



WINTER FUN



PHOTO BY LOUISE KRAFFT/GAZETTE PACKET

Winter classes and club activities are underway at most of the city's recreation centers. The Department of Recreation, Parks and Cultural Activities sponsors a number of local clubs including the Olde Town Fencing Club. Here, club member Walter McClean works with students who have completed the beginning fencing course. For more information on the club visit www.oldetownfencing.org.

MORE WINTER FUN ON PAGE 16-21.

Hotel Virginia

Alexandria City Council approves 120-room hotel on waterfront.

BY MICHAEL LEE POPE
GAZETTE PACKET

The Alexandria waterfront plan is like the 1970s Eagles hit, "Hotel California." You can check out any time you like, but you can never leave.

Over and over again, members of the City Council arrive at City Hall for public hearing after public hearing to listen to the same arguments over and over again. Residents of Old Town say the plan calls for too much density, arguing it will choke the neighborhood. Then people in other parts of the city say the waterfront is for all of Alexandria, and that increasing density is a way to milk new city revenues while increasing the vibrancy of a once-industrial waterfront.

"We are all just prisoners here," says the woman in the song, "of our own device."

Last weekend, once again, elected officials found themselves debating the controversial small-area plan. This time it was to approve the first development, a proposal from developer Carr City Centers to construct a five-story hotel with 120 rooms. Opponents of the waterfront plan gathered in council chambers and tried to stab the proposal with their steely knives. But they just couldn't kill the beast.

"The folks who have a problem, it's not with this particular project," said Mayor Bill Euille. "It's the master plan, and that's already been decided."

The development special-use

SEE COUNCIL, PAGE 22

Fire Chief Takes Cabinet Role

Adam Thiel to leave Alexandria to join McAuliffe administration.

BY MICHAEL LEE POPE
GAZETTE PACKET

When Adam Thiel became chief of the Alexandria Fire Department in 2007, he took over an agency that was clinging to the past — and not just the antiques at the Friendship Firehouse Mu-

seum. The city's fire engines were so outdated that Thiel was forced to lease a 1987 vehicle from Minnesota. Some of the stations had alerting equipment built from parts purchased at Radio Shack. In one infamous example, Thiel demonstrated a piece of equip-

SEE THIEL, PAGE 24

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A Quiet Celebration

While most of America is celebrating something called Presidents Day, Alexandria is preparing for **George Washington's** birthday. Events include a tour of Old Town spots familiar to the general, 18th century dance classes, a restaurant "cherry challenge" and even a wreath-laying ceremony at the Tomb of the Unknown Revolutionary War Soldier.

So what's missing? Cannon fire!

A check of the archive reveals that Alexandria's celebration once featured lots and lots of cannon fire. It was loud, fun and popular.

"Just as the sun peeped across the Potomac this morning, an old cannon on the summit of Suter's Hill boomed forth a salute, and Alexandria awoke to observe, with religious ceremonies, the anniversary of the birth of George Washington," observed the Washington Times on Feb. 22, 1914. "It has been the custom for more than a century for Alexandrians to open the celebration of February 22 with a cannonade."

Celebrations that year included patriotic bunting festooning Old Town, endless Masonic rituals and ever-present martial music. The parade featured the vice president of the United States, the governor of Virginia and an obscure assistant secretary of the Navy by the name of **Franklin Roosevelt**.

"Indications are that the celebration this year will be one of the greatest in the history of the town," the newspaper predicted.

Organizers this year hope to outdo the 1914 celebration — without firing a single cannon.

Trailer Zoning

People in education circles seem to go out of their way to avoid using the word "trailer." Those makeshift temporary structures that schools use when they find themselves in a crunch. The idea is simple — find a vacant spot on the school campus and set up a mobile unit so students and teachers can meet without increasing class sizes. Some school officials prefer to use the euphemism "learning cottage."

"Yea," responded Alexandria City Councilman **Justin Wilson**. "It's a trailer."

Whatever you call it, a new mobile unit is on its way to Alexandria. And it's coming with its own baggage. Last year, school officials set the pieces into place to install a trailer at Maury Elementary School. Then the latest round of enrollment figures arrived at the central administration building on Beauregard Street. School officials realized that Maury was no longer the problem. So they decided to move the trailer to MacArthur Elementary School.

There was only one problem — the city's zoning code.

The plan was temporarily put on hold when school officials realized their plan to add a trailer — ahem, a learning cottage — ran afoul of the zoning for the school. Because the specific parcel of land is zoned for "public open space," installing a trailer there would violate the zoning. That means leaders from the Alexandria City Public Schools will be appealing to the Alexandria City Council to change the zoning for part of the MacArthur campus. Perhaps they will carve out new language for a learning cottage.

"We will need to rezone the property at MacArthur to make this work," said Wilson.

A vote on the rezoning is expected in the next few weeks.

Suspicious Minds

Remember when the Alexandria City Council moved the local elections from May to November? Democrats were able to oust the two Republicans by piggybacking on the historic turnout for President **Barack Obama**. But they never got around to fixing the code. Until now.

This year, members of the General Assembly are considering a charter change that would formally move the election date from May to November — an after-the-fact alteration that has some Republicans worried. Former Republican City Councilwoman **Alicia Hughes** traveled to Richmond to testify against the bill. She told lawmakers she was concerned that the bill might be amended to create longer terms or staggered terms, two changes Republicans say would further erode their chances at the ballot-box.

"My primary concern was that amendments would come forward from the Senate that would go further than what appeared as a routine change that had been permitted to jurisdictions all over the commonwealth," said Hughes.

When the House bill reached the floor last week, 19 Republicans voted against it. The list of nays included a number of Northern Virginia Republicans: Del. **Dave Albo** (R-42), Del. **Tim Hugo** (R-40), Del. **Dave LaRock** (R-33), Del. **Bob Marshall** (R-13) and Del. **David Ramadan** (R-87).

— MICHAEL LEE POPE



With his wife Karin holding the Bible, Bryan Porter is sworn in as Commonwealth's Attorney Jan. 9 at the Alexandria Circuit Courthouse. Chief Judge Lisa Kemler administered the oath of office.

Porter Takes Oath of Office

Porter replaces Sengel as Commonwealth's Attorney.

BY JEANNE THEISMANN
GAZETTE PACKET

In a courtroom filled with family, friends and local officials, Bryan Porter was officially sworn in Jan. 9 as Commonwealth's Attorney at the Circuit Courthouse in Alexandria.

"I am confident in Bryan's ability to lead this office," said Randy Sengel in endorsing Porter as his successor. "He knows that law enforcement is not always a black-and-white issue — that you are sometimes dealing with shades of gray that requires accountability but also compassion."

A former officer with the Alexandria Police Department, Porter served as Assistant Commonwealth's Attorney for 12 years prior to being elected last November to replace Sengel, who decided not to seek reelection after 16 years in office.

"I've known Bryan most of his life," said Sheriff Dana Lawhorne during Porter's campaign. "I have always been impressed by his wealth

of knowledge and passion for serving this city."

After being administered the oath of office by Chief Judge Lisa Kemler, Porter thanked Sengel for his 34 years of service to the city. He then thanked Lawhorne, whom he credits with helping him pursue his career in law enforcement.

"Twenty years ago Dana Lawhorne helped me in my quest to become a police officer," Porter said. "I would not be here today without him."

The Commonwealth's Attorney is a constitutional officer elected to a four-year term. The Office of the Commonwealth's Attorney is responsible for the prosecution of all persons charged with the commission of criminal and traffic offenses in violation of state law or city ordinances and serves as legal advisor to the sheriff and the police department.

"Bonnie and I are extremely proud of both of our sons and the important work they do to help protect others," said John Porter, father of Bryan and his brother Scott, who is an Assistant Commonwealth's Attorney in Arlington.

Porter, 44, was unopposed in the election last fall.

"I truly feel like this job is not just a job or a career," Porter told the Alexandria Gazette Packet during his campaign. "It is what I'm good at. I think it is a huge blessing that I've found what I'm good at. I truly believe I have the ability to positively impact the community."



PHOTOS BY WAYNE HULEHAN

The Porter family gathers for a photo following the swearing-in ceremony. Pictured are John Porter, Scott Porter, Bonnie Porter, Karin Porter and Laura Porter.

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'A Catalyst for Development' Officials break ground on new NSF headquarters.

BY JEANNE THEISMANN
GAZETTE PACKET

More than 100 federal and local government officials gathered Jan. 27 for the official groundbreaking ceremony for the new Alexandria headquarters of the National Science Foundation, a 667,759-square-foot office with two connecting towers across from the Eisenhower Metro Station.

"More than 30 years ago when Dutch Hoffman bought this property, it was a swamp on the outskirts of Alexandria but he had a vision and stuck with it," said U.S. Rep. Jim Moran (D-8). "Today, we are seeing the next phase of making that vision a reality."

The General Services Administration announced the new lease agreement for the NSF headquarters at the Hoffman Town Center last June. As a result, NSF will move to the Carlyle area in 2017. The new building will be LEED Silver-certified and developed by the Hoffman Family.

"NSF will bring 2,300 jobs to Alexandria and they are knowledge jobs," Moran said. "In addition, there will be contractors to support them and 30,000 visitors who come to NSF each year for various reasons. This is a good day for NSF and for Alexandria."

The foundation's relocation from Arlington to Alexandria will be one of the largest transfers of federal workers in Northern Virginia since the Patent and Trademark Office left Crystal City for Alexandria in 2005. The new lease is about 30 percent below average market rates in the Washington, D.C. area.

"We will save taxpayers \$65 million over the 15-year lease," said GSA Regional Administrator Julia Hudson. "The developer is contributing \$35 million toward the cost of relocating NSF and the City of Alexandria is giving the developer \$23 million in tax incentives. Alexandria will gain \$50 million in new tax revenue over the life of the lease and additional money from money spent by NSF staff and those who support NSF's mission."

The new headquarters is expected to spur other development, with more than 1.5 million square feet of office space and 1,500 residential units planned for the area. Plans for a new 250,000-square-foot hotel are also moving forward.

"They have 30,000 visitors from out of the area to the foundation every year," said Val Hawkins, president and CEO of the Alexan-

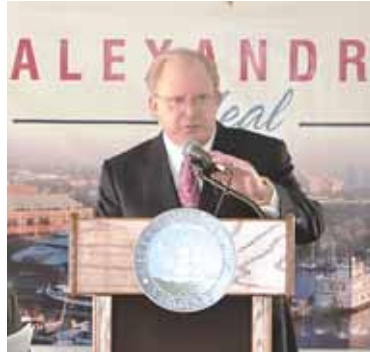


PHOTO BY JAY PALERMINO

Hubert N. "Jay" Hoffman III makes remarks at the groundbreaking ceremony.

dria Economic Development Partnership. "That generates 90,000 room nights."

The NSF is an independent federal agency created by Congress in 1950 "to promote the progress of science; to advance the national health, prosperity and welfare; to secure the national defense ..." With an annual budget of about \$6.9 billion, NSF is the funding source for approximately 20 percent of all federally supported basic research conducted by America's colleges and universities.



PHOTO BY JAY PALERMINO

Officials gather across from the Eisenhower Metro Station Jan. 27 for a ceremonial groundbreaking for the new National Science Foundation complex. Pictured are Lauren Douglas, president, The Hoffman companies; Chris Hartman, chair, Alexandria Economic Development Partnership; Dr. Cora B. Marrett, acting director, National Science Foundation; Mayor Bill Euille; Hubert N. "Jay" Hoffman III; U.S. Rep. Jim Moran and Julia E. Hudson, regional administrator, National Capital Region GSA.

"We actively sought the National Science Foundation to come to Alexandria and we welcome

them," said Mayor Bill Euille. "We believe that NSF will be the catalyst for exciting development

here."

Balfour Beatty will serve as the project's general contractor.

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The \$15 Million Congressman

During his years in Congress, Moran raised and spent about \$1 million each campaign cycle.

BY MICHAEL LEE POPE
GAZETTE PACKET

One of the first things that happened after U.S. Rep. Jim Moran (D-8) announced he would not be running for reelection this year was that he cancelled a fundraising event. The fundraiser, scheduled for Jan. 24 at the Art and Soul Restaurant on Capitol Hill. Ostensibly it was to raise money for his reelection campaign, a lunch with suggested contributions ranging from \$500 to \$2,500. But after the congressman announced he would not be seeking a 13th term in the House of Representatives, the event was canceled.

Across the 8th congressional district, it's the end of an era. For more than two decades, Moran has led a financial juggernaut. During his career in Congress, according to campaign-finance data compiled by the Center for Responsive Politics, Moran raised \$14.8 million and spent \$13.8 million. Donors included leaders in real estate, the military-industrial complex, lobbyists and information technology. For most of his time in Congress, Moran raised more than the average member of Congress for what was essentially a safe Democratic seat with marginal opposition. Through a spokesman, Moran declined to be interviewed for this story.

"There's no doubt that money plays far too great an influence in politics at all levels, and we in Virginia are learning that perhaps more painfully than people in other states these days," said Stephen Farnsworth, political professor at the University of Mary Washington. "But politicians receive money from people who want to stay on their good side, and it is unilateral disarmament for an incumbent to refuse to take money from people who want to give it to them."

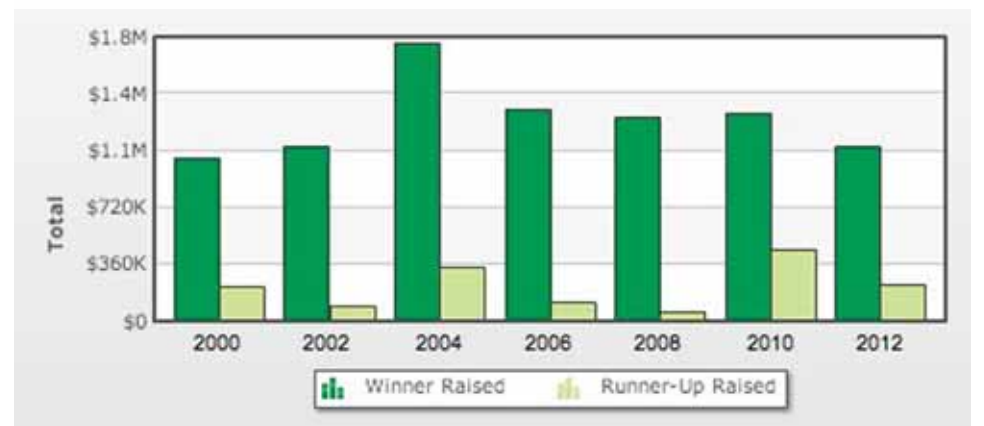
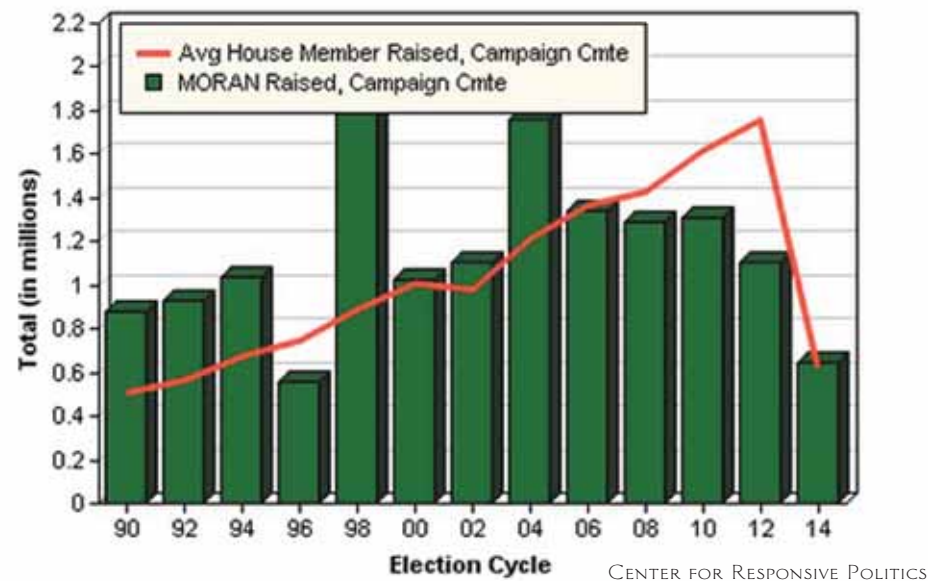
MORAN'S TOP CONTRIBUTORS

- ❖ Mantech International: \$202,615
- ❖ PMA Group: \$180,700
- ❖ Boeing: \$155,500
- ❖ Leidos: \$114,270
- ❖ Lockheed Martin: \$101,830
- ❖ Northrop Grumman: \$100,406
- ❖ National Association of Realtors: \$99,650
- ❖ International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers: \$99,000
- ❖ Ultra Electronics Prologic: \$96,134
- ❖ National Active and Retired Federal Employees Association: \$91,500
- ❖ Progency Systems: \$89,600
- ❖ General Dynamics: \$80,600
- ❖ BriarTek: \$79,784
- ❖ Automotive Free International Trade PAC: \$70,000
- ❖ Raytheon: \$66,250
- ❖ BAE Systems: \$66,000
- ❖ Mark Winkler Company: \$62,250
- ❖ Deloitte: \$62,000
- ❖ Patton Boggs: \$60,700
- ❖ Fried Companies: \$56,400

Last week, federal prosecutors indicted former Republican Gov. Bob McDonnell with public corruption charges that he and his wife accepted lavish gifts from the CEO of a dietary supplement maker in exchange for promoting his company. McDonnell's defense is that he did nothing wrong, and that politicians often work on behalf of their political supporters. Before the system of congressional earmarks was ended, members of Congress would frequently seek earmarks for campaign contributors.

"It's kind of like the chicken and egg," said Geoff Skelley, analyst with the University of Virginia Center for Politics. "Do you promise them certain things and then they give you money or do they come to you once they realize you are an established force working for them? I think it's probably a little of both."

CRITICS OF MORAN'S fundraising efforts point to Moran's support for the PMA Group, the now shuttered Arlington lobby-



CENTER FOR RESPONSIVE POLITICS

ing firm whose offices were raided by the FBI in November 2008 as part of an investigation into a "pay to play" scheme. The group's founder, Paul Magliocchetti, pleaded guilty to making hundreds of thousands of dollars in illegal campaign contributions through "straw donors," although the House ethics committee cleared Moran of wrongdoing. Republicans tried to use the scandal against Moran.

"Jim Moran has engaged in a career of pay to play," said Republican Patrick Murray, who ran against Moran twice. "He gave tax-

payer dollars to institutions or companies or people and then got campaign contributions in return."

In 2011, conservative author Peter Schweizer wrote a book titled "Throw Them All Out" that argued members of Congress engaged in insider trading. The book included an allegation that Moran dumped shares in dozens of companies the day after a closed-door meeting with Treasury Secretary Hank Paulson on Sept. 16, 2008.

SEE CAMPAIGN, PAGE 26

Crowded Primary Race to fill Jim Moran's seat has a number of early candidates.

BY MICHAEL LEE POPE
GAZETTE PACKET

For those keeping score, the number of candidates running for Congress in the 8th Congressional District is quickly becoming a crowded primary. Several candidates have already formally announced, and a number of others are working behind the scenes to formally announce soon. Because the seat features the most Democratic parts of Northern Virginia, all of the action will take place in advance of the June primary.

That's five months away, which means that the campaign season is already starting to melt the snow off the ground.

The district, which stretches from McLean to the Mason Neck, is a reliably Democratic

district. In 2012, Moran beat his Republican challenger with 65 percent of the vote. Democratic incumbent President Barack Obama won with 68 percent of the vote. That means an intense amount of interest will be invested in the upcoming Democratic primary. The first Democrat to announce was Bruce Shuttleworth, who challenged Moran during the 2012 Democratic primary. Moran beat Shuttleworth with 75 percent of the vote.

"As a straight white married father, it may come as a surprise that I am considered a diversity candidate," said Shuttleworth in a written statement announcing his candidacy. "I'm a fighter pilot and a feminist, and I believe that it is the behavior of men more than women that will determine the quickest path to equal rights."

Other early candidates to throw their hats into the ring were Del. Patrick Hope (D-47) and Del. Charniele Herring (D-46).

"We must have a proven progressive leader as our Democratic nominee in the 8th District," said Hope in a written statement announcing the creation of an exploratory committee. "We also need a nominee who will be ready to be effective on day one and able to build the necessary seniority that will be so crucial to our region."

Herring said she will step down from her position as chairwoman of the Democratic Party of Virginia to run for the seat.

"Today we need leaders who are willing to champion progressive values while still being able to reach across the aisle to find common-sense solutions for the challenges our nation faces," Herring said in a state-

ment hours after Hope issued his statement. "If elected, I will continue the good works of Congressman Jim Moran to foster the economic development of Northern Virginia, address the needs of our veterans, work for access to affordable healthcare, and protect the privacy of a woman and her healthcare decisions."

This week, Del. Mark Sickles (D-43) became the latest addition to the scrum.

"I will bring meaningful federal, state and local experience to a very divided Congress as well as the ability to work with people across the political spectrum," said Sickles in a statement announcing his candidacy.

Other candidates expected to announce soon are former Lt. Gov. Don Beyer, Alexandria Mayor Bill Euille and state Sen. Adam Ebbin (D-30).

PEOPLE



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

Oratorical Winner

Jacob Atagi, center, is the winner of this year's American Legion Post 24 Oratorical Contest. A freshman at West Potomac High School, Atagi represented Post 24 at the 17th District American Legion Oratorical Contest Jan. 25 at McLean Post 270. Pictured with Atagi are Post 24 Commander Jim Glassman and Patrick Hawley, Post Oratorical Chairman. A nationwide program, the American Legion Oratorical Contest exists to develop deeper knowledge and appreciation for the U.S. Constitution among high school students. www.legion.org/oratorical

SCHOOL NOTES

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

Mauricio Salvatierra of Alexandria was recognized as a Hurricane Scholar Athlete in a recent ceremony at Louisburg College. Salvatierra is a member of the men's soccer team.

Erin McCarty, of Alexandria and a student at Pratt Institute, was named to the president's list.

John Thomas Tenorio, a sophomore from Alexandria, was named to the fall 2013 dean's list at Thiel College. Tenorio has been on the Thiel dean's list three times.

Kristina Cruz, of Alexandria, has earned highest honors for the fall semester at the University of New Hampshire.

The following students made the president's list at James Madison University for the fall 2013 semester: **Anna Balfour**, a sophomore; **Emily**

Belkoski, a senior; **Shannon Burley**, a sophomore; **Courtney Chesley**, a senior; **Susan Fuentes**, a senior; **Christopher Hook**, a senior; **Maria Jones**, a sophomore; **Angela Nichols**, a senior; **Aneta Nikolic**, a senior; **Tara Tinsley**, a junior; and **Haley Winter**, a sophomore.

The following students graduated from James Madison University on Dec. 14: **Elisa Davidson** with a degree in health sciences - BS; **Meagan Chesley** with a degree in management - BBA; **Eun Lee** with a degree in nursing - BSN; **Alexander Fetterman** with a degree in business admin infsec - MBA; **Angelina Sobel** with a degree in finance - BBA; **Stephon Robertson** with a degree in justice studies - BS; **Kelly Cavanaugh** with a degree in sociology - BS; **Jonathan Iredelell** with a degree in physics - BS; **Emily Belkoski** with a degree in nursing - BSN; **Pavan Panjeti** with a degree in engineering - BS; and **Devin Cruttenden** with a degree in international affairs - BA.

Elizabeth Freeman was named to the dean's honor roll at Southwestern College.

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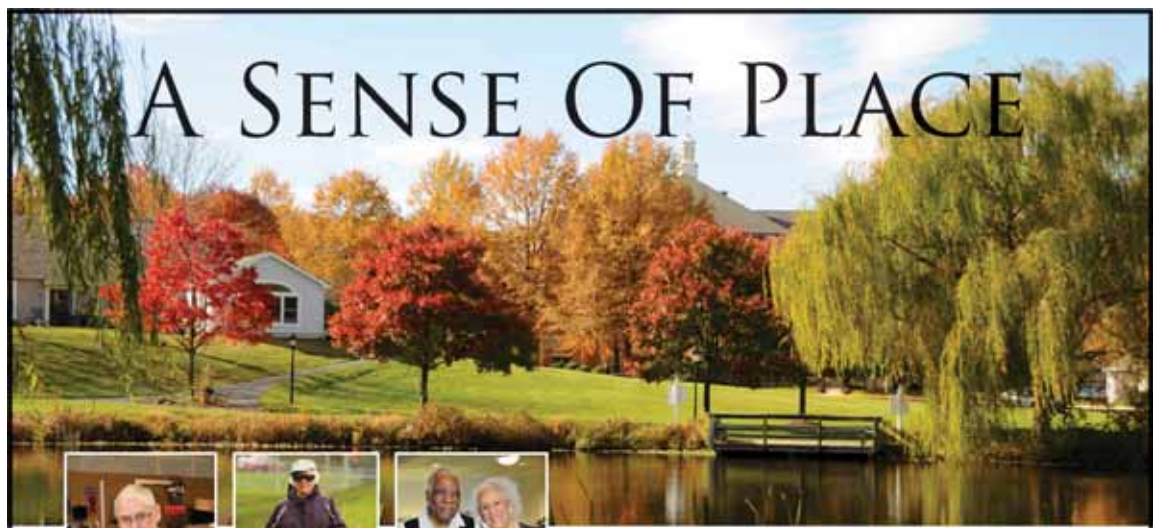
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OPINION

For Nonpartisan Redistricting

Virginia is a purple state, gerrymandered to bleed red.

Consider that in statewide elections, Virginia voters have chosen Democrats in the last two presidential elections, for U.S. Senate, for Governor, Lieutenant Governor and Attorney General.

Almost none of these elections was by a wide margin, but it's clear that Virginia is a purple state leaning blue.

Here are the actual numbers:
2013
McAuliffe (D) 1,069,789; Cuccinelli (R) 1,013,389
Northam (D) 1,213,155; Jackson (R) 980,257
Herring (D) 1,103,777; Obenshain (R) 1,103,612
2012
Obama (D) 1,971,820; Romney (R) 1,822,522
Kaine (D) 2,010,067; Allen (R) 1,785,542

It's reasonable to assume that a state so evenly divided would be about evenly divided in political representation.

How is possible then that Virginia House of Delegates consists of 67 Republicans and 33

Democrats?

Why is it that Virginia's delegation to the U.S. House of Representatives consists of 11 Republicans and three Democrats?

The split in the Virginia Senate makes sense, a 20-20 split with a Republican Lieutenant Governor breaking tie votes the last four years and a Democratic Lieutenant Governor poised to break ties in the coming four years (pending this week's recount in the special election in District 6 to replace Lt. Gov. Ralph Northam).

Virginia's 11 Congressional districts should be split about evenly. You could understand a split five Dems and six Republicans; or five Republicans and six Democrats. A four and seven split would smack of some unusual circumstance. But three and eight?

The answer is gerrymandering.

Both political parties have been guilty of this when in power, although new technology and better data have made the process more egregious, the effects more damaging.

Political parties should not control the drawing of political districts. Gerrymandering thwarts the will of the electorate. It is especially damaging in a Dillon rule state, like Virginia, where localities have only the power explicitly granted to them by the General Assembly,

— MARY KIMM,

MKIMM@CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM

democratic slump since 2008.

But this avoidance must give way in the face of an emerging crisis. Enrollment estimates for the new building in FY2015 are now so low that the board must embrace the nuclear option — redistricting — or face grave questions about their fiduciary duty to taxpayers. Without decisive School Board action, City Council would be justified in cutting the ACPS capital budget to the bone this spring and in the future.

Send Photos for Pet Gazette

The Pet Gazette, a bi-annual themed edition, will publish Feb. 26.

We invite you to send us stories about your pets, photos of you and/or your family with your cats, dogs, hamsters, snakes, lizards, frogs, rabbits, or whatever other creatures share your home or yard with you.

Tell us the story of a special bond between a child and a dog, the story of how you came to adopt your pet, or examples of amazing feats of your creatures. Can your dog catch a Frisbee 10 feet in the air, or devour an entire pizza when you turn your back for less than a minute?

Do you volunteer at an animal shelter or therapeutic riding center or take your pet to visit people in a nursing home? Tell us about your experience.

Have you helped to train an assistance dog? Do you or someone in your family depend on an assistance dog?

You can also take this opportunity to memorialize a pet you have lost.

Send photos and identify everyone in the photo including the pets and tell us what is happening in the photo, and include your address (we will only print the town name).

Submissions should arrive by Feb. 19.

Email editors@connectionnewspapers.com, or submit photos and stories directly on our website at www.connectionnewspapers.com/pets/.

On Nov. 14, ACPS staff told the board that enrollment in the new building — designed for 740 to 850 PK-8 students — would total only 386 when the doors open in eight months. Then in mid-January the joint ACPS-Planning & Zoning Long Range Educational Facilities Plan work group unveiled new estimates that predict only 336 students in fall 2014 (FY2015) and a mere 414 by fall 2019 (FY2020), when the group also projects that peak enrollment in Alexandria public schools will begin to decelerate.

School Board members want to believe that forcing parents who opted out of Jefferson-Houston under No Child Left Behind in years past to return will be a no-pain way to make up the numbers. But in November ACPS staff released a neighborhood school analysis finding only 99 students living in the Jefferson-Houston zone who attend other Alexandria public schools. Repatriating these kids won't boost enrollment to full utilization. Rapid build-up in Potomac Yard isn't swelling Jefferson-Houston's numbers either, and two sites are already set aside for a future school in the Yard.

Some believe the new Jefferson-Houston building was meant to lure parents into the middle school at Jefferson-Houston, with this vanguard then paving the way for a similar, voluntary socioeconomic transformation of grades 1-5. That isn't likely to happen. According to ACPS staff estimates, enrollment for grades 6-8 will only increase by 25 students by FY2020.

Academic performance in Jefferson-

EDITORIAL

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Consider Redistricting

To the Editor:

Alexandria's School Board has spent a year dodging decisions about Jefferson-Houston School, including opportunities to pause and evaluate whether the new \$44 million building was needed given documented east-side classroom overcapacity and the school's aca-



STEVEN G. ARTLEY/THE CONNECTION

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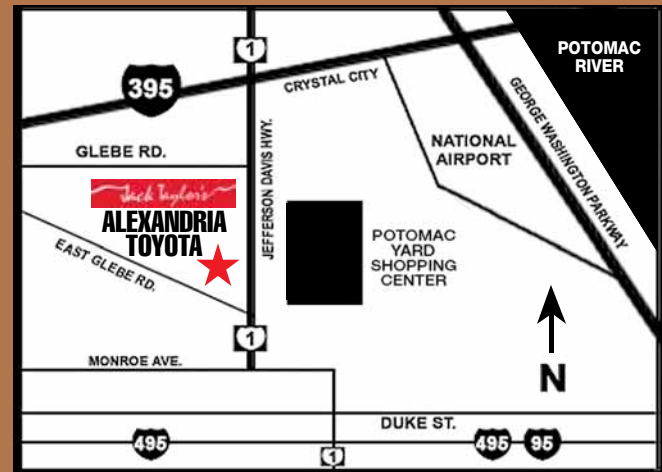
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LETTERS

FROM PAGE 10

Houston's middle school grades in subjects like reading are as unimpressive as those in the struggling lower grades, small class size is not a persuasive sell, and there are more electives and activities at George Washington Middle School.

ACPS now appears to be rethinking building a PK-8 building at Patrick Henry but is clinging to the model at Jefferson-Houston "to stabilize the population." That euphemism means ACPS leaders are sticking to PK-8 lest the student population fall to an even more embarrassing low.

On top of all this comes news that in February ACPS will be seeking Planning Commission and Council approval to add a trailer at Douglas MacArthur School to handle overcrowding. Does the School Board seriously believe they can install trailers at schools close by while leaving Jefferson-Houston half-occupied?

There is only one viable alternative: redistricting. A 2007 Virginia Department of Education efficiency audit of ACPS stressed that "each attendance boundary should be analyzed for irregularities and inefficiencies. Steps to correct deficiencies should be outlined." If a school is not 85 percent occupied by core ACPS student populations — not by adult Zumba classes and bagpipe bands or non-reimbursing programs like Head Start — then the board must tackle comprehensive redistricting that properly realigns population with unused capacity.

Leslie Zupan
Alexandria

Lights Would Benefit Students

To the Editor:

There has to be a middle ground between the needs of children and the comfort of our fellow community members when it comes to lights for our athletic fields. So when opponents ask, what's there to talk about? I say plenty.

A bad agreement — one that oppresses many in favor of an inconvenienced few — either seven years old or 40 — is a bad agreement. Citizens angry with city hall are hurting students and athletes with their misguided cause.

I would like to remind the opponents to any lights the net effect their crusade has had on the city. This 40-year blunder has had a devastating ripple effect on the entire city. If T.C. Williams can't play football on Friday night, that means rugby, lacrosse, soccer and

other events can't use the field during a typical Saturday.

By not having the standard Friday night game with lights, every other sporting and extracurricular activity schedule is reworked around a day-time football game. Students have to choose between marching band and crew, scouts or rugby. One recent high school student was asked by college admissions why they quit their preferred sport in their varsity years. The short answer is because T.C. Williams doesn't have lights. Everyone's schedule has to be reworked, sacrifices are made, and sports are dropped because there are no lights.

Team spirit and community support for football games suffer as well, not to mention the schedule juggling that every neighboring jurisdiction must face while playing against TC in all sporting events as well. It puts the teams and the students at a disadvantage. For light opponents to cry persecution shows a complete lack of perspective on just exactly who is impacted by this agreement.

Surely with lights out curfews, regulated field use and technical advancements, neighbors could agree to a civilized discussion. The "not in my backyard," argument just doesn't hold water anymore, especially when the same group tries to stop lights at every venue in the city.

As someone who lives close to Simpson Baseball Stadium, a well-lit venue, I relish the "tink" of a ball when it connects with the bat, the cheer of the crowd, the opportunity to connect with neighbors and have a hot dog. I appreciate the decrease in crime because of field lights as well as the knowledge that the children of our community have a safe space to play sports at night.

The only way to move forward on this is to let go of anger at the past and City Hall. Try to look at it from a student's point of view. Exactly how much negative impact would it be on neighbors to have lights at TC versus the benefits to thousands of students? Why not embrace the opportunity to give something to our community rather than take it away.

Laura Fries
Alexandria

More People, More Cars

To the Editor:

In Mr. Durham's letter about bikes in Alexandria, he wrote that "projected traffic (in the Eisenhower Avenue at Mill Road area) will return to unacceptable

levels of congestion in less than 7 years after the project is completed" without "more effective transit-oriented measures."

This is correct. But he conveniently neglects to explain why the Mill Road road-widening took place. The city of Alexandria granted developers the right to put large high density commercial and residential buildings nearby. Development means more people and more vehicles using this and all roads.

Forcing people to ride buses or bikes is not the answer. The answer is the city assuring that needed road capacity increases are paid for by the developer, not the city resident.

Another example is the replacement of warehouse buildings at the corner of Van Dorn and S. Pickett by several residential buildings. The new residents will bring their cars and thereby increase the number of vehicles on the roads. This type of development is happening throughout the city. More people mean more cars.

The city approved this dramatic increase in density with no improvements to the already overloaded Van Dorn corridor. Does the 99 percent have to pay for the city's mistake?

Why is Mr. Durham so relentless in his pursuit of alternative transportation? Could it be because most people, if given a choice, would opt for a car or bus rather than a bike or walking? Does he want to punish those that deviate from what he thinks they should do?

Would he recommend bike-riding when the weather is in the teens or 90s?

Still rooting for the 99 percent,

Linda Greenberg
Alexandria

Costly Expansion

To the Editor:

The recent editorial (Jan. 23, 2014) on Medicaid coverage in Virginia appears to be riddled with "phantom facts." The editorial writer gives the impression that Medicaid is vanishing for 400,000 Virginians. Not so. As we all should know Medicaid is a joint effort between the Federal Government and each state. Those who were eligible for Medicaid in Virginia before Obamacare are still eligible. There is a category known as the "newly eligible" that the editorial has avoided mentioning and is the subject of political debate. Should Virginia acknowledge these

SEE LETTERS, PAGE 24

The Day Virginia Cried

BY HARRY M. COVERT

Whatever the facts prove to be, federal corruption charges leveled against Virginia's 71st governor are nothing short of astonishing.



all over the country. Commentators are already saying 30-year prison terms are possible. Obviously, there's

No such thing has ever occurred in the state known as the "Mother of Presidents."

Robert McDonnell has turned over chief executive duties. On Tuesday last week, a federal grand jury indicted both he and his wife on 14 charges of taking money, gifts, mail fraud and other assorted things from a businessman over the course of his four-year term.

When the story broke some time ago, most Virginians, the ins and outs, and political watchers expressed shock and dismay.

First, there was a fight with the governor's chef charged with food thefts, then \$15,000 to pay for his daughter's wedding dinner, then shopping trips on a businessman's plane and financial loans for other things.

Mr. McDonnell repaid all of the gifts and noted previous governors had also received such items because the state law allowed it. No past governors have come to his aid — as far as is known.

When something seems too good to be true, it usually is, wags often say. Damage from these missteps is incredible. A promising career perhaps for future national office faded like melting snow. The Republican candidate for governor couldn't use endorsement or campaign stops and the Old Dominion has quickly moved from staunch conservative positions to Democratic leadership.

The McDonnells were arraigned in federal court Friday (Jan. 24). They turned in their passports and, after fingerprinting and mugshots, were released without bond. It will be a costly time for their defense. Incredibly the feds waited until Democrat Terry McAuliffe became the 72nd governor before charging the former First Family. State funds won't be used to help defend them now. In fact, while he was sitting, lots of state money was paid to a former attorney general for defense legal services.

From a journalistic stance, such conduct, arrest and trial gives lots of time for stories in the media in Virginia and now

more to the story.

The ongoing news frenzy will continue. That's the correct thing. But, more facts will come out, whether helpful or not. Mr. McDonnell has been credited with good leadership and solid administrative work and left Virginia with lots of money in its till. Unfortunately, all is ruined now.

Virginia provided eight presidents of the United States. The 66th governor was Lawrence Douglas Wilder, a state senator, lieutenant governor and the first African American to be elected governor. Virginians, both native borns and "come heres" cried.

The first governor I ever met was Albert S. Harrison, who was No. 59. He looked like a chief executive, could pass for an Episcopal bishop and served as a Justice of the Supreme Court of Virginia from 1968 to 1981.

Mills E. Godwin, Jr., of Chuckatuck, Va., was the 60th and 62nd governor, first as a Democrat, second as a Republican. He was the last chief executive as part of the fabled Byrd Machine and later departed from the "pay as you go" philosophy established by the Berryville/Winchester Byrd family.

Others who distinguished themselves were A. Linwood Holton, the 61st and first GOP winner in 80 years, and John N. Dalton. The latter was No. 63 and a respected politician.

Mr. McDonnell could have followed the above named Virginians as distinguished leaders. That chance has now become slim and none. Like others, I want to see all of the facts. I'm not surprised the charges were filed after McDonnell left office. This will be a long and drawn-out process.

I don't want to think any of these charges are politically motivated.

This is a good reminder that if anything is true, those in lofty office must live to higher standards, avoid any appearance of evil and realize that "old sins cast long shadows."

Maybe it's a good thing Virginia governors can't have consecutive four-year terms.

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Hensley Estate **\$840,000**
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 Lovely 4BR Colonial on cul-de-sac. Completely updated. Gourmet kitchen, formal dining room. Family room w/fire place, library, & sun room. Wooden deck and patio. Huge garage.
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 Karen Leonard 703.328.7041



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9309 Reef Ct
 \$629,500
Three Level Colonial- Near River!
 Exceptionally attractive property on magnificent half acre grounds fronting quiet cul-de-sac in one of area's premier neighborhoods. Special features include: 3LVL, 4BR, 2.5BA, family room with FP off kitchen, gorgeous stained hwd flrs, economical gas heat and hot water, and oversized 2 car garage. Major upgrades include thermal windows and glass doors. Unique opportunity! **OPEN SUN 2/2, 1-4! GW Pky S, past Estate; L-Ferry Landing; R-Tarpon; R-Coral; R-Reef.**

9412 Old Mount Vernon Rd
Craftsman Masterpiece!
 \$1,198,950
 Former model by Wakefield Homes loaded with options and upgrades. Many fabulous features include: open floor plan, high ceilings, three finished levels, 4 bedrooms, 4.5 baths, gourmet kitchen, 2 car garage. Gorgeous location on elevated lot with extensive landscaping and custom stonework. Priced thousands below current price list. **OPEN SUN 2/2, 1-4! GW Pky S, past Estate; L-Old Mount Vernon Rd to house on Right.**

8428 Old Mount Vernon Rd
 \$859,000
Large Home- Totally Updated!
 One of a kind compound consisting of a luxurious 5645 sq ft home and a totally remodeled and updated 2BR cottage. Ideal situation for home office or extended family. New home has everything including 6BR, 7BA, custom kitchen open to family room, large living and dining rooms, main level study, stunning master suite, finished lower level and 3 car garage. Most house & lot for \$5 in Mt. Vernon!

9410 Coral Ln
 \$649,500
Yacht Haven- Near River!
 A truly spectacular updated property! Personal residence of interior designer provides custom detail and level of finishes rarely found in this price range. Features include open floor plan, chef's kit, 3 luxury baths, 4-5BR and the most amazing oversized 2 car garage you'll ever find! Easy walk to Mt. Vernon Yacht Club. Unique opportunity to acquire home with top of the line custom features.

4325 Adrienne Dr
 \$598,950
Southwood Gem!
 Gorgeous home and grounds, fabulous 4BR Colonial in pristine condition with many major updates including expanded gourmet kitchen w/custom cabinetry, silstone counters, stainless appliances and large breakfast area. Other features: hwd flrs, family room with fireplace, thermal windows and two car garage. Beautiful grounds with brick walk, stone patio & magnificent landscaping. Nothing like it for under \$600,000!

9009 Captains Row
 \$665,000
Great Opportunity!
 Stately columned residence in prime location on prestigious Captains Row at exceptionally competitive price! Large 5BR, 3BA home with many significant updated items. Special features: updated kitchen with stainless appliances, granite counters, custom trim detail, stained hardwood floors, master with updated bath, 2 fireplaces, gas heat & hot water. Oversize 2 car garage and custom 2 level deck. Priced to sell!

9305 Allwood Ct
 \$519,500
Stunning Value- Huge Potential!
 Spacious home with two car garage on quiet cu-de-sac in prime Mt Vernon location! Features include 3 finished levels, open floor plan with soaring cathedral ceilings, hwd flrs, updatd kitchen and large bedrooms. Check the comps- nothing provides the combination of house and lot size in this premier location for close to this price!

1938 Shiver Dr
 \$625,000
Totally Updated!
 Truly stunning home in prime "close-in" location! Fab features include columned front portico, bright-open floor plan, gourmet kit with custom white cabinets, SS appli, gas cooktop, soapstone countertop & large island. Other features include "Pella" replacement windows, hardwood floors, 2 FPs, 3 full baths, & gorgeous professionally landscaped grounds. All the work has been- just move in & enjoy!

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 • Charming semi-detached 3BR/2BA
 • 1,700+ SF of living space
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 • Beautiful hardwoods
 • Updated kitchen & baths

Fully finished lower level with walkout
 • Off-street parking
 • Walk to Old Town

Martine & Alexander Imer
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OPEN SUNDAY 1- 4!
\$ 213,000
Alexandria
6300 STEVENSON AVE #504
 Location! Location! Beautiful 2BR/2BA condo that sparkles with wood floors, new kitchen cabinets, granite, newer appliances, full size W/D, custom closets, extra storage unit, balcony and much more. One garage space and one garage space. Amenities include pool, exercise room, convenience store, and picnic area. Walk to shops and dining.

Sharon Edwards 703.408.8144

\$ 489,900
Alexandria
"JUST LISTED"
 Stratford Landing home on market for first time! 3BR/3.5BA on .29 acres with in-ground pool on gorgeous lot. Garage parking, large formal rooms, tons of storage and room to build out in walkout lower level, with family room and gas fireplace. Priced to allow for personal updates and touches! Walk to schools and enjoy fabulous community spirit.

Kim Muffler 703.282.7739

\$ 1,059,000
Alexandria
"SEMINARY RIDGE"
 Sited on a quiet cul-de-sac, an expanded and renovated Colonial by builder with \$200K+ of quality upgrades. Gourmet kitchen, wet bar, laundry area, formal living and dining rooms, family room with wood-burning fireplace and half bath plus office area on ML. 4BRs and 2 spa-like baths on UL. Finished LL has vast living space, 2nd kitchen area and full bath. 2 car garage with hi-tech flooring tiles.

Michael Manuel 703.615.6317

OPEN SUNDAY 1- 4!
\$ 849,000
Alexandria / Heart of Old Town
318 N ROYAL ST
 First time on market in 22 years! Charming 4BR home with deeded off-street parking in rear. Beautiful formal LR and DR with classic architectural details. High ceilings, wood floors, 3 wood-burning fireplaces. Family room off kitchen opens to deck and garden - perfect for entertaining.

Pat Tierney 703.850.5630
Mary Taylor 703.785.5619

OPEN HOUSE 1- 4!
\$ 635,000
Alex. / Wilton Woods
6129 BEECH TREE DR
 Spacious & sunny 2 level home, 4BR, 3FB located on cul-de-sac & backing to woods. Warm hardwoods. Remodeled & expanded gourmet kitchen with stainless, granite, cherry. Renovated baths. New carpeting. New bay windows. 2 fireplaces. 2-car garage with loads of storage. Move-in Ready!

Martha Deal 703.622.6797

\$ 244,900
Alexandria
"FANTASTIC"
 A 2BR/2BA condo in a great community nestled up to Huntley Meadows Wildlife Preserve. Enter unit to be greeted by French doors leading to huge living room, airy kitchen and bright Dining/Sunroom backing to trees. Large BRs surpass expectations, each bedroom has its own bath. Full-size W/D and walk-in closet. Beautiful commute to Ft Belvoir, Alexandria & DC along GW Pky.

See details at www.7518Snowpea-B.com
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1503 River Farm Dr
\$1,295,000
Grand Colonial- Mins from Old Town!
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424 E Nelson Ave \$1,950
 Birdie May Mason Row House 3BR / 1.5BA
 Lauren Leggett 703.582.7354

5300 Holmes Run Pkwy #220 \$1,600
 Greenhouse Hi-Rise 1BR / 1BA
 Wendy Shelley 703.919.6045

6637 Deer Gap Ct \$1,900
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8520 Highland Lane
\$479,000
New Home at Unprecedented Price!
 Must see to believe! Priced \$220K below the next lowest priced new SFH in FFX Co. Brand new home by leading custom builder intended for family member but circumstances changed. Result-unique opportunity to acquire top quality new SFH for less than townhouse or used home. Dramatic open interior, luxury kitchen and baths, screen porch, 2 car garage, stone and stucco exterior. Unique opportunity!

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WINTER FUN & ENTERTAINMENT

A Knight to Remember at Port City

Port City debuts fringe comedy “Ballad of the Red Knight.”

BY JEANNE THEISMANN
GAZETTE PACKET

He’s not exactly a knight in shining armor, at least not in the traditional sense. But a prince known as the Red Knight must save the Kingdom of Medieval Story Land from the clutches of the malevolent Lord Fango and his Bat People in the hilarious original comedy “The Ballad of the Red Knight,” now playing at Port City Playhouse.

“When I was little, I used to pretend to be knights with my friends,” said playwright and director Scott Courlander. “This is a world that already existed in my head.”

The Red Knight, played by the charismatic Christopher Herring, is a lover not a fighter. But when his father King Marthur is murdered by the evil Bat Lord, the Red Knight must marry Lord Fango’s daughter in order to save his brother, Prince Richard, from the sinister Fruit Bat Dungeon.

“I wrote this as a prequel to ‘Medieval Story Land,’” said Courlander of his widely acclaimed 2012 Capital Fringe Festival hit. “The show is very dear to my heart.”

Playing the evil Lord Fango is the devilishly delightful Charles Boyington with Katie Zitz as his ditzy daughter Fanglett. Herring and Zitz have great chemistry and their comedic timing is especially entertaining when Red gets drunk on their wedding night, forcing Fanglett to wait for the “ro-



PHOTO BY AARON SKOLNIK

The cast of “The Ballad of the Red Knight” includes: John Stange (Gloom Mage), Matthew Sparacino (Green Knight), Kyle McGruther (Prince Richard), Bob Sheire (Blue Knight), and Edward C. Nagel (Yellow Knight). Partially hidden is Stephen Mead (Narrator).

“romantic blood sucking” between them to begin.

Kyle McGruther is Richard, the hot-headed heir to the throne, John Strange as The Gloom Mage and Stephen Mead as Narrator to both the audience and the on-stage characters.

Rounding out the cast are Edward Nagel as the Yellow Knight, Matthew Sparacino as the Green Knight, Bob Sheire as the Blue Knight, and Brendan Edward Kennedy and Carl Brandt Long as the Bat Guards.



PHOTO BY JEANNE THEISMANN/GAZETTE PACKET

Playwright and director Scott Courlander, center, celebrates with the cast on opening night of “The Ballad of the Red Knight” Jan. 24 at Port City Playhouse.

Original music by William Yanesh and piano accompaniment by Jonathan Tippens and Arielle Bayer augments the colorful costume design by Brittany Graham and JoAnn Abbott.

The world premiere of The Ballad of the Red Knight was co-produced by Red Knight Productions — a creative group grounded in improv and sketch comedy and Port City Playhouse.

Will the Red Knight overthrow Lord Fango and free Prince Richard before they both are covered in jelly and devoured by a horde

of ravenous fruit bats? Along the lines of “Spamalot,” “Shrek” and “The Princess Bride,” “The Ballad of the Red Knight” is a clever and fun fable with some of the finest acting seen on stage. It’s a must-see knight to remember for all ages.

“When I was little, I used to pretend to be knights with my friends. This is a world that already existed in my head.”

— Scott Courlander, playwright

“The Ballad of the Red Knight” is playing now through Feb. 8 at Port City Playhouse, 1819 N. Quaker Lane. Tickets may be purchased at the box office one hour prior to showtime. To purchase tickets online or for more information, visit www.PortCityPlayhouse.org.

CALENDAR

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

ONGOING

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.

Art Exhibit. See “Primary Colors” art exhibit from Jan. 3-Feb. 2 at The Del Ray Artisans, 2704 Mount Vernon Ave. Artists use the three primary colors without mixing them. Free. Visit www.TheDelRayArtisans.org for more.

Theater Performance. See “The Ballad of the Red Knight” by Red Knight Productions at Port City Playhouse, 1819 N. Quaker Lane. Runs Jan. 24 through Feb. 8. Performances are Friday at 8 p.m. and Saturdays at 2 p.m. and 8 p.m.

For tickets visit www.portcityplayhouse.org.

Art Exhibit. The results of the latest art challenge issued by Artistic Artifacts, “Mixed Media Metallics,” will be exhibited Jan. 18-Feb. 8. Many of the entries are included in a silent auction benefiting Food for Others. On display at Artistic Artifacts, 4750 Eisenhower Ave. Admission is one non-perishable food item, which will be donated to Food for Others. Visit www.ArtisticArtifacts.com/metallics for more.

Art Exhibit. See a solo photographic exhibit “Darkness Visible” by Timothy Hyde at Multiple Exposures Gallery in the Torpedo Factory, 105 N. Union St. Runs Jan. 7 through Feb. 16. Hyde’s photography examines the mysteries hidden in the shadows. Visit www.torpedofactory.org for more.

Theater Performance. Arts on the Horizon presents “Under the Canopy,” a 20-minute interactive, nonverbal show for children up to age 4. Performances are Feb. 12-14, 16, 17, 19-21, 23 at 10:30 a.m. at The Athenaeum, 201 Prince St. \$5/person. Visit

www.artsonthehorizon.org for tickets. They can be purchased at the door.

Celebrate Black History Month. 9 a.m.-4 p.m. Feb. 1-28 at Mount Vernon Estate. In observance of Black History Month, George Washington’s Mount Vernon highlights the lives and contributions of the slaves who built and operated the plantation home of George and Martha Washington. A wreathlaying and presentation occurs daily at the slave memorial site throughout the month of February. Black History Month activities are included in admission: adults, \$18; senior citizens, \$17; children age 6-11, when accompanied by an adult, \$9; and children under age 5, free. Visit www.mountvernon.org or 703-780-2000.

Art Exhibit. See “Reincarnations” art exhibit at Del Ray Artisans, 2704 Mount Vernon Ave. Features art from salvaged items, art from encyclopedias and more. Free. Runs Feb. 7 through March 2. Visit www.thedelrayartisans.org for more.

Art Exhibit. See “Frances Gallardo: Meteorology” Jan. 18 through March

2 at the Target Gallery in the Torpedo Factory, 105 N. Union St. Free. Visit www.torpedofactory.org/target for more.

Art Exhibit. See “Songs of the Shore,” archival inkjet prints by Chantilly resident Peter Toth in the Margaret W. and Joseph L. Fisher Art Gallery, of the Rachel M. Schlesinger Concert Hall & Arts Center, 3001 N. Beauregard St. Runs Feb. 7 through March 16. Visit www.nvcc.edu/schlesingercenter/gallery.html.

Theater Performance. See “Ella Fitzgerald: First Lady of Song” at MetroStage, 1201 N. Royal St., from Jan. 23-March 16. Performances are Thursdays and Fridays at 8 p.m., Saturdays at 3 p.m. and 8 p.m., Sundays at 3 p.m. and 7 p.m. Tickets may be ordered by calling 1-800-494-8497 or online at boxofficetickets.com. For group sales and information call the theatre at 703-548-9044. Visit www.metrostage.org for more.

Occupied City: Life in Civil War Alexandria Exhibition. At The Lyceum, 201 South Washington St., through Sunday, March 23. This exhibit traces life in Alexandria

following Virginia’s decision to secede from the Union in May 1861. The Lyceum is open Monday through Saturday, 10 a.m.-5 p.m. and Sunday, 1-5 p.m. Suggested admission is \$2. Visit www.alexandriahistory.org or call 703-746-4994.

CLASSES & WORKSHOPS

Metro Club After-School Program. Through June, the Metropolitan School of Arts presents an after-school program for grades 1-6. The program is located at both the Lorton studio at Workhouse Arts Center, 9517 Workhouse Way and in Alexandria at 5775 Barclay Drive. Programs will focus on the arts, including music, dance, theatre, yoga and academics, as well as designated homework time. The program will run Mondays, 1-6 p.m., and Tuesday-Friday, 3-6 p.m. Tuition runs from \$130-150. Call 703-339-0444 or visit www.metroarts.org.

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

WINTER ENTERTAINMENT



PHOTO BY PAT BAYLY SMITH

'A Midsummer Night's Dream'

T.C. Williams High School Drama Department will present "A Midsummer Night's Dream." The classic by William Shakespeare is directed by Hope E. Bachman-Miller with Leslie A. Jones as producer. Isabel Hollins is student director and Aaron Fordwright is stage manager. Shows are Friday, Jan. 31 and Saturday, Feb. 1. All performances start at 7:30 p.m. Tickets are \$5 for ACPS employees, students and senior citizens, and \$10 for adults.

CALENDAR

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.

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.

Intro to Machine Sewing for Children. Saturday, Jan. 18 from 10 a.m.-noon at Art at the Center, 2804 Sherwood Hall Lane. Learn the basics of a sewing machine and beginning sewing skills. \$35. Visit www.artatthecenter.org/registration.htm to register.

Quilting for Children. A six-week machine quilting class on Saturdays, Jan. 25-March 1 at Art at the Center, 2804 Sherwood Hall Lane. \$180. Tickets are available for purchase. For children ages 8 and up. Visit www.artatthecenter.org/registration.htm to register.

Winter Sewing Classes. A six-week introduction to machine sewing on Thursday, Jan. 23-March 6 or Saturdays, Jan. 25-March 1 at Art at the Center, 2804 Sherwood Hall Lane. \$200. For children ages 8 and up. Visit www.artatthecenter.org/registration.htm to register.

Dance Classes. Metropolitan School of the Arts, 5775 Barclay Drive, #4, will hold adult classes starting in February. Ten percent of the fees will be donated to American Heart Association. Visit www.metropolitanarts.org or 703-339-0444 for a schedule.

CONTEST

Spotlight on Pet Adoptions. From

Jan. 27 to Feb. 14, ACTION Alexandria is holding a photo contest for animal lovers in Alexandria. Participants are asked to post a photo of their adopted pet on ACTION with a short description of their pet. All contest participants are encouraged to sign up to be a Social Media Animal Ambassador for an animal who has been in either King Street Cats or the Animal Welfare League of Alexandria for a longer period of time. To participate visit actionalexandria.org.

FRIDAY/JAN. 31

Music Performance. 7:30 p.m. at Birchmere Music Hall, 3701 Mount Vernon Ave. The Bottle Rockets will perform with Marshall Crenshaw. \$27.50. Visit www.birchmere.com for tickets.

Theater Performance. 7:30 p.m. at T.C. Williams High School. See the drama department stage Shakespeare's "A Midsummer Night's Dream." \$5/ACPS employees, students and seniors; \$10/adult.

One-Act Play. 7 p.m. in the Kogelman Theatre at West Potomac High School. "Evolution of a Black Girl" by Morgan Avery McCoy will be performed. The kickoff will also include performances by the Pom Team, Sandburg Middle Step Team, and African Student Dancers. Tickets are \$10.

SATURDAY/FEB. 1

Music Performance. 7:30 p.m. at Birchmere Music Hall, 3701 Mount Vernon Ave. James McMurtry will perform. \$29.50. Visit www.birchmere.com or call 703-549-7500.

Warehouse Sale. 9 a.m.-4 p.m. at the George Washington Masonic Memorial, 101 Callahan Drive. Browse high-end boutique merchandise during the 9th annual Old Town Boutique District

Warehouse Sale. Visit www.oldtownboutiquedistrict.com or facebook.com/ALXWarehouseSale for more.

Lecture and Book Signing. 11 a.m.-12:30 p.m. at Alexandria Black History Museum, 902 Wythe St. Join the authors of "African Americans of Alexandria, Virginia: Beacons of Light in the 20th Century" for a discussion of Alexandria's civil rights trailblazers. Free. Reservations encouraged. 703-746-4356.

Special Tours and Demonstrations.

1-4 p.m. at Stabler-Leadbeater Apothecary Museum, 105-107 S. Fairfax St. Discover items from poison bottles to dragon's blood and find out how they were used and if they worked. There will also be demonstrations. Recommended for children in 3rd grade and older. \$6/person. Reservations recommended. Visit shop.alexandriava.gov or 703-746-3852.

Free Coffee. 3-4 p.m., get free coffee at St. Elmo's Coffee Pub, 2300 Mount Vernon Ave. Browse the exhibition of "Living Legends of Alexandria: African American Activists" for Black History Month. The exhibition features 13 African Americans who have been chronicled as part of the Living Legends of Alexandria project. Visit www.Alexandrialegends.com for more.

Country-Western Dance Lessons.

Lessons at 6:30 p.m., dancing from 7:30-10 p.m. at Lincolnia Center, 4710 N. Chambliss St. Couples and singles can dance to music by a DJ. \$10/NVCWDA; \$12/non-member; \$5/children under 18. Visit www.nvcwda.org or 703-860-4941 for more.

Theater Performance. 7:30 p.m. at T.C. Williams High School. See the drama department stage Shakespeare's "A Midsummer Night's Dream." \$5/ACPS employees, students and seniors; \$10/adult.

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WINTER ENTERTAINMENT



PHOTO BY KEITH WATERS FOR KX PHOTOGRAPHY

Cast of Ragtime

'Ragtime' Tony Award-winning musical opens at LTA.

BY JEANNE THEISMANN
GAZETTE PACKET

From the opening strains of "Ragtime," it's apparent that The Little Theatre of Alexandria has mounted a spectacular production of the Tony Award-winning musical by Terrance McNally. As the cast of characters make their introductions, we glimpse America's epic melting pot story come to life.

Based on the 1975 novel by E. L. Doctorow, "Ragtime" tells the story of three families reshaping life in the early 20th century. The audience first meets Father (Shaun Moe), Mother (Jennifer Lyons Pagnard), Mother's Younger Brother (Ben Cherington) and the Little Boy (played on opening night by Brian McNamara), who find their complacent life in New Rochelle, N.Y., upended by the discovery of a black infant in their garden.

In a moment of desperation, the baby was abandoned by Sarah (Aerika Saxe), a cleaning woman who conceived the child with Harlem piano player Coalhouse Walker Jr. (Malcolm Lee).

The third story follows Latvian immigrant Tateh (Michael Gale) and his daughter (Lindsey Gattuso) as they survive the squalor of Lower East Side tenements and rise to the heights of the burgeoning film industry.

Making cameo appearances are historical figures like the showgirl Evelyn Nesbit (Claire O'Brien), Harry Houdini (Jonathan Cagle-Mulberg), the radical Emma Goldman (a rousing Janette Moman) and

Malcolm Lee and Aerika Saxe star as Coalhouse Walker Jr. and Sarah in The Little Theatre of Alexandria production of "Ragtime."



PHOTO BY JEANNE THEISMANN/GAZETTE PACKET

the captains of industry J. P. Morgan (Larry Grey) and Henry Ford (Buzz Schmidt).

Saxe and Lee lead a stellar cast with Pagnard turning in a poignant performance as the privileged white mother.

Directed by Michael Kharfen, the entire production crew – sets by J. Andrew Simmons, choreography by Ivan Davila and costumes by Jean Schlichting and Kit Sibley – achieves perfect synergy for one of LTA's finest productions.

"Ragtime" is playing now through Feb. 15 at The Little Theatre of Alexandria, 600 Wolfe St. Limited tickets still available for the Feb. 4 performance to benefit the Alexandria Police Foundation. For more information call 703-746-1909 or visit www.alexandriapolicefoundation.org.



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WINTER ENTERTAINMENT

Music Performance. 7:30 p.m. at The Birchmere Music Hall, 3701 Mount Vernon Ave. James McMurtry will perform with Curtis McMurtry. Visit www.birchmere.com or call 703-549-7500.

SUNDAY/FEB. 2

Downton Abbey Tours. 2 p.m. at Lee-Fendall House, 614 Oronoco St. The current owner of Highclere Castle, the real world castle where Downton Abbey is filmed, is a direct descendent of the original owner of Lee-Fendall House. The tour will compare similarities between people and places within the world of the television series and those of Lee-Fendall House and also include the rarely seen servant's wing and kitchen area. \$5/advance; \$7/day of. Visit www.leefendallhouse.org or 703-548-1789 for tickets.

Closing Reception. 2-4 p.m. at The Art League in the Torpedo Factory, 105 N. Union St. See "Community Canvas Project" and "SOHO Photography Exhibit" before it closes. The project is nearly 600 pieces strong. Visit www.theartleague.org.

Opening Reception. 4-6 p.m., meet Katie Rrunnerstrom and see drawings and paintings at the Athenaeum, 201 Prince St. The show reflects her exploration of several areas of science such as mycology and the study of jellyfish. Free. Visit nvfaa.org or 703-548-0035.

TUESDAY/FEB. 4

Special Tour. 1:30 p.m. at Mount Vernon Estate. Take a special tour of the new Fred W. Smith National Library for the study of George Washington. Included in admission. Visit www.mountvernon.org or 703-

780-2000.

Discussion Series. 6-8 p.m. at Morrison House, 116 S Alfred St. Catherine Hollan on the "Growing American Silver Market" has been rescheduled from January. Free. Visit www.torpedofactory.org/morrison/.

Arts Extravaganza: An Evening of Fine and Performing Arts. 7 p.m. at West Potomac High School Springbank Arts Center, 6500 Quander Road. All ages can enjoy "Tuesday Night Live," a parody of "Saturday Night Live," browse art exhibits and create with clay, paint and more. There will also be music and competitions and more. Free.

WEDNESDAY/FEB. 5

Dance Workshop and Book Signing. 4:30-6:30 p.m. at Metropolitan School of the Art's Alexandria studio, 5775 Barclay Drive. Middle and high school students can enjoy a workshop by Tim Federle, a Broadway choreographer. \$50/open to advanced dance, theatre and music students. Visit www.metropolitanarts.org to register.

Music Performance. 7:30 p.m. at The Birchmere Music Hall, 3701 Mount Vernon Ave. Travis Tritt will perform. Visit www.birchmere.com or call 703-549-7500.

THURSDAY/FEB. 6

Free Frozen Yogurt. From noon-9 p.m. at Menchie's Pinecrest Plaza, 6550 Little River Turnpike. Print off a coupon at facebook.com/mymenchie and bring it in for a free six-ounce cup of frozen yogurt. Valid only on that day. Visit www.menchie.com.

Lecture. 7-8:30 p.m. at The Lyceum, 201 S. Washington St. "How France

Embraced and Rejected American Values." Free, donations accepted. Visit www.alexandriacaen.wordpress.com.

Music Performance. 7:30 p.m. at The Birchmere Music Hall, 3701 Mount Vernon Ave. Vanessa Carlton with Patrick Sweany will perform. Rescheduled, all tickets from Oct. 17 will be honored. Visit www.birchmere.com or call 703-549-7500.

FRIDAY/FEB. 7

Opening Reception. 7-10 p.m. see "Reincarnations" art exhibit at Del Ray Artisans, 2704 Mount Vernon Ave. Features art from salvaged items, art from encyclopedias and more. Free. Runs Feb. 7 through March 2. Visit www.thedelrayartisans.org for more.

Opening Reception. 7-9 p.m. meet Chantilly resident Peter Toth, artist of "Songs of the Shore," archival inkjet prints in the Margaret W. and Joseph L. Fisher Art Gallery, of the Rachel M. Schlesinger Concert Hall & Arts Center, 3001 N. Beauregard St. Visit www.nvcc.edu/schlesingercenter/gallery.html for more.

Music Performance. 7:30 p.m. at The Birchmere Music Hall, 3701 Mount Vernon Ave. Arlo Guthrie continues his tribute to Woody's 100th birthday. Visit www.birchmere.com or call 703-549-7500.

SATURDAY/FEB. 8

Barnes & Noble Bookfair. 10 a.m.-1 p.m. at Barnes & Noble Potomac Yard, 3651 Jefferson Davis Highway. Support Jefferson-Houston PTA while enjoying student performances, book readings and crafts. Visit bn.com/

bookfairs and enter ID #11271368 if you would like to support the school online.

Swordsmen's Rendezvous. Noon-4 p.m. at Gadsby's Tavern, 138 N. Royal St. Enjoy a re-enactment of 18th-century swordplay, displays, discussions and more. Includes audience participation. \$6/person. Reservations required, shop.alexandriava.gov or 703-746-4242.

Civil War Recruiting Day. 1-4 p.m. at Fort Ward Museum, 4301 W. Braddock Road. Meet soldiers and civilians of the 3rd U.S. Regular Infantry, Company K. There will be demonstrations and information about how to become a re-enactor. Free. Snow day is Feb. 22. Visit www.fortward.org or 703-746-4848.

Closing Reception and Silent Auction. 3-8 p.m. bid on some of the entries from "Mixed Media Metallics." Proceeds benefit Food for Others. On display at Artistic Artifacts, 4750 Eisenhower Ave. Admission is one non-perishable food item, which will be donated to Food for Others. Visit www.ArtisticArtifacts.com/metallics for more.

Teen Production. 7:30 p.m. at Heritage Presbyterian Church, 8503 Fort Hunt Road. See MVCCT's production of Shakespeare's "Much Ado About Nothing." \$12. Visit mvcct.org for more.

Music Performance. 7:30 p.m. at The Birchmere Music Hall, 3701 Mount Vernon Ave. Arlo Guthrie continues his tribute to Woody's 100th birthday. Visit www.birchmere.com or call 703-549-7500.

SUNDAY/FEB. 9

Valentine Card-Making Party.

Noon-4 p.m. at Del Ray Artisans in the Nicholas A. Colasanto Center, 2704 Mount Vernon Ave. Free, but a donation for a make-and-take card is requested. Visit www.thedelrayartisans.org for more.

Downton Abbey Tours. 2 p.m. at Lee-Fendall House, 614 Oronoco St. The current owner of Highclere Castle, the real world castle where Downton Abbey is filmed, is a direct descendent of the original owner of Lee-Fendall House. The tour will compare similarities between people and places within the world of the television series and those of Lee-Fendall House and also include the rarely seen servant's wing and kitchen area. \$5/advance; \$7/day of. Visit www.leefendallhouse.org or 703-548-1789 for tickets.

Winter Warmer Tea. 3-4:30 p.m. at Gadsby's Tavern, 138 N. Royal St. Eat period-inspired delicacies while enjoying tea and American Heritage Chocolate. A historic guest will be visiting. \$35/person and is all inclusive. Reservations required, shop.alexandriava.gov or 703-746-4242.

Teen Production. 3 p.m. at Heritage Presbyterian Church, 8503 Fort Hunt Road. See MVCCT's production of Shakespeare's "Much Ado About Nothing." \$12. Visit mvcct.org for more.

Christie Dashiell. 6-9 p.m. at The Carlyle Club, 411 John Carlyle St. The Hoop Academy Project presents an Evening with Christie Dashiell, accompanied by the Vaughn Ambrose Quartet. Proceeds benefit the Alexandria African American Hall of Fame Project. \$35 per person. Cash bar and full dinner menu available. Contact Juah Haley at 571-217-9951 or aaahalloffame13@gmail.com.



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WINTER FUN

Explore Offerings at City's Recreation Centers

PHOTOS BY LOUISE KRAFFT/GAZETTE PACKET

Winter classes and club activities are underway at most of the city's recreation centers. The Department of Recreation, Parks and Cultural Activities sponsors a number of local clubs that include: Alexandria Coin Club, Olde Town Fencing Club, Al-

exandria Harmonizers Barbershop Quartets and Chorus, MYO SIM Kendo/Karate Club, The Seaports Side Chorus-Alexandria Chapter of the Sweet Adelines International and The Royal Scottish Country Dance Society. For more information on programs visit www.alexandriava.gov/recreation.



Carey Lewis works out with the punching bag adding a few moves from another class.



Tony Suggs leads a "Boxercise" class in the Charles Houston Recreation Center on Monday and Wednesday evenings. Boxercise is an exercise class based on the training concepts boxers use to



Emily Brusino practices different combinations on the punching bags.



Jessica Rozek follows instructor Tony Suggs' lead in a sparring exercise.



Jackson Montague practices his footing with a classmate in the beginning fencing class taught by the Olde Town Fencing Club at the Charles Houston Recreation Center.



PHOTOS BY SALLY MACKLIN/GAZETTE PACKET



Native American tools

Escape Indoors

Get out of the chill this winter by dropping by the Lyceum: Alexandria's History Museum, 201 South Washington St. It's open Mondays - Saturdays, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. and Sundays, 1-5 p.m.



An early American silver teapot.



Early tools used by local Native American tribes.

WINTER FUN

Surviving the Polar Vortex

By JEANNE THEISMANN
GAZETTE PACKET

The anticipation is palpable. Only a few more days before Punxsutawney Phil surfaces to make his prognostication on winter. But with prolonged subzero temperatures hanging over the region, no need to summon the famous groundhog to know that surviving another winter of discontent won't be easy.

"I love to go for a run when it's snowing," said Alexandria resident John Bordner, one of those chipper, cheery souls who bounds out of bed to embrace any opportunity to get outside. But for many people, it's a challenge to stay active during the winter months. Having an arsenal of activities planned can help keep you from spending yet another winter overeating, feeling depressed and thinking about moving to Florida.

GET OUTSIDE

When most people think "winter fun," they think of outdoor activities like sledding or ice skating. Not much can be done about the sledding until the snow hits, but when it does, most neighborhoods have a favorite spot for kids and families to gather. Bundle up, take a thermos of hot chocolate and go visit with neighbors.

With or without Mother Nature's cooperation, you can take to the ice at the Mount Vernon Rec Center ice skating rink, which offers open skate times as well as ice and figure skating lessons for children and adults. The Ice Hockey programs and leagues are some of the best in the state and clinics and pick-up games are also available (703-768-3224).

When the next Snowmageddon does hit, head outside and build a snow fort. For something different, build an igloo with



PHOTO BY JEANNE THEISMANN/GAZETTE PACKET

Torpedo Factory artist Tatyana Schremko took advantage of Snowmageddon to make an ice sculpture.

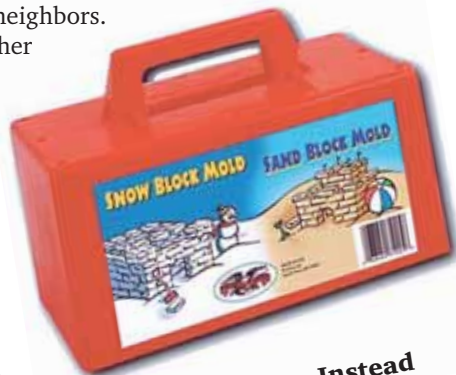
blocks made with a snow mold. (Flexible Flyer makes one that will do double duty to build sand castles for that Spring Break trip you are planning).

Grab your digital camera and develop your photography skills with a photo expedition of the winter landscapes. A walk through Dyke Marsh makes a great place for some solitude and scenic photo opportunities.

Put that patio fire pit you bought last summer to good use by lighting a winter bonfire and making S'mores.

Make snow paint. Simply add food coloring to water and put in a spray bottle. Then go out and paint your yard. Youngsters especially love this.

The winter months can be the best time to enjoy the local Farmer's Markets. Grab a cup of coffee or hot chocolate and take a walk through Market Square or Del Ray on a Saturday morning to visit with the vendors and regulars who attend.



Forget the snowman. Instead build an igloo with Flexible Flyer snow molds.



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

The Little Theatre of Alexandria offers classes for children and adults in improv, musical theater, jazz and playwriting.

GET ENLIGHTENED

The Polar Vortex is no excuse to hibernate inside with cabin fever. Now is the time to try some of the many indoor activities that take a back seat to outdoor events during the summer months.

Take a class, like those offered at The Little Theatre of Alexandria, or music or voice lessons at The Alexandria School for the Performing Arts in Del Ray. Both are among the most affordable in the area. The Art League at the Torpedo Factory Art Center offers a range of classes for budding artists in a range of mediums.

Support the local entertainment scene by taking in a show at MetroStage, LTA or Port City Playhouse. Live entertainment venues like The Carlyle Club and The Birchmere offer a variety of concerts, shows and events. Stop by The Morrison House any Tuesday, Friday or Saturday to hear Bob Smith at the piano and a variety of Alexandria's best amateur singers (hello, Adron Krekeler) take to the microphone. For traditional karaoke, there's always The Rock It Grill.

GET INVOLVED

With the holiday frenzy behind everyone, now is the perfect time to get involved in the community. Volunteer and mentoring opportunities exist in countless areas from



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

The Art League offers a range of classes for children and adults.

the Animal Welfare League of Alexandria to Community Lodgings and Carpenter's Shelter. Volunteer Alexandria (www.volunteeralexandria.org or 703-836-2176) can help connect volunteers to opportunities.

Still for some, there is only one way to survive the winter months.

"We're going to Maui for a month," said Sandy and Charlie Collum.

That works, too.

lost (adj): 1. unable to find the way. 2. not appreciated or understood. 3. no longer owned or known

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10:30 am; 12:00 Noon; 2:00 pm (en Español); 6:30 pm

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ALEXANDRIA DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND ZONING

The hotel as seen from Duke Street.



ALEXANDRIA DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND ZONING

The hotel as seen from Union Street.

Council Approves 120-room Hotel on Waterfront

FROM PAGE 1

permit received unanimous support, although Vice Mayor Allison Silberberg was out of town at the time and unable to vote. During the 2012 campaign she was the only member of the Democratic ticket who said she would have voted against the waterfront plan, quoting former state Sen. Patsy Ticer (D-30) who said the plan was “not ready for prime time.” Once again, opponents said the density was too big for Old Town.

“Scale it down or put it elsewhere,” said David Olinger, a member of the waterfront task force. “But don’t inflict this on the waterfront and the surrounding neighborhood.”

THE CUMMINGS PROPERTY is one of the three sites slated for redevelopment that were at the heart of the waterfront small-area plan, an increase of density that aggravated neighbors so much they filed a series of lawsuits to stop the city from moving forward. Opponents are still challenging the zoning in court, focusing their attention on efforts of city officials to prevent them from challenging the zoning change in 2012. They say the Cummings property will play an important role as the first development of the waterfront plan, so it’s important for city officials to get it right and



ALEXANDRIA DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND ZONING

The hotel as seen from the Strand.

build support for the proposal.

“A legal cloud is hanging over the zoning,” said Old Town resident Bert Ely. “This does not set the tone. In fact, it doesn’t even come close.”

Supporters of the plan say the hotel will revitalize the waterfront and bring new vibrancy to a run-down stretch of land long dominated by industrial use. City officials say the hotel, which would be located at the northeast corner of Duke and Union streets, would bring the city an estimated \$750,000 in annual property taxes. The hotel will include 69 underground parking

spots and a valet service that will park cars in a nearby garage.

“For anyone walking along the street, it will look like it was built 100 years ago,” said Ken Wire, attorney for the developer. “And it will be a quality building for 100 years to come.”

THE HISTORY of the property dates back to the earliest days of the city, a time when city leaders extended the waterfront east into the river to create a zone for commerce. About half of the property was underwater when Alexandria was founded in

1749, although the parcel had been completely filled in by 1845. Originally, it had a warehouse with piers running east to the Strand. The current warehouse structure on the property was constructed in the 1950s.

“Historically, waterfront buildings, often warehouses, were significantly larger and less high-style than buildings in other parts of the city,” according to the staff report on the proposal. “Warehouses were often four stories in height and occupied the entire lot, without setbacks or open space.”

City Council members ended up making several changes to the proposal after the public hearing. They modified the color of the bricks, shortened the hours for the loading dock and reorganized the lighting a public plaza along the northern edge of the property. They kept the increased density, though, leading to concerns that parking could suffer in Old Town.

“Where are those folks who use those spaces supposed to park? And what about the impact on the residents themselves?” asked Old Town resident Robin Marquis. “Keep in mind that residents are taxpayers and should at least have a chance to find a parking space.”

Members of the Board of Architectural Review will have the last crack at making changes to the exterior when they take up the project in the coming weeks.

BULLETIN BOARD

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

TAX HELP

AARP Tax-Aide, the nation’s largest free tax preparation and tax counseling volunteer program starts its free Tax Preparation Services Feb. 1. The program, sponsored by the IRS, is staffed with Certified IRS Tax Counselors and use IRS computers and software to prepare and eFile tax returns for low to middle income families and elderly citizens. Please bring Government-issued picture IDs, and social security cards for all persons that will be included in your tax return. Also bring a printed copy of last year’s tax return, if you itemized. Located at Lee Center, 1108 Jefferson St., Wednesdays and Fridays from 10 a.m.-2 p.m. Walk-ins welcome. Visit www.aarp.org/taxaide for additional information.

WINTER PROGRAMS

Guide Now Available. The Department of Recreation, Parks and Cultural Activities’ 2014 Winter

Program Guide is now available. Individuals who did not receive the program guide can download a free copy at alexandriava.gov/recreation. To sign up for a free subscription visit alexandriava.gov/recreation or call 703-746-4343.

THURSDAY/JAN. 30

Nonprofit Workshop Series. 9-11 a.m. at the Alexandria Small Business Development Center, 625 N. Washington Street, Suite 400. Jennifer Ayers, JL Ayers Consulting LLC, presents “Boot Camp for Changing the World: How to Start, Manage and Grow a Nonprofit Organization: NPO Basics.” Join the first session of this nonprofit workshop series and learn the basics of nonprofit organizations. Registration required. Free. Visit www.alexandriasbdc.org or call 703-778-1292.

FRIDAY/JAN. 31

City Council Legislative Subcommittee. 5 p.m. City Hall, Council Work Room, 301 King St. Contact 703-746-4550.

TUESDAY/FEB. 4

Talk. 7 p.m. at St. Stephen’s & St. Agnes School, performing arts center, 1000 St. Stephen’s Road. Lenore Skenazy will discuss “Free-Range Kids: How to Raise Safe, Self-Reliant Children.” Free. Appropriate for parents of children age 2-22. Visit www.sssas.org to register.

WEDNESDAY/FEB. 5

Lecture. 7 p.m. at St. Paul’s Church - Nave, 228 S. Pitt St. Tom Kerns will discuss his firm’s vision for the new Episcopal Cathedral in Port-au-Prince, Haiti. Visit www.stpaulsalexandria.com or 703-549-3312.

Application Deadline. The Alexandria Commission for the Arts is seeking volunteers who reside or work within the City of Alexandria to serve on the Public Art Committee. There are currently four openings: two for an individual with expertise in urban planning, landscape architecture and/or architecture; and two for an individual who has strong interest in the arts. Only applicants who meet these qualifications will be

considered at this time, since the openings for those with expertise in art as an artist or art professional are not available at this time. Visit www.alexandriava.gov/publicart. Interested volunteers should send an e-mail to aca@alexandriava.gov.

FRIDAY/FEB. 7

Community Center Closings. The following community centers will close at 6 p.m. for staff training: Charles Barrett, Charles Houston, Cora Kelly, Mount Vernon, Nannie J. Lee, Patrick Henry, and William Ramsay. In addition, the Lee Center will close at 6 p.m. For a list of recreation facilities, visit www.alexandriava.gov/RecreationCenters. For additional information on recreation programs and activities, visit www.alexandriava.gov/Recreation or call 703-746-4343.

SATURDAY/FEB. 8

Boating Safety Course. 8 a.m.-5 p.m. at Knights of Columbus Hall, 8592 Richmond Highway. Take an education course. Register by e-

mailing eaglesailor75@cox.net or 703-780-3765.

Meeting. 9 a.m.-noon at City Hall, 301 King St. The Royal Street Bus Garage Ad hoc Advisory Committee will hold its first meeting. The meeting will include an introduction of the Advisory Committee members, an overview of the Committee’s mission and process, a site background discussion and a virtual tour of the property and surrounding neighborhood. Free. 703-746-3813 or e-mail jessica.mcvarry@alexandriava.gov.

Open House. 10 a.m.-1 p.m. at Northern Virginia Community College, Alexandria Campus, 3001 N. Beauregard St. Interested middle and high school students and their parents are encouraged to attend an open house at Northern Virginia Community College’s Alexandria Campus. Students can meet with faculty, staff and current students, and also take a tour of campus. Information includes advising, student life, preparing for college, financial aid and applying to NOVA. To register and for more information visit <http://blogs.nvcc.edu/alhsoutreach/open-house/>.

TC Gymnastics Places Third at W-L Invitational

Titans compete as team for first time this season.

BY JON ROETMAN
GAZETTE PACKET

The T.C. Williams gymnastics team competed with four members, the minimum needed to produce a team score in most meets, for the first time in many years on Jan. 25 during the Barbara Reinwald W-L Gymnastics Invitational at Washington-Lee High School in Arlington.

Each of the four Titan gymnasts — Holland Cathey, Grace Girard, Jordan Lambert, Cailyn Lager — finished in the top 10 of the all-around competition and T.C. Williams placed third as a team.

“It’s the first time we’ve had all four healthy or in town,” head coach Pete Novgrod said. “We’ve had three usually, and it’s been a different one that we had each time not there.”

Cathey finished fourth in the all-around with a score of 35.075, including a first-place finish on floor (9.35), and third-place finishes on vault (9.3) and beam (9). She struggled on bars, finishing 15th (7.425). Novgrod said Cathey usually scores in the 37 range.



PHOTO BY CRAIG STERBUTZEL/GAZETTE PACKET

T.C. Williams junior Grace Girard finished seventh in the all-around competition at the Barbara Reinwald W-L Gymnastics Invitational on Jan. 25 at Washington-Lee High School in Arlington.

Girard finished seventh in the all-around with a score of 33.875. She finished eighth on vault (9.15), 10th on bars (8.125) and



PHOTO BY CRAIG STERBUTZEL/GAZETTE PACKET

T.C. Williams senior Holland Cathey placed third in the all-around competition at the Barbara Reinwald W-L Gymnastics Invitational on Jan. 25 at Washington-Lee High School in Arlington.

beam (8.45), and 11th on beam (8.15).

Mambert was ninth in the all-around (33.225). She finished eighth on floor (8.6), 11th on bars (7.875), and 13th on vault (8.8) and beam (7.95).

Lager finished 10th in the all-around (32.6). She finished ninth on bars (8.2), 14th on beam (7.65), and 18th on vault (8.7) and floor (8.05).

“Very good,” Novgrod said about the Titans’ performance. “We had some rough parts ...”

Each of the four Titans competes in club gymnastics with the Arlington Aerials.

Last season, T.C. Williams gymnastics consisted of three members: Cathey, Girard and Mambert. Two years ago, Girard was the only gymnast on the team. Prior to Girard, Shannon Murphy, a 2009 graduate, was the first T.C. Williams gymnast in many years, according to Novgrod.

Fairfax’s Rachel Barborek won the all-around with score of 35.975, followed by West Potomac’s Monica Thompson (35.425).

Washington-Lee won the team competition with a score of 104.975. Yorktown finished second (104.95).

T.C. Williams will compete in the Conference 7 tournament at 6 p.m. on Friday, Jan. 31 at Lake Braddock.

SPORTS BRIEFS



PHOTO BY CRAIG STERBUTZEL/GAZETTE PACKET

John Chandler led the T.C. Williams boys’ basketball team with eight points during a 62-50 loss to West Potomac on Jan. 25.

T.C. Williams Boys Lose To West Potomac, West Springfield

The T.C. Williams boys’ basketball team dropped to 2-14 with losses against West Potomac (Jan. 25) and West Springfield (Jan. 27).

West Potomac led for the entire contest on Saturday, building leads of 10-2 and 22-7 in the first quarter. The Wolverines held a 35-27 halftime lead and led by at least six points for the entire second half.

Joe Richards led West Potomac with 22 points, including six 3-pointers.

John Chandler led T.C. Williams with eight points. Khalil Celestine, Mert Ozkaynak and Andrew Hill each scored six points.

West Springfield defeated the Titans 48-41 on Tuesday.

T.C. Williams will travel to face Lake Braddock at 7:30 p.m. on Thursday, Jan. 30.

T.C. Williams Girls Hand West Springfield First Loss

The T.C. Williams girls’ basketball team beat West Springfield 66-55 on Tuesday, giving the Spartans their first defeat of the season.

The Titans improved to 12-5, have won eight in a row and have yet to lose during the 2014 portion of their schedule.

West Springfield fell to 16-1. T.C. Williams will host Lake Braddock at 7:30 p.m. on Thursday, Jan. 30.

MILITARY NOTES

Email announcements to gazette@connectionnewspapers.com. Photos are welcome.

Air Force Airman **Rashaad E. Bell** graduated from basic military training at Joint Base San Antonio-Lackland, San Antonio, Texas. Bell is the son of Melva Bell of Washington, D.C., and Reginald Bell Sr. of Alexandria. He is a 2012 graduate of Anacostia Senior High School, Washington, D.C.

Air Force Airman **Nathaniel T. Runyon** graduated from basic military training at Joint Base San Antonio-Lackland, San Antonio, Texas. Runyon is the son of Shelly and Daniel Runyon. He is a 2011 graduate of Lansing High School, Lansing, Kansas.

Thiel To Leave Alexandria To Join McAuliffe Administration

FROM PAGE 1

ment featuring a red light bulb mounted atop a machine that looked like it came from a 1960s science fiction movie.

“When I got here, our people worked very hard to do everything they could with the resources they had available,” said Thiel in between budget meetings at City Hall. “I would characterize those resources as somewhat outdated.”

Now, Thiel has been tapped to become the next deputy secretary of Veterans Affairs and Homeland Security. He leaves a fire department that’s very different than the one he inherited. During his time in Alexandria, he oversaw the construction of the city’s first new fire station in 30 years at Potomac Yard. More stations are in the works on Eisenhower Avenue and Beauregard Street. And all of the existing stations are slated for replacement in the next decade.

“Chief Thiel has served Alexandria with distinction,” said City Manager Rashad Young in a written statement. “His strong leadership, strategic vision, and passionate commitment to our community have left an indelible mark on our city and ensure our continued safety.”

A NATIVE of Colorado, Thiel was raised

in Chicago and studied history at the University of North Carolina before becoming a firefighter in Durham County. A year later he moved to the Fairfax County Fire and Rescue Department. In 2002, Democratic Gov. Mark Warner appointed Thiel to lead the Virginia Department of Fire Programs. As executive director, he served as a member of the Commonwealth Preparedness Working Group, the Virginia Emergency Response Council, the State Hazardous Materials Emergency Response Advisory Committee, and the Critical Infrastructure Working Group.

“The big opportunity there was to transform that agency in a very tight fiscal climate,” said Thiel. “But the big deal was being part of the effort to address this new public policy environment around homeland security.”

In 2004, Thiel moved to Arizona to become the deputy fire chief for a city called Goodyear. There he was responsible for managing the city’s response to fires, medical emergencies, hazardous material releases and rescue situations. But he was eager to come back to Virginia. So in 2007, Thiel accepted an offer to replace former Chief Gary Mesaris, who became fire chief of the Metropolitan Washington Airport Authority’s Fire and Rescue Department.

“Chief Thiel is the professional we need



PHOTO BY LOUISE KRAFT/CAZETTE PACKET

Fire Chief Adam Thiel in front of fire engines last year.

at this time to take our fire department to the next level of excellence and professionalism,” said City Manager Jim Hartmann in a June 2007 written statement. “His background, experience, and technical knowledge will benefit the men and women of our Fire Department.”

SINCE THAT TIME, Thiel has worked to modernize the department. When City Council members considered the budget every year, he would press for equipment

and personnel. Meanwhile, he oversaw key parts of the city’s emergency response to the 2010 Snowmageddon and the 2011 earthquake in addition to the addition of a hazardous materials facility less than a mile away from Tucker Elementary School. Colleagues said he kept a cool head under pressure.

“Adam is very organized,” said Rich Baier, director of the city’s Department of Transportation and Environmental Services. “He has an extremely logical approach to complex problems.”

Some of the changes have yet to take place, although Thiel says he feels comfortable that he has set the pieces into place so the department can become a modern service. That red light bulb is still atop the device at the West End fire station, although Thiel says he recently signed a contract for a modern station alerting system. And the city’s capital-improvement program includes a complete replacement of every existing fire station except the historic one on Prince Street and the new one at Potomac Yard.

“This is a very sought after position in the U.S. fire service,” said Thiel. “I think that the city manager will have a lot of very well qualified candidates for the position as well as folks who are currently working here now.”

LETTERS

FROM PAGE 12

“newly eligible,” the state would pay a portion of additional expense as would the Federal Government. The Feds would guarantee an extra 10 percent for a 3-year period.

Most of us are aware of the present problems with Medicaid; poor payment schedule, few sign-up physicians, a general apathy for care except for emergency situations, etc.

About 15 years ago the state of Oregon came up with something similar to what Obamacare proposes for Medicaid in Virginia. It was known as the “Oregon Plan.” Oregon doubled the number of eligible Medicaid recipients by increasing the income level needed to make them eligible. Soon, they realized the state could not afford to sustain this new level of spending. So, they cut the legs off of their spending pattern by eliminating coverage for the lowest cost procedures and the highest cost procedures. Is that what we want in Virginia?

Harvey Wenick
Alexandria

Learn About CHD

To the Editor:

February is Heart Month, during which the public will undoubtedly hear a lot of information about how

to keep our hearts healthy and prevent heart disease — the number one killer of Americans. While this is important, I want to shed light on the two to three million adults and children in the United States who live with congenital heart defects (CHDs) — a heart disease they were born with and will have for the rest of their lives. It may come as a surprise that CHD is the most prevalent birth defect throughout the nation.

Almost one in 100 babies in this country are born with some kind of heart defect. CHD requires lifelong care and patients will require care from doctors who specialize in treating adults with CHDs. Fewer than 10 percent of American adults with CHDs who need care from specialty adult CHD centers actually receive the care they need.

For the first time, there are more adults with CHDs than children, thanks to medical advances, greater understanding of CHDs and an increased number of doctors specializing in the care of these defects. With greater awareness and understanding, each and every CHD patient can get the care they need at every stage of their life. Help patients and family members like me spread the word about CHDs during Heart Month and beyond by visiting the Adult Congenital Heart Association at www.ACHAheart.org for more information.

Seana Gallagher
Alexandria

Ethics Dominates News Headlines

BY ADAM P. EBBIN
STATE SENATOR (D-30)

The major news story that broke last week was the 14-count felony indictment filed against former Governor McDonnell and his wife for ethics violations. There is no question that public confidence in government officials has diminished. The people of Virginia expect accountability from their elected officials, and my colleagues and I have invested a lot of time and effort in crafting legislation to meet that expectation. Many provisions I proposed have been endorsed by the Senate Rules Committee.

Last week also marked a big victory for proponents of marriage equality in Virginia when Attorney General Mark Herring announced that, after a thorough legal review, he concluded Virginia’s ban on same-sex marriage violates the Due Process and Equal Protection clauses of the 14th Amendment to the US Constitution. Virginia has a proud history as the birthplace of the Bill of Rights, but too often our Commonwealth has been on the wrong side of history, as we were in *Loving v. Virginia* in 1967 arguing against interracial marriage. It is exciting and refreshing to see Virginia waking up from history and looking forward, not backward.

Several of my other legislative proposals have made progress. One of these bills (SB27) would reinstate the option for individuals to receive their tax refunds in the form of a paper check instead of a pre-loaded debit card. Consumers around the state complained that the debit cards being used were fraught with fees and not consumer-friendly, and I am pleased to report this bill passed unanimously through the Senate.

Another bill I’ve co-sponsored with Senator

Bryce Reeves of Fredericksburg (SB96) would prohibit the sale of electronic cigarettes to minors. These e-cigarettes contain nicotine and have addictive properties. We need to regulate them in the same manner as we regulate traditional cigarettes by not allowing their sale to children.

I have also introduced legislation (SB663) to establish a mental health pilot program at eight community college campuses around the state. This bill would provide important services given the alarming increase in violent tragedies at campuses around the country.

Thanks to all who attended the Mt. Vernon Town Hall Meeting last Saturday with Sen. Toddy Puller and Del. Scott Surovell. For those who could not make it to that one or who live in other parts of the district, there are two additional Town Hall Meetings:

❖ Lee District: Feb. 1, 10 a.m.-12 p.m., Kingstowne Thompson Center (6090 Kingstowne Village Parkway, Alexandria) with Del. Mark Sickles, Sen. George Barker and Sen. Toddy Puller.

❖ Alexandria/Arlington: Feb. 15, 10 a.m.-12 p.m., Charles Houston Recreation Center (905 Wythe Street, Alexandria) with Del. Rob Krupicka.

If you’re in Richmond between now and March 8, please stop by my office and see me. You can also email me at district30@senate.virginia.gov or call 804-698-7530 with your thoughts on legislation or state-related matters. I am active on Facebook and Twitter (@AdamEbbin) and more information is available at www.AdamEbbin.com, where I encourage you to sign up for my email updates.

It is an honor to represent the citizens of the 30th Senate District.

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-William Van Horne

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-Werner Heisenberg

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Campaign Finances

FROM PAGE 8

Along with many of the other members of Congress featured in the book, Moran says Schweizer got his facts wrong.

"I was never at this meeting where supposedly insider information was disclosed," Moran said during a 2012 debate with Murray.

ELECTION CYCLE after election cycle, Moran raised massive amounts of cash — swamping the competition. In the 2008 cycle, for example, Moran raised \$1.3 million. Republican Mark Ellmore raised about \$57,000. Ellmore now says the Republican Party abandoned him, adding that he might have been able to capture more than 30 percent of the vote if leaders in his party were willing to spend a little more money supporting him and his candidacy.

"You know going in what the challenge is, and you know that you are not going to have the resources to get your message out," said Ellmore. "So we were just dead in the water because we had no chance to win at all, and we knew that going in."

Moran's campaign-finance reports show he raised most of his money from what Dwight Eisenhower called the military-industrial complex, businesses that rely on contracts from the Department of Defense. The list includes some of the heaviest hitters in the industry, including Boeing, Lockheed Martin, Northrop Grumman, General Dynamics and Raytheon. As one of the senior members of the House Appropriations Committee, Moran had a reputation of working for these business interests, many of which are located in his congressional district.

"It's not necessarily quid pro quo," said Skelley. "By generally supporting the defense industry, he's gotten their backing in elections and received support from them."

Write

The Gazette Packet welcomes views on any public issue.

The deadline for all material is noon Friday. Letters must be signed. Include home address and home and business numbers. Letters are routinely edited for libel, grammar, good taste and factual errors.

Send to:

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21 Announcements

ABC LICENSE
Fionas, LLC trading as Fionas Irish Pub, 5810 Kingstowne Ctr, ste 160, Alexandria, VA 22315. The above establishment is applying to the VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGE CONTROL (ABC) for a Wine, Beer and Mixed Beverages on Premise license to sell or manufacture alcoholic beverages. Martin White, Member/owner
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 newspaper legal notices. Objections should be registered at www.abc.virginia.gov or 800-552-3200.

21 Announcements

ABC LICENSE
King Street Bottleshop, LLC trading as King Street Bottleshop, 1309 King 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. Christine Lee Seashore, member of LLC
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 newspaper legal notices. Objections should be registered at www.abc.virginia.gov or 800-552-3200.

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Obituary



Lila B. Zimmerman
Williamsburg Landing Resident

Lila Breshears Zimmerman, 97, peacefully passed away Wednesday January 15th at her Woodhaven residence in the Williamsburg Landing retirement community. She was preceded in death by her sister Lillian and Gil Zimmerman, her loving husband of 51 years who passed away in August, 2012.

She was born in the Breshears Valley near Warsaw, MO and moved to Washington D.C. along with her sister Lillian in the 1940's to go to work for the U.S. Government as a secretary. It was there that she and Gil met and subsequently married in June, 1961. He was a high ranking lawyer with the U.S. Attorney's Office prior to both of their retirements from the government.

Lila and Gil were longtime and highly regarded residents of Old Town Alexandria, VA for many years prior to moving to Williamsburg Landing in 1995. While in Alexandria, she was active in charity work and was a volunteer for Nelly's Needlers, a group of talented women who made beautiful quilts to raise money for the preservation of Woodlawn Plantation, a historic home south of Alexandria that was originally a part of George Washington's Mount Vernon estate and was the residence of he and Martha Washington's granddaughter Nelly Custis. In addition to her quilt making, Lila was a talented oil painter and created several beautiful still life paintings.

She is survived by her author step-son Gerry A. Zimmerman of Scottsdale, AZ. At her wish, there will be no public memorial services and following her cremation at the Nelsen Funeral Home, her ashes will be sent to Missouri where they will be buried along with the ashes of her beloved husband, Gil, in a family plot in Wheatland, MO.

Online condolences may be expressed at www.nelsencares.com.

Legal Notices

LEGAL NOTICE
Pursuant to the provision of section 4-1-16 of the code of the City of Alexandria, the Alexandria Police Department located at 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.

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-Dagobert Runes

21 Announcements

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Light tomorrow with today!
-Elizabeth Barret Browning

21 Announcements

AT&T Mobility, LLC is proposing to install new wireless telecommunications equipment at 4600 Duke Street, Alexandria, VA 22314 and 2727 Duke Street, Alexandria, VA 22314. New generators will be installed at grade on a 5' by 11' concrete pad at each site. The height of the generators is not to exceed 10 feet above grade. Any interested party wishing to submit comments regarding the potential effects the proposed facility may have on any historic property may do so by sending such comments to: Project 61140111-TC c/o EBI Consulting, 6876 Susquehanna Trail S, York, PA 17403 or via telephone at 339-234-2597.

21 Announcements

AT&T Mobility, LLC proposes to install new wireless telecommunications equipment at 501 Slaters Lane, Alexandria, VA 22314. A new +/- 10-foot tall generator will be installed at grade on a 5-foot by 11-foot concrete pad. Any interested party wishing to submit comments regarding the potential effects the proposed facility may have on any historic property may do so by sending such comments to: Project 61140019-TC c/o EBI Consulting, 6876 Susquehanna Trail S., York, PA 17403 or 339-234-2597.

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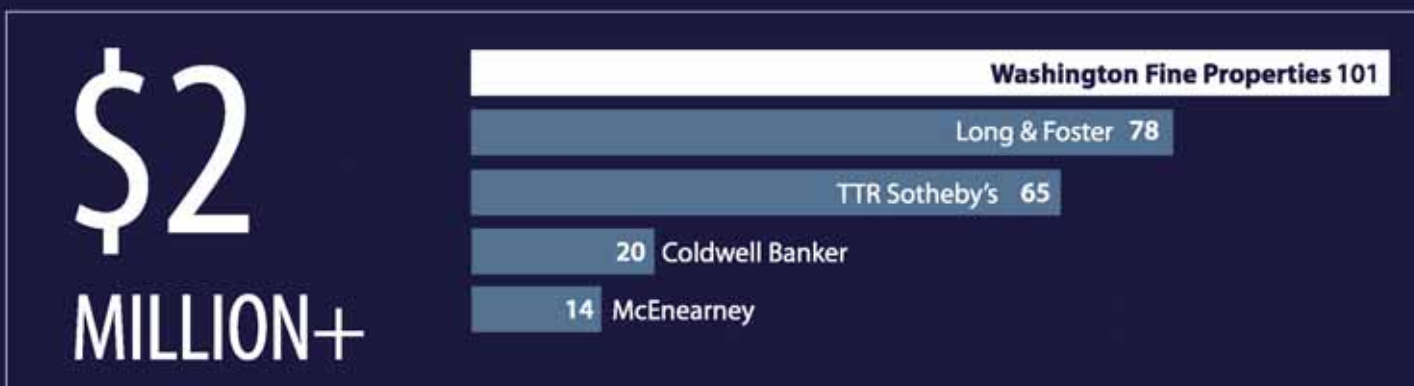
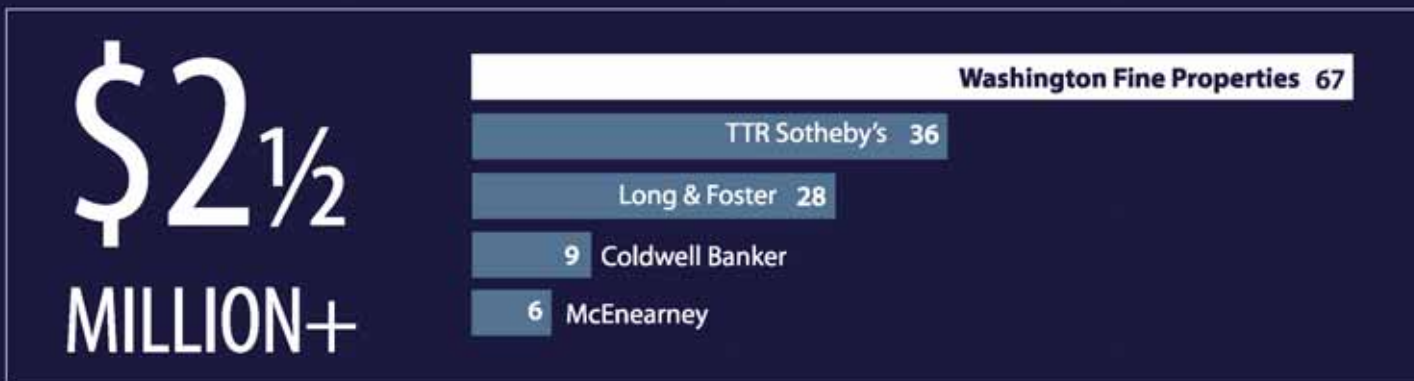
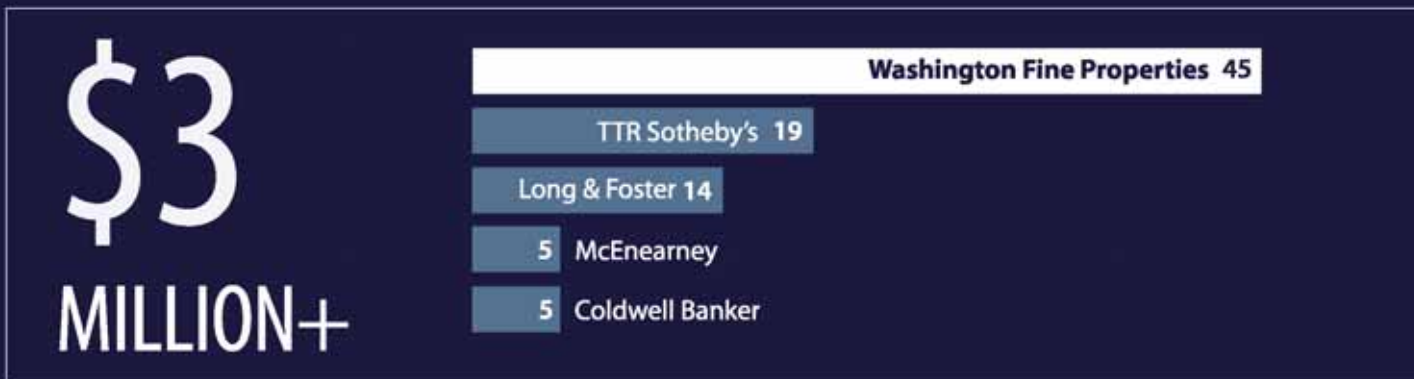
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