.newdominion.org or 703-442-9404.

Music Performance. 3 p.m. The Washington Metropolitan Philharmonic will perform at T.C. Williams High School, 3330 King St. \$20/adult; 18 and under free. Visit www.wmpamusic.org or 703-799-8229.



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PHOTO BY JOHN BORDNER

Workmen begin the installation of a Brazilian soapstone bar top Nov. 11 at Sweet Fire Donna's in the Carlyle neighborhood of Alexandria. The new BBQ restaurant from Donna Anderson, wife of "Mango Mike," will open in mid-December.

Sweet Fire Donna's BBQ to open in Carlyle.

By JEANNE THEISMANN
GAZETTE PACKET

In less than a month, the Carlyle neighborhood of Alexandria will be the home of Sweet Fire Donna's, the latest offering from "Mango Mike" Anderson, Bill Blackburn and Anderson's wife Donna.

"Make no mistake, this is a woman-owned business," said Anderson as he coordinated construction work Nov. 11 in the space formerly occupied by Jerry's Subs and Pizza. "Sweet Fire' Donna is definitely the one calling the shots."

Following the successful launch of Pork Barrel BBQ, Holy Cow and The Sushi Place in Del Ray, Anderson and his team decided on the Carlyle neighborhood for their next project.

"It's like the early days of Shirlington," Anderson said. "Carlyle has been around for eight years. It is in a growth mode and at a tipping point."

Located next to Artfully Gifts and Chocolate, the 1,800-square-foot space and will have indoor seating for 48 people and a barbecue oven that will hold up to 700 pounds of pork.

"There is a base of residents that like living here but need more options," Anderson said. "I wish more full service restaurants would come here. It's definitely a good time to get involved in the Carlyle



"Mango" Mike Anderson, left, gives Sheriff's Deputy Sergeant Anthony Zygmunt a look at the barbecue oven at the soon-to-open Sweet Fire Donna's.

neighborhood."

Anderson praised the work of the Alexandria Economic Development Partnership in luring the National Science Foundation headquarters from Arlington to Alexandria and the Carlyle area.

"My hat's off to them," Anderson said. "The odds were against them but Carlyle has all the great elements of a vibrant neighborhood — easy Metro and Beltway access and adjacent to Old Town and the PTO."

With a bar top made of unpolished Brazilian soapstone with copper veins as its centerpiece, Sweet Fire Donna's will feature an interior of wood and stone. The menu will be similar to Pork Barrel BBQ's but with a decidedly Southern twist.

"Donna is from South Carolina so there will be more focus on chopped pork and sweeter beans," said Anderson, adding with a laugh, "Did I mention she is calling the shots?"

More at sweetfiredonnas.com or 703-555-1212.



PHOTO BY JEANNE THEISMANN/GAZETTE PACKET

A Living Legend

More than 100 friends and family members gathered Nov. 16 to celebrate the 75th birthday of Living Legends of Alexandria founder Nina Tisara. Tisara, shown kneeling in her home surrounded by members of the Living Legends board of directors, created the nonprofit organization as a way to honor and chronicle the living history makers of Alexandria. For more information, visit www.alexandrialegends.com.

VIEWPOINTS

What are you thankful for, this year?



Nyima: "I'm thankful for Santa giving me presents and I'm thankful for family."



Carla Severich: "I'm thankful for my mother, for my whole family being healthy, and for having my job for the past 15 years."



Charles consulted with daughter Cecilia and they agreed on an answer: "We are thankful for our family."

PHOTOS BY RENÉE RUCCLES/GAZETTE PACKET



Shop 'Til You Drop

Alexandria Chamber of Commerce CEO John Long, second from left, celebrates the opening of the Tommy Hilfiger store with Prince George's County Executive Rushern Baker III, second from right, as part of opening day festivities of the Tanger Outlet Center Nov. 22 at National Harbor. With them are Chamber of Commerce representatives Jay Palermino and Shari Bolouri. More than 80 stores make up the \$100 million, 340,000-square-foot center. For more information, visit www.tangeroutlet.com/nationalharbor.

PHOTO BY JEANNE THEISMANN/GAZETTE PACKET

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Pursuant to the provision of section 4-1-16 of the code of the City of Alexandria, the Alexandria Police Department located at 3600 Wheeler Avenue, Alexandria, VA 22304 is now in possession of unclaimed bicycles, mopeds, lawn equipment, money, scooters, and other items. All persons having valid claim to the property should file a claim to the property with reasonable proof of ownership or the items will be sold, destroyed, converted or donated. For a complete listing go to <http://alexandriava.gov/police/> and contact the Police Property Section at (703) 746-6709.

21 Announcements

ABC LICENSE

AMR Wines Plus, LLC trading as AMR Wines Plus, 5401 Port Royal Rd, Springfield, VA 22151 and 6461 Autumn Glen Ct, Alexandria, VA 22312. the above establishment is applying to the VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGE CONTROL (ABC) for a Wholesale wine and wine importer-in-state license to sell or manufacture alcoholic beverages, Anna Ryjik, Manager/member
NOTE: Objections to the issuance of this license must be submitted to ABC no later than 30 days from the publishing date of the first of two required legal notices. Objections should be registered at www.abc.virginia.gov or 800-552-3200.

ABC LICENSE

Brown Bag Vino, LLC trading as Altura Wines, 108 N. Patrick St, Alexandria, VA 22314. The above establishment is applying to the VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGE CONTROL (ABC) for a Wine and Beer off premises license to sell or manufacture alcoholic beverages. Edgar Salinas/Partner
NOTE: Objections to the issuance of this license must be submitted to ABC no later than 30 days from the publishing date of the first of two required legal notices. Objections should be registered at www.abc.virginia.gov or 800-552-3200.

26 Antiques

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I'm a slow walker, but I never walk back.
-Abraham Lincoln

21 Announcements

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LETTERS

FROM PAGE 14

ing what they see as the value and fun of performing in a marching ensemble, not by threatening the denial of musical opportunities. And for those musicians who prefer to study their instrument in the traditional, seated ensemble, their contributions would be similarly valued, encouraged and welcomed.

Let's end the marching band mandate now and allow all students the choice to follow their musical dreams.

Ripley and Diana Forbes
Alexandria

What a Surprise

To the Editor:

City council voted to take the Old Dominion Boat Club parking lot by eminent domain. What a surprise! The 90-day period for further negotiation is laughable. Why should the city negotiate? They've already stuck their shovel in the asphalt. Why stop there? Why not take the boat club's building and piers? Surely there is a better public use for that land than a private club. Maybe that's been the plan all along?

Adron Krekeler
Alexandria

(I am a member of the Old Dominion Boat Club but this is my own opinion. I am not authorized to speak for the club.)

Matter of Compromise

To the Editor:

Though I would like to see the complete elimination of the Old Dominion Boat Club parking lot and its conversion to a park, I believe the city should accept the compromise offer from the ODBC to allow continuous public access and landscaped parkland along the Potomac River frontage.

However, I would add to the deal or counteroffer a requirement that the remainder of the parking lot be repaved with a permeable surface with on site treatment of the runoff of polluted storm water emanating from the site. Also the fence that encloses the parking lot is offensive and should be replaced with something more aesthetic. I can understand the need to keep non-members and the public from illegally parking on the lot but there are other ways of doing this without the cage effect.

The city could offer to pay for the cost of the repaving of the lot and other improvements as consideration for the public access/ park.

The important point is that if this is going to be a compromise and the city is to forego the option of taking the entirety of the lot by eminent domain then make this a complete package of improvements to achieve the public purpose of providing continuous public access along the waterfront and improving the environmental and aesthetic quality of the lower King Street and Waterfront Area.

If the OBCD balks at this deal then there is always Plan B with eminent domain acquisition. Eliminating impermeable surface

and mobile sources of pollution along a waterfront serves a public purpose especially given the threat of rising sea levels affecting the Potomac River. This changed circumstance may strengthen the city's case for use of eminent domain to protect the public's interest against increased flooding incidents due to climate change and elevated high tides.

Good luck — for the love of Alexandria by all concerned good luck will prevail.

Larry Grossman
Longboat Key, Fla.

New Commercial Corridor

To the Editor:

Now that we've got 90 days to concentrate our thoughts on improving the design of the "foot of King" and surrounding area — let's grab it. This is not only about the plaza, but also about the entire newly created commercial corridor on Union Street, that runs from Robinson Terminal North to Robinson Terminal South. It's all up in the air right now.

It was getting captured by the past that led inexperienced city planners to focus solely on the foot of King. This is a problem. The proposed plaza is constrained by two design bottlenecks — the Torpedo Factory and the Chart House that would trap people arriving there from King Street or by water taxi and impede the flow of foot traffic going north to the RTN complex. This means that developments at the RTN complex will see fewer dollars, as potential customers will flow south or back up King Street. And as currently designed, the small "foot of King" plaza, is expected to accommodate disparate contradictory activities: the Old Dominion Boat Club, a fountain/ice skating rink and its sales/rentals, water taxi arrivals and ticketing, and a loose collection of chairs and potted trees for the walking weary.

It is obvious that professional re-design is desperately needed now — before another permanent development mistake is made, and commercial properties to the north are short changed. This is precisely why Olin Studios was engaged. This is not a job for amateurs. It's a toughie, and getting it wrong creates a costly problem with the life of concrete.

One solution may be to distribute visitors who arrive by water taxi (or commuter ferry?) by repurposing the large capacity, Chart House building, its spacious surrounding dock, and natural exit via the wide passageway to Union Street next to the Torpedo Factory. With the right signage this can work for the entire new commercial corridor. With full facilities — a visitor center, coffee shop, ticketing, and restrooms — it can create a good first experience.

As RealCo testified to the city in February it was a lack of traffic from the river combined with a drop-off in seasonal tourism from November to April were at the heart of the Food Pavilion's failure. A large, dedicated ferry station would mitigate this. And properties at 101 and 201 N. Union,

SEE LETTERS, PAGE 26

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'Tis the Season All Year-Round at Inova Alexandria Hospital

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

This time of year, many of us generously give our time and money to those less fortunate as thanks for all we have. Here at Inova Alexandria Hospital, we too are getting in the spirit of the season. As part of an ongoing partnership with the City of Alexandria, our staff is collecting grocery store gift cards, as well as winter

COMMENTARY coats, hats and gloves to help less fortunate residents of our community. It's an annual tradition for us that underscores the true reason for the season.

But our commitment to helping the community remains long after the holidays. As part of the not-for-profit Inova Health System, Inova Alexandria Hospital is committed to improving the health of the diverse community we serve all year-round through traditions great and small. Let me share just a few:



❖ **The Walk to Fight Breast Cancer** – In partnership with the City of Alexandria, we sponsor this annual October walk, which has helped us provide more than 7,000 free mammograms to uninsured/underinsured

City of Alexandria residents since 1994.

❖ **The Greater Washington Heart Walk** – Each year our employees team up to raise money to support the American Heart Association's efforts to eradicate cardiovascular disease, the number one killer of Americans. This year we raised nearly \$7,000.

❖ **Annual Health Expo** – Each fall we host this free, interactive event focused on health and well-being. This year's expo featured skin cancer and other health screenings, cooking demonstrations, exercise classes and Q-and-A opportunities with our clinical staff.

❖ **Emergency Management and Safety Fair** – In partnership with the City of Alexandria, every summer we invite the local police and fire departments, Alexandria City Public Schools, the Health Department and other public and private organizations to educate the community about safety and emergency preparedness.

❖ **Back-to-School Supplies Drive** – Working with Alexandria City Public Schools, we gather and distribute school supplies for low-income families in Alexandria each August.

❖ **Employee Giving Campaign** – Inova Health System's annual systemwide campaign encourages employees to donate money in support of a community program of their choice. More than 70 percent of Inova Alexandria Hospital employees donated this year.

❖ **Supporting our global community** – Inova Health System is raising funds to support the Filipino people whose country was devastated by Typhoon Haiyan. Funds raised will be given to our partner, Project

HOPE, to purchase emergency medical supplies and medicines. Inova will match donations up to \$50,000.

As Charles Dickens, author of "A Christmas Carol," once said, "No one is useless in this world who lightens the burdens of another." I am proud to work among so many at Inova Alexandria Hospital who generously share their gifts to lighten the burdens of those less fortunate in our community. It truly 'tis the season here all year-round.

If you are looking for a charitable cause this season, please consider helping those less fortunate who seek medical care at Inova Alexandria Hospital. As a not-for-profit hospital, we serve all who come through our doors regardless of their ability to pay. For example, just \$50 could provide bus passes or gas cards to assist needy cancer patients with transportation to treatment.

To see other examples of how your gifts can help, please see "Donate Now" at inova.org/IAH.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

FROM PAGE 25

the new Waterfront Market, and proposed restaurant at the former Food Pavilion would thrive.

And it is fully expected that the navigational channel of the Potomac will very soon teem with commuter water traffic. Let's seize this opportunity and not do another BRAC.

Very importantly, this option may help retain one of the true brand features of Old Town — a living, breathing historic, and beloved boating club. Something you couldn't buy today, if you tried. Its membership wait list is very long, and people stand for years to get in. Both good measures of value to the community. Its launch site might even be shared with kayakers or canoers, stopping for lunch, and needing a place to park for free. Old Town is a place where people of all kinds float their boats.

Let's put our money into redesigning a small part of the waterfront to transform and benefit the whole Union Street commercial corridor, avoid eminent domain in defense of flowerpots and a fountain, and go with the flow of rising river traffic on the Potomac.

Kathryn Papp
Alexandria

their vassals. What's gotten into these people?

Clearly, the waterfront imbroglio has affected their judgment. Instead of heeding the people, they voted to issue an ultimatum to the boat club: 90 days to capitulate or we'll seize your property. If this isn't justification for wards allowing neighbors to elect someone who lives and cares about the neighborhood in which they reside, then I can't think of a better example.

To compel candidates to reside in the community they represent, and to require them to persuade their neighbors that they will promote their interests and be accountable to them, and to minimize the power of political party endorsements, we must elect council members by wards. And to ensure they don't believe their council seat is a birthright, add term limits too.

Otherwise, we'll get keep getting what we have now: a polite but dismissive mayor acting like a would-be potentate and, save Silberberg, council members acting as his groupthink supplicants. If they continue to act as our rulers instead of our representatives, then recall them.

Jimm Roberts
Alexandria

A Taxpayer-Funded Lawsuit?

To the Editor:

It didn't take more than a Texas second for Paul Smedberg to make a motion after the 69th speaker, Frank Fannon, had given his remarks to council relative the use of eminent domain on the boat club parking lot. Obviously, the fix was in. Only one council member, Allison Silberberg, had the intestinal fortitude to vote against the use of eminent domain.

After fighting for 36 years against the federal government to maintain what they

own, ODBC now needs to live to fight one more battle. The city always thought that the Feds would win that lawsuit and then subsequently the Feds would turn the property over to the city. It wasn't till 2011 when the suit was settled in the favor of the ODBC that they then had to find another way to take the property.

The Waterfront Plan served as their devils vehicle to do this.

The city attorney was the first to tell the Boat Club that they could retain only 11,000 of the 22,000 square feet of their parking lot. If they didn't like it, the city would take it thereby essentially threatening the use of eminent domain. This dictatorship by this council and their staff has to come to a screeching halt. Even if council accepted the ODBC's current offer there is no guarantee that this or future councils won't try to take additional real estate. In my opinion, it is the plan of this council to whittle away at the ODBC parking lot and building until they put ODBC totally out of business.

The entire membership of ODBC has to approve any proposed settlement. As only one of 750 members I will not vote to approve any deal. If the city wants to spend taxpayer dollars on a lawsuit then invoke eminent domain. The city will lose any court action based upon the new eminent domain law passed last year by an overwhelming 75 percent of the Virginia populace. Council has over-reached and deserves another kick in the Wales Alley butt.

Council, wake up. You are being given poor advice from your city manager and city attorney. What you want to do cannot be backed up by solid legal advice.

Townsend A. "Van" Van Fleet
Alexandria

Democratic Machine

To the Editor:

When sworn into office, Mayor Euille and all members of council took an oath to uphold the law and the constitution of the Commonwealth of Virginia. Last year Virginia voters approved an amendment strengthening property rights and limiting use of eminent domain in Virginia. By so doing, this means that our local elected officials cannot buy/purchase the small parcel of land (0.01 percent) involved with the Old Dominion Boat Club parking lot. I suspect that when this law was passed last year, city staff, Mayor Euille and all council members who were on the council in 2006 were possibly thinking about using eminent domain in the West End of Alexandria. I and others in the West End cannot forget the infamous memo from Assistant City Manager Mark Jinks to Mayor Euille and all council members at that time welcoming BRAC-133 to the Mark Center stating that site selection would meet all the needs for BRAC-133 regarding transportation, restaurants, housing, etc. And of course the promise by Mayor Euille not to rush the Beauregard Small Area Plan, which of course was done without really listening to citizens concerns and alternate suggestions. Should our elected officials proceed with eminent domain the cost to Alexandria taxpayers will be more than we can afford and that doesn't take into account the \$300 million to fix the sewer systems in Alexandria, along with the city continuing to hire major laws firms to deal with land use issues and continued cost for outside consultants which City Manager Young and Mayor Euille seem to think we need to do for everything.

As reported in the Alexandria Gazette regarding the Waterfront group meeting, Mr. Jinks stated that eminent domain may be the only way for the city to seize the property from ODBC. Have they all forgotten about the recent Supreme Court decision?

SEE LETTERS, PAGE 27

OBITUARY

Peter M. Murphy

Peter M. Murphy, Counsel to the Commandant of the Marine Corps for 20 years (1984-2004), died on Nov. 15, 2013. He was 68 years old. The cause of death was complications of a Parkinsonian syndrome.

Murphy was appointed Counsel by General P.X. Kelley in 1984. Murphy would go on to serve as Counsel to six Commandants — Kelley, Gray, Mundy, Krulak, Jones and Hagee — spanning a period that included the Beirut Barracks bombing, Iran-Contra, the first Gulf War and 9/11.

As Counsel, Murphy oversaw a staff of 60 military and civilian lawyers and 60 support staff across the world. Murphy directed the Marine Corps administrative procurement, environmental, ethics and labor law programs and served as the principal advisor to the USMC on issues encompassing international relations, community outreach, major weapons systems acquisitions, complex investigations affecting national and Marine Corps interests, commercial legal issues (including base closures and legal aspects of homeland security), and environmental litigation and legislation. He was instrumental in the implementation of the Goldwater-Nichols Act, the 1986 law which reorganized the Department of Defense. In addition, he was a member of the Defense Department's senior legal leadership group and was the Marine's senior ethics

advisor during his entire tenure.

He assisted in the creation of the Injured Marines Semper Fi Fund, which provides financial assistance and lifetime support for injured and critically ill members of the U.S. Armed Forces and their families, and continued to serve on its board of directors after his retirement. When Murphy retired from the office of Counsel in 2004, Commandant General Hagee bestowed upon him the title of Honorary Marine.

Following his retirement, he served as a partner at Holland & Knight LLP, Washington, D.C., for two years.

Murphy was the recipient of numerous awards, including the Presidential Rank Award of Distinguished Executive in 2004 as well as in 1996, and the Presidential Rank of Meritorious Award in 1992 and 2000. In 1997, the Secretary of Defense presented him with the Department of Defense Distinguished Civilian Service Award, the highest honor awarded by the Secretary to a career employee.

Murphy is also remembered as a mentor



and friend to generations of civilian and military lawyers.

Prior to his appointment to the Marine Corps, Murphy served in a number of positions within the Navy Office of General Counsel, including assistant General Counsel (Intelligence), Deputy Counsel for the Naval Supply Systems Command and chief attorney for the Saudi Navy Expansion Program.

During the Vietnam conflict, Murphy served as an infantry officer in the U.S. Army.

Murphy earned his bachelor's degree magna cum laude from Long Island University in 1972, and his J.D. from St. John's Law School in 1974.

Murphy was born in 1945 and grew up in Yonkers, N.Y. He is survived by his wife Kathy and daughter Michaela.

Services were held at the John Phillips Sousa Band Hall at Marine Barracks Washington, 8th and "I" Streets, S.E., on Nov. 23.

The family requests that donations be made to the Injured Marines Semper Fi Fund at semperfifund.org, in lieu of sending flowers.

LETTERS

FROM PAGE 26

Once again, Mr. Jinks, Mayor Euille and Mr. Young feel the Waterfront plan must move forward ASAP. What's the rush? Is this really about ODBC and the waterfront plan or is this our local elected officials once again ignoring laws and doing what they want to do rather than work with the waterfront group and ODBC who have addressed the major issues involved.

Remember, Old Dominion Boat Club owns Boardwalk and Park Place. I doubt any member of council or senior staff would allow eminent domain in their neighborhood. Mr. Young, Cameron Station residents would never let this issue get this far nor would Del Ray or Carlyle, Mr. Mayor.

Interestingly enough, Seattle, Wash., a larger city than Alexandria, finally passed district elections for their City Council this November and I'm proud to say that I was involved with the first campaign for district elections for council in 1996 when I was living there. Although it failed, Seattle residents persevered. Seattle, like Alexandria, is run by the Democratic machine and the downtown business association. This recent action by Mayor Euille and members of the council, City Manager Young, his staff, and City Attorney Banks and his staff cries out for either district elections for council and/or term limits for mayor and council. It is time to "clean house" at city hall and take eminent domain off the table. It is time for Alexandria residents/taxpayers to take back our city whether it is done via district elections or term limits.

Annabelle Fisher
Alexandria

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Region Becomes Hotbed for Car-Title Lending

FROM PAGE 1

erty Law Center. “People who get into this end up much worse off than when they started.”

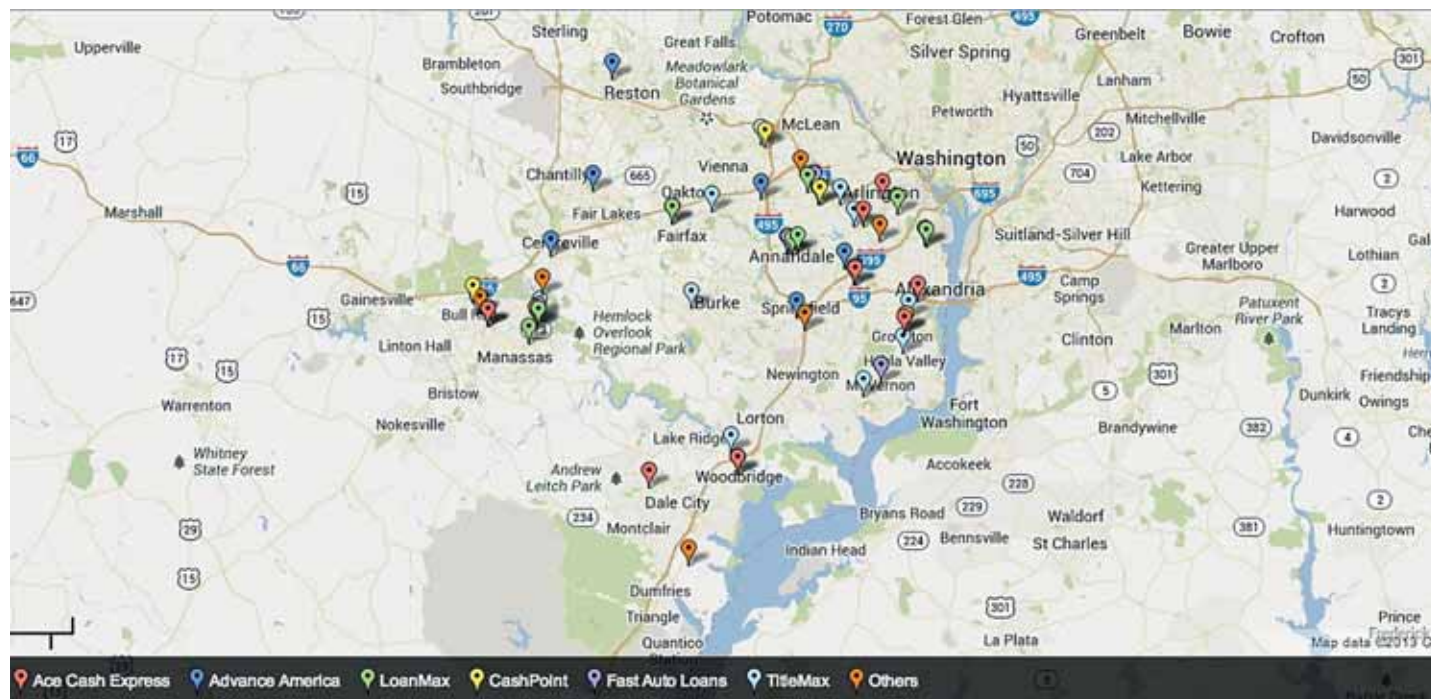
Lenders have always charged a range of interest rates for loans, but what’s happening now in neighborhoods across Northern Virginia is unprecedented. Back in 2010, after then-Attorney General Bob McDonnell went after the car-title lending industry for violating Virginia law restricting how soon collections could begin on loans, members of the Virginia General Assembly crafted legislation that set rules specific to car-title lenders. The legislation created some restrictions that prevented lenders from going after borrowers for additional money if they had already repossessed an automobile, prevented lenders from charging more than 50 percent of the value of a car and capped the interests rate at 264 percent a year.

“Under this law, Mister Speaker, the industry will not grow,” said Del. Terry Kilgore (R-1) when the bill was debated on the House floor. “It will shrink.”

THAT PREDICTION ended up being wrong. When the 2010 legislation passed, Virginia had 125 car-title lending locations. By the end of the year, that number had spiked to 184 locations. By the end of 2011, according to a report from the State Corporation Commission, the industry had 378 locations across the commonwealth. And the industry was clamoring for more. In 2011, a year after the new rules were created, the General Assembly considered another piece of legislation that undercut one of the restrictions created by the previous bill — preventing lenders from accepting titles of out-of-state cars.

“If you want to see car-title lenders do more loans in the state of Virginia, then you want to vote yes,” said Glenn Oder (R-94), who brought a plush shark to the House floor to help him make the point. “But if you agree with me that the law we passed last year was sufficient, then you want to vote no.”

A number of Northern Virginia legislators disagreed with Oder and supported the legislation to expand the reach of car-title lenders outside the boundaries of the commonwealth. The Senate passed the legislation on a 32 to 3 vote, with every member of the Northern Virginia supporting legislation



that was introduced by Senate Democratic leader Dick Saslaw (D-35). On the House side, the vote was much tighter — 51 in support and 47 in opposition. The coalition in support of the bill was bipartisan, including Del. Bob Brink (D-48), Del. Barbara Comstock (R-34), Del. Kaye Kory (D-38), Del. Tim Hugo (R-40) and Del. Mark Sickles (D-43).

“All these laws do is let people get a car-title loan,” said Del. Dave Albo (R-42), who also voted in favor of the bill. “People can determine if this is a good choice for them or if it’s a bad choice for them.”

INDUSTRY LEADERS contributed generously to members of the General Assembly and lobbied heavily to get their way. Since 2009, LoanMax contributed more than \$500,000 and Fast Auto Loans contributed more than \$200,000. Saslaw received the largest individual contributions, receiving \$22,000 from Fast Auto Loans and almost \$20,000 from LoanMax. Many of the other legislators voting in support of the industry also received financial support from car-title lenders. When asked about his support of the 2011 bill, Del. Bob Brink (D-48) had little to say.

“No comment,” said Brink, who received \$1,500 from LoanMax and \$500 from Fast Auto Loans.

A map of car-title lending operations in



This site is soon to become the latest addition to the series of car-title lending operations that have opened along the Route 1 corridor since legislators opened the door to the industry back in 2010.

Northern Virginia shows they are clustered in areas with high poverty and low salaries. Manassas has 11 locations.

Annandale has four. South Arlington has two. The Route 1 corridor in southeast Fairfax County has seven, and another one is about to open at the intersection with Huntington Avenue. Some say they are concerned Northern Virginia is becoming a place where unscrupulous lenders can take

advantage of people in need who come from the District of Columbia or Maryland — a fear that will become more pronounced when a new casino opens in Prince George’s County.

“Route 1 has become the car-title lending capital of Northern Virginia,” said Del. Scott Surovell (D-44). “And that’s the last kind of economic development we need on the corridor.”

BUSINESS NOTES

Email announcements to gazette@connectionnewspapers.com. Deadline is Thursday at noon. Photos encouraged.

Area residents have known for years that when they buy gifts from **Ten Thousand Villages**, they are actually “giving twice.” Not only do they find unique handmade items, they provide much-needed income to Third World artisans enabling them to feed, house, and educate their

families. For several evenings this December, shoppers at Ten Thousand Villages will support favorite local charities, because Ten Thousand Villages will donate a percentage of the evening’s sales to non-profit organizations

working to improve the community and the world. Ten Thousand Villages is located at 915 King Street. Visit www.alexandria.tenthousandvillages.com or call 703-684-1435.

Monday, Dec. 2, 6-8 p.m.: **Coexist Foundation**, a non-profit organization creating understanding across religious and cultural divides by improving religious literacy across civic institutions, industry, media and society. coexistfoundation.org

Tuesday, Dec. 3, 6-8 p.m.: **Give to the World**, an international organization that provides medicine, clothing toys, school supplies and other goods to needy families around the world. www.givetotheworld.org

Thursday, Dec. 5, 7-9 p.m.: **Phoenix Bikes**, an Arlington-based bicycle shop which, through bike repair, mechanics, and sales, gives local youth the necessary skills and education to prepare them for the future, while providing customers affordable, refurbished bikes and repair services. www.phoenixbikes.org

Saturday, Dec. 7, 7-9 p.m.: **Computer C.O.R.E.** of Alexandria, which works to help low-income adults acquire the technological and life skills they need to pursue their career aspirations. www.computercore.org

Sunday, Dec. 8, 5-7 p.m.: **Haiti-Micah Project**, which works to assist the street children of Mirebalais, Haiti by providing food, clean water, health care, education, vocational training and

emotional well being. www.Haiti-Micah.org

Tuesday, Dec. 10, 6-8 p.m.: **Latin America Working Group Education Fund**, which promotes human rights, justice, peace and sustainable development throughout Latin America. www.lawg.org

Thursday, Dec. 12, 7-9 p.m.: **Animal Welfare League of Alexandria**. Operating the Vola Lawson Animal Shelter, the AWLA is committed to ending animal homelessness, promoting animal welfare, and serving as an educational resource for the community. www.AlexandriaAnimals.org

Monday, Dec. 16, 6-8 p.m.: **Good Shep-**

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PHOTOS CONTRIBUTED

Joshua Mann shares an original poem as Director Shennell Coit and guest singer Jacqueline Jones listen.

Sheriff's Office Hosts Thanksgiving Program

The Alexandria Sheriff's Office hosted its annual Thanksgiving program for inmates at the William G. Truesdale Adult Detention Center on Thursday, Nov. 21. The program featured a musical performance and readings by inmates, as well as singing by guest Jacqueline Jones, a member of the city employee choir who works for the Finance Department. Inmate Karina Ortega shared "What Thanksgiving Means to Me" before joining inmates Rungnatee Pearson, Jamille Ferguson and Leslie Cradle in singing "Grateful." Inmate Joshua Mann read an original poem expressing what he is thankful for and Pearson gave a reading that explored the history of the Thanksgiving holiday.



From left: Leslie Cradle leads Rungnatee Pearson, Jamille Ferguson and Karina Ortega as they sing "Grateful" for fellow inmates at the William G. Truesdale Adult Detention Center.



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

Leaders in the Law

Ben Dimuro, Nina Ginsberg, Marni Byrum, Martha McQuade, Tom Curcio and Pia Trigiani enjoy the reception for Leaders in the Law at the Science Museum of Virginia in Richmond. DiMuroGinsberg sponsored the reception. Attorneys Ginsberg, Byrum, and Curcio were honored as 2013 Leaders in the Law. Trigiani, who was selected as the 2012 Leader of the Year, presented this year's Leader of the Year award to John B. McCammon.



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

To Play for University of Florida

Olivia Cole, a senior at Bishop Ireton High School in Alexandria has signed a National Letter of Intent to play women's lacrosse at the University of Florida. Cole is a decorated goal-tender earning All-American, All-State, and All-Conference honors while leading Bishop Ireton to both the Virginia State finals and the Washington Catholic Athletic Conference finals. Cole will continue her playing career with the Florida Gators who are a perennial NCAA championship contender. Above: Amelia Cole '17, Grant Cole, Olivia Cole '14, and Susan Cole. Standing: Dr. Thomas Curry, Head of School, and Rick Sofield, Varsity Lacrosse coach

FROM PAGE 28

herd Housing and Family Services, which works to reduce homelessness, increase community support, and promote self-sufficiency in Fairfax County. www.goodhousing.org

Thursday, Dec. 19, 7-9 p.m.: **Shelter House**, which works with homeless families in Northern Virginia and whose mission is to break the cycle of homelessness for families and victims of domestic violence in Fairfax County. www.shelterhouse.org

Local architect **Charles M. Goodman** left a Modernist design legacy on numerous communities in the Washington, D.C. area, including the original terminal of Reagan National Airport and Alexandria's Hollin Hills subdivision. Fans of Goodman's streamlined style, familiar to viewers of the "Mad Men" television series, can make it their own on Dec. 7 with furniture and artwork from his personal collection at Potomack Company's Modern Designer auction.

Original pieces by Hans Wegner, Harry Bertola, Jens Risom, Arne Vodder and other mid-20th century designers are among more than 100 lots of chairs, tables, paintings, decorative arts and other items from the home of Charles and Dorothy Goodman, as well as furniture from the award-winning Alcoa Care-free Home in Rochester, NY, designed by Goodman in 1957 as a prototype for the post-World War II affordable housing boom.

Pre-sale viewing will begin on Saturday, Nov. 23 at 10 a.m. at The Potomack Company located at 1120 N. Fairfax St. For additional information, call 703-684-4550 or visit www.potomackcompany.com.

Two attorneys recently joined the Alexandria office of MercerTrigiani.

Marion S. Cooper joins the firm as counsel. Most recently she worked as risk management attorney for Dow Lohnes, PLLC in Washington, D.C. where she managed the firm's conflict of interests and ethics issues. Previously, she was a conflicts attorney with Hunton & Williams and served eleven

years as an Assistant Attorney General in the Office of the Attorney General for the Commonwealth of Virginia. Cooper also served as the Property Registration Administrator for the Virginia Real Estate Board.

Cooper is licensed to practice in Virginia and the District of Columbia and is a member of the Virginia Bar Association. She represents common interest communities, providing counsel on governance and administration. A 1977 graduate of Rutgers University, she earned her law degree from the University of Richmond School of Law in 1981.

Douglas M. Diffie joins the firm as an associate. He is licensed to practice law in Virginia and is a member of the Virginia Bar Association. His practice focuses on general legal matters for common interest community associations, including advising community associations with respect to daily business operations, contract matters, voting and proxy issues, and quorum and meeting requirements.

He also provides litigation support on matters for firm clients, including assessment collection. Diffie is a 2008 graduate of the College of William & Mary where he majored in government. He earned his law degree from the University of Richmond School of Law in 2012 and following graduation, served as law clerk to the Honorable Charles E. Poston and the Honorable John R. Doyle, judges of the Circuit Court for the City of Norfolk.

Visit www.MercerTrigiani.com or call 703-837-5001.

Artfully Chocolate was named number nine in the 15 Best Places to Drink Hot Chocolate in America by Fodor.

They wrote "Putting a spin on traditional hot chocolate, Artfully Chocolate serves up delicious surprises. The shop's Cocoa Bar offers a variety of blends, all named for famous 'divas.' Guests can order a 'Judy Garland' with whipped cream and rainbow sprinkles, or a 'Liz Taylor' infusion of semi-sweet chocolate and lavender."

Visit Artfully Chocolate at 2003A Mount Vernon Ave. or <http://thecocoagallery.com/> for more.

Inexperienced Titans Looking To Get Program Back on Track

Coach King wants group effort until standout players emerge.

BY JON ROETMAN
GAZETTE PACKET

Two days after a strong performance during a scrimmage at Landon, the T.C. Williams boys' basketball team concluded Monday's practice with a missed layup that caused head coach Julian King to wave the Titans to the baseline for some running.

"That's a terrible ending," King said to the Titans, "to a bad day."

There will be good days and there will be bad days for the Titans early in the 2013-14 season as a group of new faces tries to get on the same page. With first-team all-district performer Malik Carney and 6-foot-6 inside presence Jeremiah Clarke opting to focus on their football futures at the University of North Carolina rather than play basketball, the Titans are left with two players — senior guard Mert Ozkaynak and junior guard Darius Holland — who were on last year's roster. Holland missed time as a sophomore due to academic ineligibility, adding to the team's inexperience level.

So who is going to step up and carry T.C. Williams?

"Everybody," King said. "I know that's a little vague, but I'll be honest — everybody, just because we are a completely new group that has been thrown together and it's going to take some time for us to figure out who is going to be the guy that we can count on night in and night out. I just preach to the guys, let's do everything by committee. Let's not worry about individual accolades. Let's just worry about our team goals at the moment. As we go on, [during] certain games each individual talent will shine through and you'll get your just due in time."

In 2011, T.C. won the Patriot District and



PHOTOS BY CRAIG STERBUTZEL/GAZETTE PACKET

Northern Region championships before suffering an overtime loss in the state semifinals. In 2012, the Titans repeated as district champions. Last year, however, T.C. was bounced in the district semifinals and lost to Wakefield in the opening round of the regional tournament — a down year for a program with a winning tradition.

Is last season's early postseason exit motivation for the Titans?

"It should be," King said. "I bring it up every day. If not's not, shame on you for wanting to be a basketball player and a competitor. You should look at it and say ... it was a down year for TC standards, let's change that. You have to say, not on my watch. Let's get it back on the right track."

While King is looking for a group effort early in the season, there are several candidates to break out and lead the Titans.

Ozkaynak has been on the varsity since he was a freshman, but King said his game needs a confidence injection.

"He's had a lot of ups and downs and a lot of it has to do with a confidence issue," King said. "... I've seen a lot of growth and maturity out of him. The thing is keeping it consistent and him adding a little aggressiveness to it." Holland showed his athletic ability on the football field as the school's varsity quarterback and will now try to be a playmaker on the court. The junior said

T.C. Williams head boys' basketball coach Julian King talks to Warren Smith, left, and Darius Holland during practice on Monday.

T.C. Williams senior Alex Bledsoe shoots during Monday's practice.



winning would help convert Titans doubters.

"They can doubt us," Holland said, "but if we prove them wrong then they'll become supporters." Junior guard Andrew Hill is a transfer from Bishop O'Connell who could be a difference-maker. Senior post Michael Gray, at 6 feet 5 and 300-plus pounds, gives the Titans size in the paint.

Seniors Tomi Fadahunsi, John Chandler, Kevin Perry, Alex Bledsoe, Justin Kerekes, Khalil Celestine, and Warren Smith, juniors Boubacar Diallo, Curtis Jordan, and Jamison Clark, and sophomores Dejuan Robinson and Jordan Jones are also on the

team.

T.C. Williams will open the season Dec. 7 on the road against Wakefield in the annual Parker-Gray/Hoffman-Boston memorial contest. Other notable Titan games include a matchup with Warwick on Dec. 21 at Kecoughtan High School and contests against Duval (Dec. 27) and Montrose Christian (Dec. 28) in Baltimore.

"If we execute the way we know we can, we're going to states," Holland said. "Most people say we're undersized [and] we don't have the experience that most teams down [south] have, but basketball is universal. ... It's all about execution."

SPORTS BRIEF

Group 6A North Region Football Playoffs

Three of four favorites advanced during the 6A North region football quarterfinals on Nov. 22, with Langley being the lone high seed to fall short.

The Saxons, seeded No. 5 in the region, lost to No. 13 Stonewall Jackson 51-48 in the region's highest-scoring game of the weekend. Stonewall Jackson will travel to face No. 1 Centreville in the semifinals at 1:30 p.m. on Saturday, Nov. 30. Undeclared Centreville beat No. 8 South County 55-35 in the quarterfinals on Friday.

No. 2 Lake Braddock beat No. 7 Yorktown 40-7 to earn a trip to the semifinals, where the undefeated Bruins will host No. 3 Westfield at 11:30 p.m. on Saturday, Nov. 30. The Bulldogs beat No. 11 Robinson, 21-14.

Lake Braddock and Westfield faced one another during the regular season, with the Bruins winning 28-24 on Sept. 20. At the time, it was Westfield's first regular-season loss since 2010.

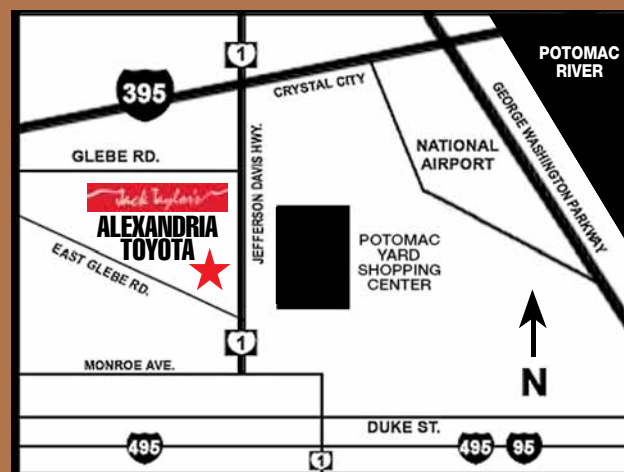


Jessica Kammen, a senior at Bishop Ireton High School, has signed a National Letter of Intent to row at Fordham University in New York. Kammen will row for Coach Ted Bonanno, who is in his 25th year leading the Rams. During his tenure, Fordham crews have earned 17 national championships. Sitting: Angela Kammen '16, David Kammen, Jessica Kammen '14, Peggy Kammen; standing: Coach Mary Jordan, Dr. Thomas Curry, Head of School; Stephen Crooker, Director of Instruction, and Bill Simmons, Athletic Director.

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Left to Right: Babs Beckwith, Mason Bavin, Amy and Dave Hawkins

McEneaney Associates is a proud sponsor of Historic Alexandria Foundation, Toasting Our Town. The wine tasting and silent auction event was Saturday, November 16th at The Athenaeum in Old Town, Alexandria. Proceeds from this event benefit the Historic Alexandria Preservation Fund.

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