

# Working Against a Slowdown

## Alexandria developments hope to reverse job loss trends.

BY VERNON MILES  
GAZETTE PACKET

When asked how Alexandria's doing, interim City Manager Mark Jinks' reaction is tepid. The good news is that income is high, as is hotel occupancy, but it basically stops there.

"The region is experiencing a slowdown. [Washington D.C.] was the second fastest growing economy in the country," said Jinks, but the region has fallen to 14th out of 15 in job growth. "Now Detroit is the only city not growing faster."

Jinks attributes the slowdown primarily to the stall of federal government spending, the primary economic driver in the region. According to the U.S. Labor Department, the region lost 14,000 total jobs last year, including 10,000 government jobs and gained 6,000 new ones. Even these new jobs, Jinks says, are service industry jobs and are much lower paying than the federal jobs the area was built on. With less people coming to work in Alexandria, apartments in the area have gone down in value.

"Basically, we're dead in the water," said Jinks.

The biggest development story for Alexandria in 2015 is the planning for the Potomac Yard Metro Station. According to Jinks, the Metro station is Alexandria's primary defense against losing more jobs and more office space to development in Tysons and Herndon with the opening of the Silver Line.

"There's more competition now,

with the opening of the Silver Line and more development out east," said Jinks. "There's more competition among the localities. In our experience, the metro station at the Potomac Yard development is the best chance at fighting that."

Jinks warned that Silver Line developments were the biggest immediate threat to Alexandria's economy. If Alexandria can't open more development capabilities with metro accessibility, growing companies will look towards the less expensive opportunities.

"There are millions of square feet of unopposed development along the Silver Line," said Jinks. "Eighty-five percent of office space is built within one-quarter mile of the metro."

The Potomac Yard Metro is funded primarily from new taxes on developments moving in and the property tax increases on real estate in the immediate vicinity. The city is currently considering five alternative plans for the Metro, including a no build option, which range from a \$209 million station built on the tracks at the north end of Potomac Greens to a \$492 million station built closer to the Potomac Yard Shopping Center.

"The new Metro station is going to be an incredible asset," said John Long, president and CEO of the Alexandria Chamber of Commerce, "it's a major cog in the New Alexandria."

The Potomac Yard Metrorail Implementation Work Group is scheduled to meet at 7 p.m. on Thursday, Jan. 29 in the City Coun

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### NEIGHBORHOOD OUTLOOK

PHOTO BY VERNON MILES/GAZETTE PACKET



Development continues on National Science Foundation and the Park Meridian residential tower.

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# NEIGHBORHOOD OUTLOOK

## City's Developments Hope To Reverse Job Loss Trends

FROM PAGE 1

cil Workroom in City Hall.

**AT A CITY COUNCIL** meeting on Jan. 28, city staff laid out the priorities for the long-term Waterfront Development plan. Priorities were identified in a survey of 70 Old Town residents and an assessment from the project's engineering staff. The top priority, and the first phase of development on the plan, will be the flood mitigation and promenade construction along the waterfront. The flood mitigation and promenade plan is expected to cost \$33 million.

"This had better be one glorious promenade," said Councilwoman Del Pepper.

There has been controversy over the implementation of the City's Waterfront Development plan, including an impending review by the Virginia Supreme Court of a lawsuit dismissed by the City of Alexandria that alleged that the City had engaged in illegal spot zoning.

**"There's more competition among the localities. In our experience, the metro station at the Potomac Yard development is the best chance at fighting that."**

**— Interim City Manager Mark Jinks**

Long identified balancing between new construction and maintaining the historic atmosphere as one of the biggest challenges in Alexandria development.

"There's always a balance," said Long. "People like change, when it's something that they like. When change starts, people get excited by that, but it's really about implementing change well. The hotels have done a really good job of working together with the community. There's a point where you need to move on, and that's where Alexandria is right now."

The first site of private development in the Waterfront plan is already underway at the Indigo Hotel at 220 South Union St. Construction at the site is expected to be completed by Summer of 2016.

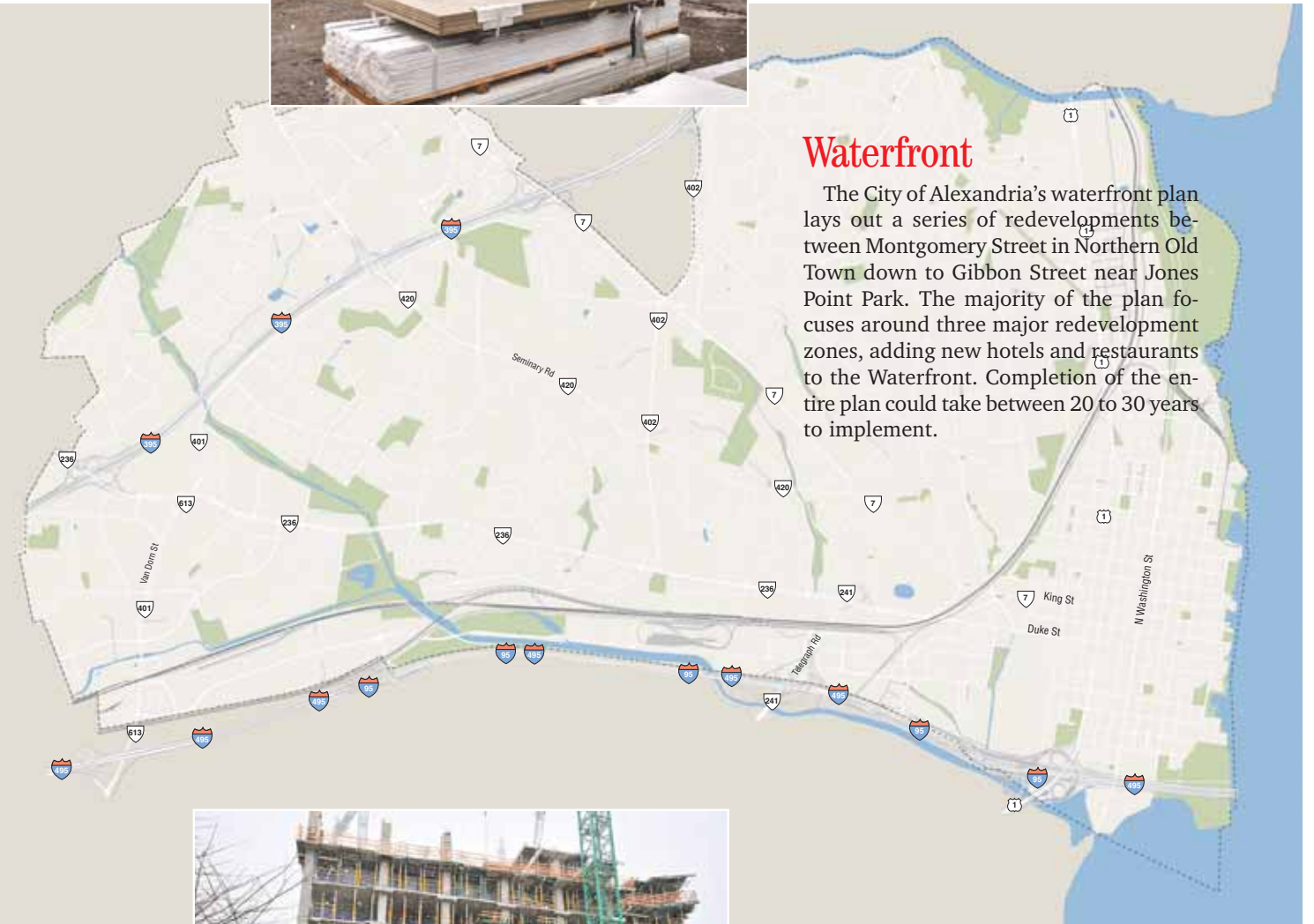
### Housing and retail construction continues at Potomac Yard.

PHOTO BY  
LOUISE KRAFFT  
GAZETTE PACKET



### Potomac Yard

A new Metro Station at Potomac Yard means big changes for north Alexandria. The Potomac Metro Yard is estimated to spur on development of an additional 7,100 residential units in the area as well as additional office and retail development within a quarter mile of the metro. The station is expected to open in 2018.



### Waterfront

The City of Alexandria's waterfront plan lays out a series of redevelopments between Montgomery Street in Northern Old Town down to Gibbon Street near Jones Point Park. The majority of the plan focuses around three major redevelopment zones, adding new hotels and restaurants to the Waterfront. Completion of the entire plan could take between 20 to 30 years to implement.

### Construction of the National Science Foundation building rises on Eisenhower Avenue.



### National Science Foundation

With the National Science Foundation moving to Eisenhower Avenue, adjacent to AMC Hoffman Center 22, construction has started on the new hotels and apartments expected to fill the other side of Eisenhower to provide housing for employees and guests at the Foundation. The National Science Foundation is expected to open in 2017.

ber 2012.

Alexandria got a big win in 2013 with the announcement that the National Science Foundation would move into the lot adjacent to the Hoffman Town Center on Eisenhower Avenue. The NSF is expected to directly bring in 2,100 new jobs to Alexandria, and Jinks notes that those jobs are part of a high paying and highly educated workforce, but the bigger news for development in the area is the 30,000 visitors to the NSF every year and the expected 60,000 person hotel room occupancy increase.

Between the Patent and Trademark Office (PTO) at one end of Eisenhower Avenue to Telegraph Road just past the metro station, Jinks said the area is going to be full of hotel development for the NSF and PTO. The first stage of the development involved

tearing down the empty Trucking Association building on Mill Road adjacent to Route 495. The building, originally constructed in 1984, had been empty since 2007. On a nearby lot on Eisenhower Avenue, construction has begun on the 25-story Park Meridian apartment building, expected to be complete by the end of 2015.

"There are a series of high rise towers planned between there and the metro," said Jinks. "They're approved but not financed yet."

Alexandria's deal with the NSF came at the cost of a \$28 million tax abatement to the foundation, nearly a third of the tax revenue expected. However, Jinks noted that the gain, even with the abatement, is far more than what the city could have expected from anything else that was planned

for the lot.

"It's a \$28 million abatement, but we get a \$90 million gain," said Jinks. "That's over \$60 million we wouldn't have had otherwise ... It's a tax credit for a building that wasn't here. And we're getting 60,000 to 90,000 hotel rooms and we're bringing in the top scientists to the area. We will see consulting firms and businesses come into the area and bring a secondary economic benefit over the long run."

With regards to future development, Long identified National Harbor as a potential partner in retail growth and trans-Potomac endeavors. Mayor William Euille identified improvements to transportation on the Woodrow Wilson Bridge as a priority for Alexandria. Euille mentioned that there are

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## NEWS

# Incremental Victories

**Northern Virginia Democrats fight for small wins in legislature.**

By VERNON MILES  
GAZETTE PACKET

**W**ith Republicans now controlling Virginia's legislature, local Democratic delegates and senators are carefully choosing their legislation for the 2015 session.

Two themes of the legislators' bills are political ethics and sexual assaults on campuses.

"All Universities in Virginia need a sexual assault crisis center," said state Sen. Barbara Favola. "We want to ensure that [victims] ... have access to counseling. That's a big topic in the General Assembly in the wake of the news headlines over the past several months."

Favola believes that the controversy over the accuracy of the recent Rolling Stone article exposing sexual assaults at the University of Virginia doesn't change the sexual assault crisis in Virginia's universities.

"The issue of sexual assaults on college campuses didn't start there," said Favola. "These problems pre-date that article and served to shine a national spotlight on the issue. Regardless of what we now know to be the factual problems with the article, [Bill 275] takes a small but significant step towards fixing that problem."

Favola previously introduced sexual assault legislation in 2014 with Senate Bill 275, which would have prohibited insurance policies from charging any cost-sharing requirement for HIV prevention medication to victims of sexual assault. The bill would have required persons seeking coverage for the HIV medicine to have reported the assault to the police or verified by a sexual assault nurse examiner or equivalent program. The bill was referred to the Committee on Commerce and Labor.

Del. Charniele Herring from Alexandria's 46th District focused on sexual assaults in a town hall meeting Jan. 10.

"We want to allow victims to come forward and to provide them a liaison between the university and local counseling," said Herring.

The legislation, House Bill 1683, would "require each institution of higher education to designate one employee to serve as the institution's liaison to the local department of social services and local law enforcement ...."



PHOTO BY VERNON MILES

**Del. Charniele Herring (left) meets with local resident Sam Ulm.**

Herring, who currently serves on the Courts of Justice subcommittee, also proposed bills that would limit the powers and jurisdiction of private police departments throughout Virginia, specifically referencing security at the King's Dominion amusement park. In the wake of the Hannah Graham case, another law enforcement reform Herring proposed would eliminate the waiting period before accepting a "critically missing adult report." A critically missing adult is defined as any missing adult 21 years or older law enforcement suspects may have disappeared in a circumstance that may pose a risk to their health or safety.

Herring and other Democratic delegates have also put forward legislation that would accept student ID cards as valid voter identification. On the senatorial side, Adam Ebbin from the 30th district, which includes Alexandria, Arlington, and parts of Fairfax, has also proposed a bill to accept out-of-state student IDs as voter identification.

"With our photo ID laws for voters, we penalize college students who attend school outside of Virginia," said Ebbin. "We accept in state attendance at a college. But if you worked at Georgetown university, your work ID is valid, but your student ID is not. We need to make it easier to vote, not harder."

Ebbin supports decriminalizing marijuana in Virginia. Senate Bill 686 would change the current \$500 and 30-day jail sentence for marijuana possession to a \$100 civil penalty without jail time.

## BULLETIN BOARD

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### ARTS PROGRAM GRANTS

The City of Alexandria's Office of the Arts will begin accepting applications for Arts Program Grants on Monday, Jan. 5. Grant funds are available to eligible arts organizations and individual artists for operations, programs and special projects that occur in Alexandria between July 1, 2015 and June 30, 2016. The Office

of the Arts will conduct a series of grant workshops and webinars to assist interested applicants in preparing their grant applications. Online application forms, instructions, and frequently asked questions for all grant programs will be available online at [www.alexandriava.gov/arts](http://www.alexandriava.gov/arts) on Jan. 5. Online applications are due by Friday, Feb. 28.

### ADULT EDUCATION

#### Registration for Winter Classes.

The Department of Recreation, Parks and Cultural Activities' Winter 2015 Program Guide is now available online. The guide highlights City classes, camps, programs, activities

and special events occurring January through March 2015 as well as park and facility information. Register online, in-person or by phone at the new Registration & Reservation Office, located at the Lee Center, 1108 Jefferson St. For additional information, call the Department of Recreation, Parks and Cultural Activities at 703-746-4343 or visit the Department's website at [alexandriava.gov/Recreation](http://alexandriava.gov/Recreation).

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## News



PHOTOS BY LOUISE KRAFT/GAZETTE PACKET

The Sugar Shack offers a variety of handmade donuts freshly cooked and a selection of hot and cold beverages.

# The Sugar Shack Opens

The line started early on Saturday morning, Jan. 24, outside the newly opened Sugar Shack on N. Henry Street and Madison. Waiting customers were greeted by owner state Sen. Rob Krupicka. The Sugar Shack features hand-made creatively flavored or filled donuts and coffee from Zeke's, a D.C. roaster.

The Sugar Shack is located at 804 N. Henry St. in Alexandria. Hours of operation are Monday - Thursday, 6 a.m. - 10 p.m., Friday, 6 a.m. - 11pm, Saturday, 7 a.m. - 11 p.m. and Sunday 7 a.m. - 9 p.m.



State Sen. Rob Krupicka greets customers on Saturday morning at the newly opened Sugar Shack on N. Henry St.

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## PEOPLE

# Working as a Public Defender

## Trying to keep the system fair.

BY SHIRLEY RUHE  
GAZETTE PACKET

**“R**emain seated; the court is back in session.” Judge Nolan Dawkins enters the courtroom with the 12 juror chairs lining the right wall and sits in his large black chair. There is complete silence as the hand on the clock ticks to 10:27 a.m. The clock is located over the blue door where the prisoners enter the courtroom. Paul Pepper, deputy public defender, had walked up the steps of City Hall and down the long hall of Circuit Court 182 to Courthouse 1. He carried several manila folders and a thick green “Police, Crimes and Offenses-Virginia” volume under his arm. He checks the list of cases posted on the wall, and as usual all cases are listed for 10 a.m.

**PEOPLE AT WORK** “Today I’m lucky; my cases are all in the same courtroom. Sometimes I’m running between three different courtrooms and somebody gets ahead of me when they call up my case and I’m in the other courtroom. My day lengthens,” he said.

He sits and waits. Today Pepper has two cases with three motions. The schedule is really “hit or miss” with sometimes eight cases at a time. It is about noon. The prosecutor calls up case #CF11001387. The man, wearing a baggy gray uniform with PRISONER printed on the back, is facing a probation violation. Pepper has already talked to the client about an offer.

In the second case the Commonwealth has filed a motion for new counsel. “Your honor,” Pepper says leaning over the podium, “the Commonwealth didn’t tell us there was a conflict of interest until we wanted a trial. Now all of a sudden there is a conflict. The Commonwealth just can’t decide when the public defender has a conflict.” The case also involves an issue of Facebook privacy surrounding an undercover police officer seeking to befriend the defendant under false pretenses and without a warrant. Pepper argues the action is illegal and is seeking a motion to get details on how the information was obtained.

Pepper has been with the Alexandria Public Defenders Office for 17 years. He started with minor misdemeanor cases such as trespassing and petty larceny. Then he moved through traffic, juvenile domestic relations, and juvenile court.

“That’s what we like to do with new attorneys, rotate them through, about nine months for each,” he said.

Pepper has been doing strictly felony work for 12 years. These are serious charges like murder and rape. “We have two murder cases right now, and we have a rape case every several months. And now we have human trafficking. We were initially representing prostitutes but now they are going more after the pimps.” He says the operation is running out of a lo-



**Paul Pepper in his office on N. Royal St..**

PHOTOS BY SHIRLEY RUHE/GAZETTE PACKET

cal motel that the police patrol. Pepper came to the Public Defenders office after serving as a pilot in the Navy.

“It’s sort of interesting. When I was in high school I read a book by F. Lee Bailey called ‘The Defense Never Rests.’ He was a public defender and a pilot. It stuck with me. I wanted to do something like that.” So Pepper was a Navy pilot first and then in 1995 he went to law school.

To qualify for a public defender’s services, an individual has to be certified as indigent with an income of \$14,000 a year or less. “If you are wealthy you can afford an attorney and if you are indigent you can get a public defender, but those people in between are caught. If you commit a serious crime and you make \$20,000 your bond can be so high you can’t afford it and you can lose everything.”

He says many of the people they represent are homeless, alcohol-or drug- addicted or have mental health issues. “We try to get them into a shelter, job training. Many of them won’t change but some do. I encourage them every time, don’t give up.” Pepper added, “I feel good about any positive results even if it is temporary. I had a young man with a lot of potential who had a chance to go to college. He had brothers in and out but he was different. When we won he broke down crying. But he didn’t move on.”

One of the funniest cases he remembers was a man who fell asleep outside with a can of sardines, juice dripping down his arm. He had tried to start a stolen car with a screwdriver. “But luckily we won this case because he was very drunk and the car looked exactly like one he had just sold,” Pepper said.

Thursday is the busiest day in court with most of the criminal cases scheduled. When he isn’t in court, Pepper is helping train the junior lawyers, assigning cases, doing video arraignments at the jail, fielding questions, and discussing issues on pending cases. He said, “You try to understand the clients; the emotions of all the clients are different. People who have never been in the criminal justice system are much more profoundly affected. And you always have your eye to the sentencing phase and mitigating things. I still remember when I got a sentence I didn’t expect; it was a slap in the face.”

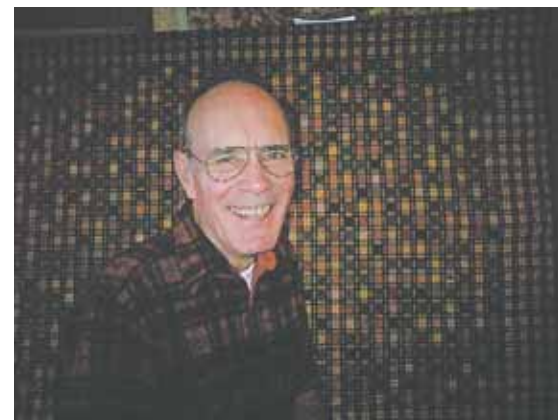
Pepper added, “Juries are always unpredictable. I had one case with three different trials, a hung jury. It was a learning experience for me. I asked the one hold-out why she didn’t find the young man guilty and she said, ‘it could have been my son.’”

“In this trial something had to push the client to make the emotion come out. He was embarrassed at the charge and he couldn’t express himself. I had to surprise him. I pushed him and made him mad at me on the stand and that’s when we won. It is a job,” he added, “for someone who likes to think on his feet.”

“What I like is we are the only people who put a check on the police and the court. We challenge everything the government does. It’s a responsibility I enjoy doing. All of us here root for the underdog. We try to keep the system fair.”



**Paul Pepper walks to the door of City Hall, papers and references tucked under his arm, as he heads to check the day’s cases listed on the wall.**



**Michael Heilman**

## Creating Tapestries

## Michael Heilman to participate in Sugarloaf Craft Festival.

BY SENITRA T. MCCOMBS  
GAZETTE PACKET

**A**t this year’s Sugarloaf Craft Festival, Alexandria artist Michael Heilman will showcase his naturally dyed tapestries and rugs.

The Sugarloaf Crafts Festival will be from Jan. 30 to Feb. 1 at the Dulles Expo Center in Chantilly.

Although this is not his first time at the festival, Heilman was excited to have his work featured in this year’s festival.

“It is always nice to have other people tell you that you do good work,” he said.

While working in Morocco, Heilman’s interest in rug making and weaving was piqued after visiting a rug-making cooperative where they created a rug from one of his designs.

Fifteen years later, he was at an antique shop on the Eastern Shore, Md., when he came across a rug-making tool called a shuttle hook, which re-ignited his interest in weaving and rug making.

After investigating the shuttle hook’s history and purpose, his next goal was to create his own rug using the tool.

“So I went out to a hardware store and got some burlap for a backing and then went to a craft store and got some yarn and made my first ugly rug,” he said.

His success with making hooked rugs led him to look into learning how to weave rugs. Soon after taking a weaving class, Heilman built a loom and began making his own woven rugs.

Since there are few weavers in the U.S. and the tools needed are mostly dated, he had to teach himself the craft. He is

currently working on four or five projects in his home studio.

Heilman will be displaying both his woven rugs and hooked rugs at the festival. His hooked rugs are created with naturally dyed wool yarn. They start off with a cotton or linen backing on which he draws a design with magic marker and then pokes a needle through the backing with a shuttle hook to make a loop.

“Certain colors are just easier to make naturally. I use black walnut shells to make brown, onion skins and indigo for green dye, indigo for blue and I also use a small beetle that lives in cactus in Mexico for the color red,” he said.

Heilman finds inspiration for his designs from everyday things such as graffiti or fabric. Most of his recent patterns have centered on an animal theme.

“I’m really open to designs coming from everywhere. Once I was in a high rise building and I looked down at the parking lot and I realized that the markings would be really interesting for a rug. I did one pattern based on a computer circuit board,” he said.

It usually takes him from up to 14 months to create a larger tapestry or woven rug and seven or eight months to create a hooked rug.

“Setting up the loom for the woven rugs and setting up the frame and fabric for the hooked rug is very time consuming. You’re lucky if you can start and work consistently because usually you’ll find there is something you need to change such as an issue with the design or maybe you can play with the colors in a different way,” he

SEE HEILMAN, PAGE 9



## News



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

**Puppy Bowl XI teammates Dougie and Donnie relax with Operation Paws for Homes volunteers Gwen Rogers Jones and Meagan Lutz.**

## Countdown to Puppy Bowl IX

Dogie and Donnie are working out this week in preparation for Puppy Bowl XI. The puppies, both Team Fluff members, will be appearing on Animal Planet's annual competition on Sunday, Feb. 1 at 3 p.m. The pre-game show starts at 2 p.m. The puppies were rescued by an Alexandria-based group, Operation Paws for Homes, Inc.

## BULLETIN BOARD

FROM PAGE 4

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### SUNDAY/JAN. 25-SUNDAY/FEB. 1

**Donation Drive.** Christ Church Youth will launch a food drive to tackle hunger and poverty issues in our own community as part of the SOUPer Bowl of Caring. In the week leading up to the big game, Christ Church Youth are taking a collection of full-size toiletry items (shampoo, conditioner, bath soap, toothbrushes, toothpaste, deodorant) and/or monetary donations. The goal is to collect 1,000 items for the Christ Church Lazarus Ministry Food Pantry. Donated items may be dropped off at the entrance to the Christ Church Memorial Parish House building at 118 North Washington Street in Old Town from 8:45-9:45 a.m. on Sunday, Feb. 1. Visit [www.historicchristchurch.org](http://www.historicchristchurch.org) for more.

### THURSDAY/JAN. 29

#### Lower School Admission

**Curriculum Coffee.** 9:30-10:30 a.m. St. Stephen's & St. Agnes, Lloyd House Living Room, Lower School

Campus, 400 Fontaine St., Alexandria. For prospective parents, grade JK-5. This is an opportunity for parents to learn about the academic program. Registration required, contact April Toman at 703-212-2705 or [atoman@ssas.org](mailto:atoman@ssas.org).

### FRIDAY-SATURDAY/JAN. 30-31

#### Potomac Piranhas.

Opening Reception, Friday, 6-8 p.m.; Pitch, Saturday, 9 a.m.-6 p.m. at U.S. Patent and Trademark Office, 401 Dulany St., Alexandria. The Potomac Piranhas are using the model of ABC's popular "Shark Tank" program to accelerate improving the Potomac River watershed, in which entrepreneurs and businesspeople will pitch innovations and business models to a panel. The event will also include panel discussions on the issues of innovation, capital and entrepreneurship. Visit [www.potomacpiranhas.org/home.html](http://www.potomacpiranhas.org/home.html) for more.

### SATURDAY/JAN. 31

#### Genealogy Crash Course.

11 a.m.-3:30 p.m. at the Alexandria Black History Museum, 902 Wythe Street, Alexandria. Join cultural historian Michael W. Twitty for a day's course on tracing family roots back to Africa using tools currently available. The intimate museum setting provides for one-on-one interaction. \$15 per attendee covers course reading materials and lunch. Call 703-746-4356 for reservations.

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PHOTO BY JOHN BORDNER

**Walter Clarke with his mother Gracie and brother Thomas.**



PHOTO BY LOUISE KRAFFT/GAZETTE PACKET

**Matt Whitaker, Julie Hodge and Jerome Davis**



PHOTO BY LOUISE KRAFFT/GAZETTE PACKET

**U.S. Sen. Tim Kaine is welcomed by CEO and Chairman of the Board at Burke & Herbert Bank E. Hunt Burke**

# ‘From K Street to King Street’

Clarke leads Chamber into 2015.

BY JEANNE THEISMANN  
GAZETTE PACKET

**T**o wear or not to wear? That was the question Jan. 22 as hundreds of men and women pondered their attire for the Alexandria Chamber of Commerce “bow ties and pearls” Chairman’s Reception honoring Burke & Herbert vice president and bow tie aficionado Walter Clarke as the 2015 board chairman.

“It’s great to see so many different faces here tonight,” Clarke said as he formally took the reins of the chamber board from outgoing chair Joe Haggerty of United Way Worldwide. “This is such a diverse crowd and good representation of businesses in the city of Alexandria.”

Held at the historic Terminal A at Washington Reagan National Airport, the event featured a keynote address by U.S. Sen. Tim Kaine and remarks by Metropolitan Washington Airports Authority President and CEO John E. Potter.

“I’m excited and honored to have this opportunity,” Clarke said. “It’s a real privilege for me to work with such a dynamic chamber staff and a board filled with some of the finest and most accomplished professionals in the region.”

A graduate of Virginia State University, Clarke brings more than 25 years of banking and financial experience to his position at Burke & Herbert Bank, one he

has held for just over four years. He credited his mentor and Burke & Herbert Chairman and CEO Hunt Burke for what is now Clarke’s signature look.

“Not long after I was hired, I walked into a meeting at the bank and Mr. Burke was there wearing a bow tie,” Clarke said. “I remember thinking, ‘So that’s what success looks like,’ and have been wearing a bow tie pretty much ever since.”

As chairman of the board, Clarke hopes to continue the growth of the chamber, which is now one of the largest in the region.

“One of the goals this year is to continue our growth as a chamber without boundaries,” Clarke said. “We want to continue advocating, educating and promoting business in Alexandria, from K Street to King Street, so if you do business in Alexandria, you should be a member.”

In 2015, the 109<sup>th</sup> year for the chamber, Clarke and his team will be initiating programs to support a stronger quality of life in the community. Examples include: Disconnected Youth with City & Public School Young Entrepreneurs Academy; Start-Up Academy; Minority Program; and Young Professionals Program, while continuing programs like the Valor First Responder Luncheon and Business Leader & Awards Reception.



PHOTO BY JOHN BORDNER

**O’Kelly and Karen McWilliams and Isaac Lewis sign a white dinner jacket for Chamber of Commerce board chair Walter Clarke.**

“Going forward, I hope to expand on our recently initiated programs like the GOV/CON Council, Non-Profit/Association Academy, Armed Forces Valor Awards Breakfast and Power Roundtable and Business Competiveness Summit,” Clarke said. “I’d like to see these grow as well as continue the chamber’s neighborhood business association partnerships.”

Clarke and his wife Kellye, co-owner of Hometown Title & Escrow Company, are the parents of daughter Kameron, 14, and son Clayton, 11.

“I couldn’t do any of this without the support that I get from Kellye and my family,” said Clarke, whose mother and siblings were

also in attendance. “Kellye is the glue that holds everything together.”

Presenting sponsors of the event included Burke & Herbert Bank, the MWAA and United Way Worldwide. Jane Hughes of Hadeed Carpet managed the silent auction which raised more than \$5,600 for the chamber’s nonprofit foundation and Gordon and Rees LLP sponsored the entertainment provided by the Johnny Artis Band.

“This was such a great turnout,” Clarke said. “All the usual suspects were joined by some exciting new members and our focus will turn to growing the membership to 800 by the end of the year. Now the fun begins.”



PHOTO BY JOHN BORDNER

**Pam DeCandio of John Marshall Bank with restaurateur and former board chair Mike Anderson.**



PHOTO BY JOHN BORDNER

**Walter Clarke dons a dinner jacket signed by attendees of the Chamber Chairman’s Reception.**



PHOTO BY LOUISE KRAFFT/GAZETTE PACKET

**Noemi Riveira and Edythe Kelleher**



PHOTO BY LOUISE KRAFFT/GAZETTE PACKET

**Incoming Chamber of Commerce Chairman Walter Clarke and his wife Kelly.**



PHOTO BY LOUISE KRAFFT/GAZETTE PACKET

**Executive vice president and chief revenue officer of the Metropolitan Washington Airport Authority Jerome Davis and Margaret Bishop.**



PHOTO BY LOUISE KRAFFT/GAZETTE PACKET

**Sophie Delquie and Victoria Kilcullen**



## PEOPLE

# Heilman To Participate in Sugarloaf Craft Festival

FROM PAGE 6

said.

Unlike creating a hooked rug, making a woven rug or tapestry requires the artist to work slowly from the bottom up. This causes the artist to have to fight against the grid pattern that forms from weaving the yarn in the loom if they want to do any sort of curve. Therefore, the artist has to plan ahead more. In addition, it is also more challenging to go back an "unweave" a mistake.

"You have to be more discipline when doing a weaving and it is much slower than doing a hooked rug. And you don't really know how it is going to turn out," he said.

His favorite piece is a 5-by-8 foot colorful abstract rug that he made four years ago and decided that he never wanted to part with it. "It was sort of a personal challenge to see if I could incorporate all sorts of geometric and curved shapes into one rug. I hope that one of my daughters will want to have it when I'm gone," he said.

Although he grew up in Wisconsin, he has been in the Northern



Tapestries  
by  
Michael  
Heilman

Virginia area for over 30 years after living overseas. Currently, he lives just south of Alexandria. He enjoys visiting the Torpedo Factory in Old Town and walking his dog along the Dyke Marsh.

Prior to becoming an artist,

Heilman graduated from University of Wisconsin with a degree in law. After graduating, he worked for the U.S. State Department in Morocco, Greece and Lebanon. When he returned to D.C., he was an attorney with the Department

of Justice working on refugee and asylum issues. He retired more than 15 years ago and has since been dedicated to his craftwork. He teaches a hooked rug-making class at the Art League of Alexandria.



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# OPINION

## Outlook

### Many bright spots will be overshadowed in the coming budget season in Northern Virginia.

Long awaited, the opening of the Silver Line promises to bring transformation to Tysons and around the current station in Reston, with another Reston station and Herndon to come.

The opening of Springfield Town Center has been greeted by enthusiastic shoppers, showing plenty of demand for retail and restaurants.

Housing prices are up, although so is the number of houses on the market, while the number of houses sold is down from last year.

But from local government, current economic conditions overall look more like this:

Job growth has slowed, and the jobs that are being created are lower paying. There is a decline in federal and business services employment, while the job growth that the region is experiencing is dominated by gains in hospitality and retail sectors. Slowing job growth and lower wages mean lower demand for home purchases and retail spending, while declines in federal jobs and government contractors mean lower demand for office space. The region is growing, but it is growing at a slower rate than projected one or two years ago.

Lower demand for office space translates into 19 million square feet of vacant office space in Fairfax County alone. Just for some sense of

scale, that is like having eight malls the size of Tysons Corner Center (2.4 million square feet) completely empty. Arlington County has an office vacancy rate of more than 20 percent; in Rosslyn, the rate is approaching 30 percent (27.7). Overall, Northern Virginia has an office vacancy rate of more than 17 percent.

Not only are companies moving their offices from older office space to newer space, more transit-oriented space, but as they do so, they are downsizing the amount of space, leaving more less modern space vacant in the process.

The result will be a very difficult budget year in Northern Virginia. It's also a call to do things differently.

Critical to a successful economy will be to create housing that service and hospitality workers can afford. We have a massive shortage of affordable housing, and the opportunity transform some of the massive quantities of vacant office space into thoughtful, well-designed housing.

## Be Part of the Pet Gazette

The Pet Gazette, a bi-annual themed edition, will publish Feb. 25, 2015.

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?

Or take this opportunity to memorialize a beloved pet you have lost.

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

Submissions should arrive by Feb. 18.

Email [gazette@connectionnewspapers.com](mailto:gazette@connectionnewspapers.com), or submit photos and stories directly on our website [atwww.connectionnewspapers.com/contact/letter](http://atwww.connectionnewspapers.com/contact/letter)

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### My Giant

To the Editor:

For me, at least, it is a big loss. I know the little Giant in Old Town North wasn't the fanciest of stores. In fact, there wasn't much fancy about it at all. But for 24 years it has been the place I've gone to stock my shelves and refrigerator. Over that time I've become ac-

quainted with many of the staff who, in a very real way, became a part of the neighborhood. For instance, there was Miss Betty. She stopped me one Saturday and told me I shouldn't pay for the milk that was sitting in my cart. She went on to explain that the week before she had neglected to give me the bag with the milk I had purchased. I then remembered discovering it

was missing a few hours after leaving the store. I decided not to pursue the matter, and by this time it was completely out of my mind — but not hers. More recently on my 60th birthday, I returned home from work to find 2 and a half cases of beer outside my door. (That's 60 cans.) Come to find out, my brother in Arizona had contacted one of Giant's managers,

Lisa, and she arranged to have the surprise delivered up the street to my place, "Happy Birthday" balloon in tow. And over the years I've looked forward to seeing my favorite Saturday cashiers, like Linda, Jameka, and Tasha, all of whom made me smile or laugh each time we interacted.

Yes, the produce wasn't always particularly fresh, and it's the only store I have ever shopped at that would occasionally have no carts available because so many customers used them to transport their groceries home. And yet for me, and I'm sure many of my neighbors, that little old store was a central part of our area. And even though we now have other local choices, I will always remember "my Giant" with fondness and gratitude for being a part of Old Town North for so many years.

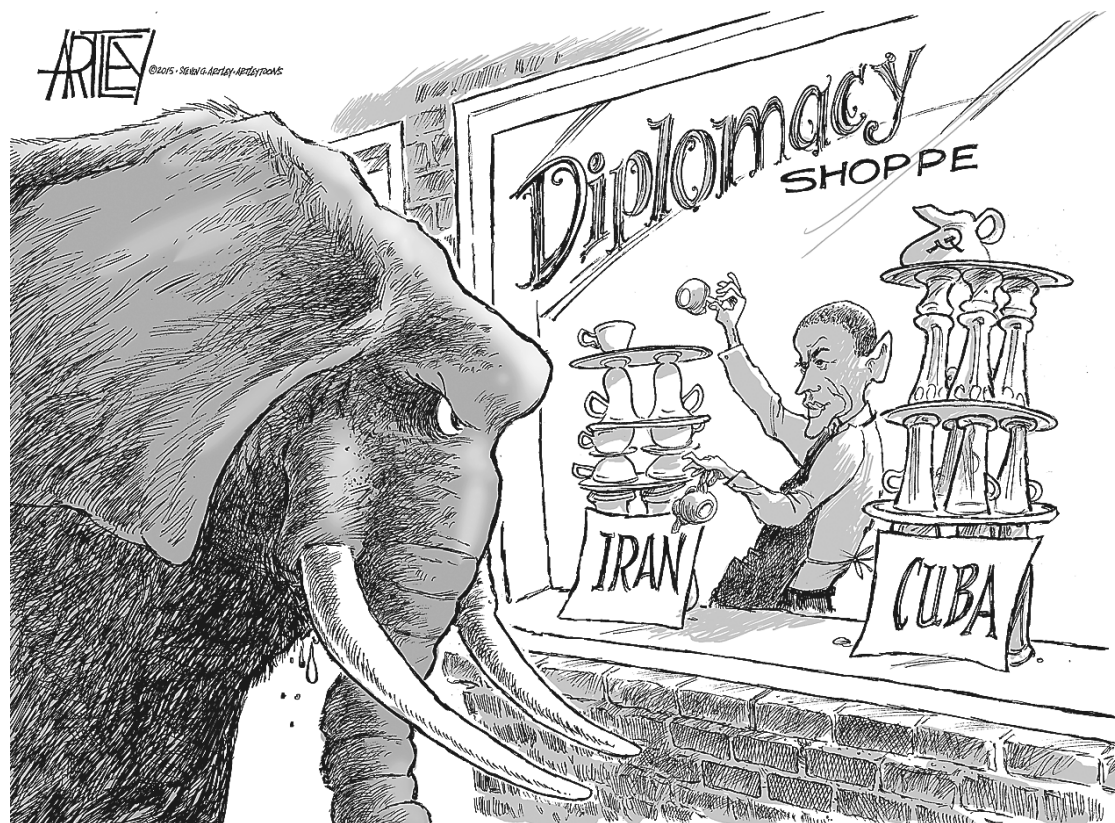
**Peter Ramsberger**  
Alexandria

### Downton Alexandria

To the Editor:

As a resident of this historic Alexandria village, I feel that it is always important to acknowledge the generosity of our patron family. It is also clear that we must recognize that times are changing,

SEE LETTERS, PAGE 18



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## Alexandria Gazette Packet

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## OPINION

# Focus on Economy, Budgeting

BY ADAM EBBIN  
STATE SENATOR (D-30)



Last week, my fellow Democratic Senators and I unveiled our 2015 legislative priorities, an "Opportunity Agenda," which focuses on six core principles. They are Economic Security; Voter Access and Participation; Equality; Education for a Brighter Future; Restoration of Faith in Government; and Leading Healthier and Safer Lives. When I spoke at our news conference, I invited our Republican colleagues to partner with us in support of these core Virginia values.

An integral part of building a stronger economy is making sure that hardworking Virginians receive an honest day's pay for an honest day's work. In 2013, 113,000 Virginians earned the minimum wage of just \$7.25 per hour. If the minimum wage was indexed to inflation, it would be more than \$10.50 per hour today. That is why I co-sponsored Sen. David Marsden's bill to give hardworking Virginians a raise. Unfortunately, the bill failed on a party line vote in the Commerce and Labor committee.

Much of the focus this session so far has been on the budget. One budget amendment I submitted is for smart investments in support of Community Health Centers (CHC's), non-profit organizations that provide primary medical care in addition to dental and behavioral services to those in need. Neighborhood Health is one CHC with branches in Alexandria, Arlington, and Mount Vernon that provide services to low-income residents who would otherwise go

without healthcare. My proposal would provide state grants to match private, foundation, and federal funding. Supporting great organizations like Neighborhood Health will bring down medical costs by increasing access to preventative care.

I introduced multiple pieces of legislation to address tax disparities that would bring in more revenue. One would be to levy an excise tax on e-cigarettes at a lower amount than tobacco cigarettes. The second would reduce the tax preference for yachts valued at over \$100,000.

I have also introduced a bill to outlaw the import and sale of ivory and rhinoceros horns. While it is illegal under federal law to transport ivory and rhinoceros horns across state lines, there is a loophole regarding trade within states. The ivory black market is a global security issue, as many of poaching proceeds fund terrorist networks like al-Shabaab. My bill aims to close the loophole and expand the penalties for dealing with those who break the law.

Please join my colleagues and me for a legislative town hall meeting this winter.

❖ Mt. Vernon: Saturday, Feb. 14, 10:30 a.m. – noon, at the Mount Vernon Government Center (2511 Parkers Lane) with Sen. Toddy Puller and Del. Scott Surovell.

❖ Alexandria: Saturday, Feb. 14, 2:30 – 4 p.m., at the Charles Houston Recreation Center (905 Wythe Street) with Del. Rob Krupicka. Take my online survey at [www.AdamEbbin.com/Survey](http://www.AdamEbbin.com/Survey). You can also email me at [district30@senate.virginia.gov](mailto:district30@senate.virginia.gov). I am active on Twitter @AdamEbbin and Facebook at [www.facebook.com/EbbinCampaign](http://www.facebook.com/EbbinCampaign). You can sign up for my weekly email updates at [www.AdamEbbin.com](http://www.AdamEbbin.com).

It is my continued honor to represent the citizens of the 30<sup>th</sup> Senate District.

## Speaking on Senior Travel

BY MARY LEE  
ANDERSON  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR  
SENIOR SERVICES OF  
ALEXANDRIA



Transportation is a major issue for seniors — and Alexandria has lots of options. The Senior Speaker Series event on Feb. 11 will feature local experts sharing information about affordable, safe and reliable ways to get around town. And for anyone thinking about your next vacation, come find out about the fantastic options offered by the Road Scholar Program — and get handy tips on how to make your trip easier from a senior travel expert.

### SENIOR SERVICES OF ALEXANDRIA

Local experts will be on hand from the Washington Metropolitan and Alexandria Transit (DASH) Companies talking about the various local public transportation options for seniors, traveler trainer workshops and the benefits of bus transportation in Alexandria. There will even be

a DASH bus on hand to explore at the event. You will also learn about the Senior Taxi and DOT Paratransit taxi services which provide a very affordable alternative for many seniors.

A Road Scholar Ambassador will be on hand to give an overview of their programs, and share how you can explore the world with Road Scholar. Road Scholar has been a not-for-profit leader in educational travel since 1975, offering over 5,000 educational tours in all 50 states and 150 countries. Local and renowned experts guide in depth and behind-the-scenes opportunities through cultural tours and study cruises.

There will also be a travel expert from Beatley Central Library sharing tips on what to consider when planning a trip, senior friendly places to travel, and best times to go.

This event will be held on Feb. 11 at the Beatley Central Library, 5005 Duke Street in Alexandria. Doors open at 9:30 with coffee and a light breakfast; the program begins at 10. It is free and open to the public. To register go to [www.seniorservicesalex.org](http://www.seniorservicesalex.org) or call 703-836-4414, ext 10.

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2 414 DUKE ST .....	5	6	2	....	ALEXANDRIA ..	\$3,025,000 ....	Detached .....	0.13 .....	22314 .....	OLD TOWN .....	02/07/14
3 209 SAINT ASAPH ST S .....	4	3	1	....	ALEXANDRIA ..	\$2,900,000 ....	Semi-Detached .....	0.09 .....	22314 .....	OLD TOWN .....	01/06/14
4 700 PITT ST S .....	4	3	1	....	ALEXANDRIA ..	\$2,700,000 ....	Townhouse ..	0.22 .....	22314 .....	OLD TOWN .....	10/03/14
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7 208 SAINT ASAPH ST S .....	5	3	1	....	ALEXANDRIA ..	\$2,535,000 ....	Detached .....	0.12 .....	22314 .....	OLD TOWN .....	10/06/14
8 16 WOLFE ST #54 .....	2	3	1	....	ALEXANDRIA ..	\$2,500,000 ....	Townhouse .....	22314 .....	HARBORSIDE .....	03/18/14	
9 210 NORTH VIEW TER .....	6	7	1	....	ALEXANDRIA ..	\$2,375,000 ....	Detached .....	0.34 .....	22301 .....	ROSEMONT .....	07/11/14
10 815 PRINCE ST .....	4	4	1	....	ALEXANDRIA ..	\$2,300,000 ....	Attach/Row Hse	0.05 .....	22314 .....	FARNEY .....	07/03/14

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## NEIGHBORHOOD OUTLOOK

# City's Developments Hope To Reverse Job Loss Trends

FROM PAGE 3

likely to be transportation, and potentially commercial, effects of the new MGM Casino opening at National Harbor in 2016.

**BUT WITH THE DEVELOPMENT** in 2015 centered on Potomac Yard and the Waterfront, some have expressed concerns that western Alexandria is being left behind.

"A lot of focus needs to be on the West End right now," said Long. "The time has come to recognize that as the next area of major development."

Most of the development in western Alexandria is focused around housing developments. The Eisenhower West Small Area Plan Committee is expected to present its report to City Council in fall of 2015 detailing land use, connectivity, and density goals for the area. Eisenhower West Small Area Plan's next community meeting is Monday, Feb. 9 at 7 p.m. at the Beatley Central Library.

The city's Beauregard Small Area Plan, adopted in 2012, requires \$210 million in developer contributions to fund a fire station, affordable housing, landscaping, and increased regional transit. The Beauregard Design Advisory Committee is currently reviewing Developmental Special Use Permit applications for the Beauregard area.

Jinks said that increased transit capabilities are vital to keeping eastern and western Alexandria connected.

"We're currently working on the Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) to make [the West End] more accessible," said Jinks. "With Arlington, we're working on opening the first regional BRT lane that would connect Crystal City and Braddock Road."

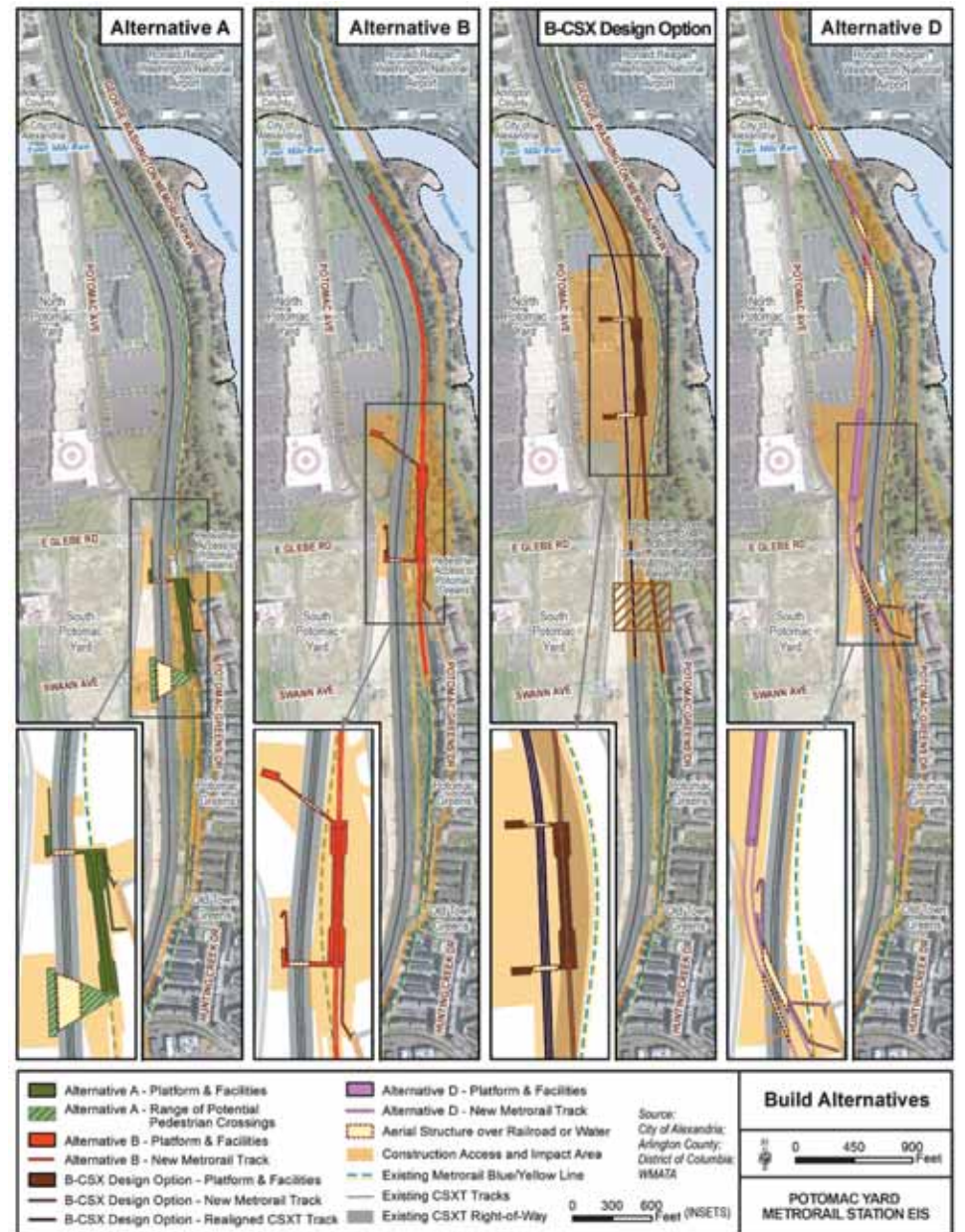
Despite high profile developments in Potomac Yard and around the new NSF building, Jinks said the city can't afford to lose sight of its affordable housing needs.

"The affordable housing on Route 1 is past its life-span," said Jinks. "It needs redevelopment."

According to Jinks, the current plan is one-to-one development, which means they redevelop them one building at a time to minimize impact to the community. The public planning for that development is going and will be a part of Jinks' upcoming discussions with the community.

"We're trying to do this differently," said Craig Fifer, director of communications and public information for the City of Alexandria. "We're hoping for more public input before the city manager proposes his budget. Instead of reacting, we can get that public feedback first."

At 6:30 in the Lee Center on Feb. 5 and 9, the city will host public meetings to receive public input on the upcoming budget and priorities.



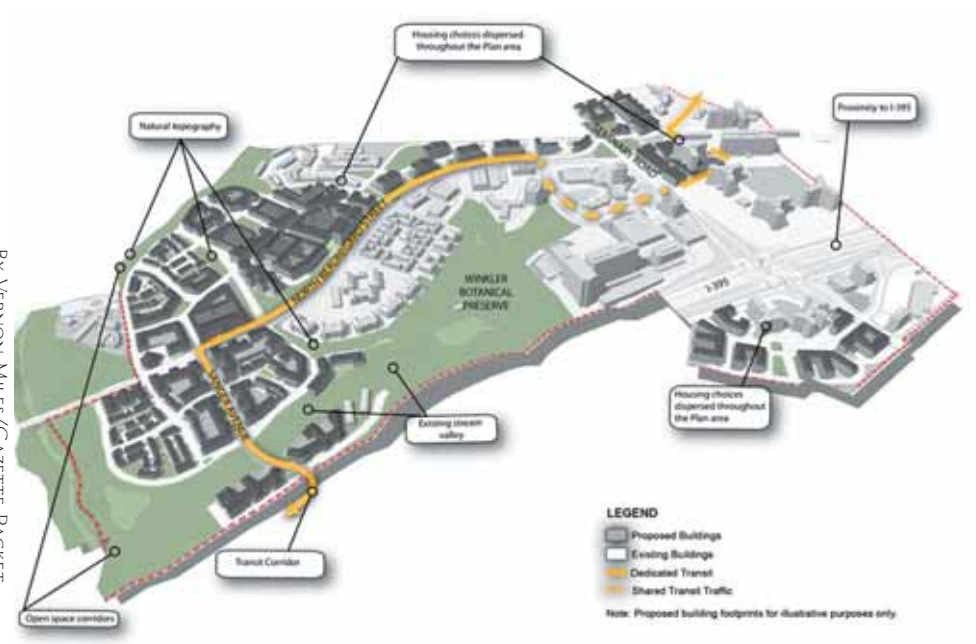
The four potential design plans for the Potomac Yard Metro.



The scope of Alexandria's Waterfront Redevelopment Plan.



Construction vehicles remove debris from demolished Trucking Association building.



Transit and housing development goals for the Beauregard Small Area Plan.



# WINTER FUN

## ‘Bessie’s Blues’ At MetroStage

BY CAROLYN GRIFFIN  
METROSTAGE  
PRODUCING ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

“Bessie’s Blues” is probably the biggest show we have ever done — certainly the biggest set. And with eight on stage (seven actors and one dancer) and five musicians — probably the biggest cast. And did I mention the projections and the eight foot tall letters that spell BLUES? With LED lights and video projected on the surface of the letters. Don’t want to give it all away before you see it, but honestly it’s going to be amazing.

Not to mention the incredible cast. Bernardine Mitchell returns after a triumphant fall production of “Three Sistahs,” along with Roz White (always the middle sistah), both of whom were in the original production of “Bessie’s Blues” at Studio Theatre 20 years ago. Lori Williams (the stunning Ella in “Ladies Swing the Blues” — her performance recognized with a Helen Hayes Nomination), and the incredible TC Carson (remember that sexy lover in “Two

Queens One Castle” at MetroStage a few years ago? and of course he can still be seen on television as Kyle in reruns of “Living Single”) — both return to MetroStage. Actors debuting on our stage in this production are LC Harden Jr, Djob Lyons, and Stephawn Stephens all triple treats as actors, singers and dancers. Dancer Nia Harris joins the cast as well.

“Bessie’s Blues” is written, directed and choreographed by Thomas W. Jones II, who has been associated with MetroStage (in spite of living in Atlanta) for the past 14 years. Speaking of a triple treat (maybe quadruple since he is also an actor), he brings a unique, original voice to all of his scripts, characters, themes and music. His “Three Sistahs” last fall touched the hearts and souls and had audiences rushing home to call their sisters. His direction of “Gee’s Bend” garnered a Helen Hayes Nomination for outstanding direction among other things, bringing the lives and music of the women quilters of Gee’s Bend into the lives of our audiences. Witness musicians “chasing the music” in “Ladies Swing the Blues” or in the words of Cool Papa “keep traveling...inventing...sweating...stealing seconds from destiny...tracing new foot-



“Bessie’s Blues” writer, director and and choreographer Thomas W. Jones II with MetroStage Producing Artistic Director Carolyn Griffin.

steps...” from “Cool Papa’s Party.”

Tom Jones writes about themes, values and circumstances that all can relate to because they are timeless and universal. Specific stories, yet universal, timeless themes. MetroStage is proud to present this body of work that touches our audiences, leaving a memorable impression well into the future. It is what theatre is meant to be and what we at MetroStage intend to keep doing for

the next 30 years.

Happy anniversary MetroStage and here’s to the future.

*Performances, through March 15, are Wednesday-Friday, 8 p.m.; Saturday, 3 and 8 p.m.; and Sunday, 3 and 7 p.m.*

*MetroStage is located at 1201 North Royal St., Alexandria. Tickets \$55-60. Visit [www.metrostage.org](http://www.metrostage.org) or call 800-494-8497.*

## CALENDAR

Email announcements to [gazette@connectionnewspapers.com](mailto:gazette@connectionnewspapers.com). Include date, time, location, description and contact for event: phone, email and/or website. Photos and artwork welcome. Deadline is Thursday at noon, at least two weeks before event.

### ONGOING

#### Girls in SOHO Outreach Program

**Exhibit Their Photography.** Through Feb. 2 at The Art League Gallery, 105 North Union St., Studio 21, Torpedo Factory Art Center, Alexandria. Each of the 12 girls in the 2014-2015 Space of Her Own (SOHO) class was given a film camera and the opportunity to create a series of narrative-based photographs. At the completion of the program, the teams remodel each of the girls’ bedrooms, incorporating all of their artwork, to truly give each girl a “space of her own.” Visit [www.theartleague.org](http://www.theartleague.org) or call 703-683-1780.

**“The Space Between.”** Through Feb. 2 at the Multiple Exposures Gallery, The Torpedo Factory Art Center, 105 N Union St., Studio 312. Photographer Janet Matthews presents a portfolio of new work in this solo exhibit at the Multiple Exposures Gallery, looking beyond the literal representation of objects to explore their edges and the space that surrounds them. Visit [www.multipleexposuresgallery.com](http://www.multipleexposuresgallery.com) or call 703-683-2205 for more.

**Signature Tour.** 2 p.m. or various other availability. Through Thursday, Feb. 12 at Mount Vernon Mansion, 3200 Mount Vernon Highway, Mount Vernon. During a guided exploration

tour of the Mansion, visit areas not normally open to guests, including the basement and the third floor where Martha Washington retired after the death of her husband in 1799. \$5/per person in addition to general admission. Hours vary. Visit [mountvernon.org](http://mountvernon.org) for more.

**Exhibition “Unearthed | Unleashed.”** Through Sunday, Feb. 22 in the Athenaeum Gallery 201 Prince St., Alexandria. An exhibition of the works of Michael Gessner and Joanne Kent. Gessner’s mixed media sculptures reference a variety of natural forms. Kent’s minimal works with thickly applied paint and wax appear to be a reflection on organic elements and artifacts. Free. Visit [www.nvfaa.org](http://www.nvfaa.org).

**“Beyond the Board” Art Exhibit.** Through Feb. 22. Prudential PenFed Realty, 4900 Seminary Road, Alexandria. Del Ray Artisans’ presents “Beyond the Board.” A portion of artists’ sales go to the PenFed Foundation, supporting active military families, veterans and their families. Visit [www.thedelrayartisans.org/shows/gww/](http://www.thedelrayartisans.org/shows/gww/) for more.

**“Front and Back.”** Feb.11- March 15, 10 a.m.-5 p.m. daily; 10 a.m.- 9 p.m. second Thursday of the month at Potomac Fiber Arts Gallery in Studio 18 of the Torpedo Factory Art Center at 105 North Union Street, Alexandria. Artists’ imagination plays with Items that are different front vs back; right vs left; top vs bottom; inside vs outside; right side up vs up side down; positive space vs negative space. Anything that has two or more sides can be used to show two different visuals. Free admission. See

[www.potomacfiberartsgallery.com](http://www.potomacfiberartsgallery.com). **Alexandria Cars & Coffee** invites car enthusiasts to meet for coffee at Hollin Hall Shopping Center in front of Roseina’s, 1307 Shenandoah Road. Owners of classic cars, hot rods, exotic cars, motorcycles and more meet to share car stories and drink coffee. Group meets the first Sunday of every month. 8:30-11 a.m.

**Fifty Years of Collecting.** Tuesday-Saturday 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., Sundays noon to 5 p.m. Fort Ward Museum 4301 West Braddock Road. An anniversary exhibit of objects from the Fort Ward collection. Free. Visit [www.fortward.org](http://www.fortward.org) or call 703-746-4848.

**Dinner for the Washingtons.** Noon at George Washington’s Mount Vernon, 3200 Mount Vernon Memorial Highway. A walking tour that goes behind the scenes to find out how food was prepared and served before the era of microwaves and TV dinners. \$5 in addition to estate admission. Visit [www.mountvernon.org/](http://www.mountvernon.org/) for more.

**Second Thursday Music.** Athenaeum, 201 Prince St. 7 pm. Second Thursday of every month. Visit [nvfaa.org](http://nvfaa.org) to view concert calendar and listen to upcoming Second Thursday Music artists.

**The Monday Morning Birdwalk** has been a weekly event at Huntley Meadows since 1985. It takes place every week, rain or shine (except during electrical storms, strong winds, or icy trails), at 7 a.m. (8 a.m. November through March), is free of charge, requires no reservation, and is open to all. Birders meet in the parking lot at the park’s entrance at 3701 Lockheed Blvd. Direct questions

to Park staff during normal business hours at 703-768-2525.

### THURSDAY/JAN. 29

**Bob Hume and Martha Capone.** 7-9 p.m. at John Strongbow’s Tavern, 710 King St., Alexandria. Visit [www.johnstrongbows.com](http://www.johnstrongbows.com) or call 703-329-3075.

### FRIDAY/JAN. 30

**“Smellin’ Up the Den.”** At Port City Playhouse, 1819 Quaker Lane, Alexandria. The classiest potty humor in the DMV. Audiences will be treated to an hour-long whirlwind of hysterical vignettes. \$18-\$24. Visit [www.redknightproductions.com](http://www.redknightproductions.com) or [www.portcityplayhouse.com](http://www.portcityplayhouse.com).

### SATURDAY/JAN. 31

**Tea with Martha Washington,** 2-3 p.m. at Mount Vernon, 3200 Mount Vernon Highway, Mount Vernon. Listen to Martha Washington’s stories about life at Mount Vernon while enjoying a selection of lite fare prepared by the Mount Vernon Inn. Following tea, enjoy a self-guided exploration of the estate and decorative arts found in the Donald W. Reynolds Museum and Education Center. \$30 for adults, \$20 for youth (12 and under), includes tea, lite fare, and general estate admission. Visit [www.mountvernon.org](http://www.mountvernon.org).

### FRIDAY/JAN. 31-SATURDAY/FEB. 1

**The Taste & Style of George Washington.** 2 p.m. Mount Vernon’s first fine arts tour offers

guests the chance to appreciate a lesser known quality of George Washington — his keen eye. This tour, which includes the mansion as well as the museum, explores Washington’s tastes and his selection of decorative fine arts for his home. This tour is included in admission, visitors must register for a tour ticket online or at the ticket window. Limited capacity. Visit [www.mountvernon.org](http://www.mountvernon.org) for more.

### SUNDAY/FEB. 1

**Wonders of Science.** 1-4 p.m. at The Stabler-Leadbeater Apothecary Museum, 105-107 South Fairfax St., Old Town, Alexandria. The Apothecary Museum hosts a day of 18<sup>th</sup>-century natural and medical science exploration and demonstrations. Discover curious objects, from poison bottles to dragon’s blood, and find out how they were used — and if they worked. This hour-long program includes a tour of the museum, with new groups beginning every 30 minutes. Recommended for 3<sup>rd</sup> grade and older. \$6, children and adults. Reservations recommended, space is limited. Visit [www.apothecarymuseum.org](http://www.apothecarymuseum.org) or call 703-746-3852.

**Walk with Washington Tour.** 2 p.m., at Alexandria Convention and Visitors Bureau, 221 King Street, Alexandria. The walk focuses on important Old Towne sites associated with George Washington. 60-90 minutes. Free. Call 703-746-3301.

**Philharmonic Performance.** 3 p.m. at The George Washington Masonic Memorial, 101 Callahan Drive,



## WINTER FUN

Alexandria. The Washington Metropolitan Philharmonic welcomes pianist Thomas Pandolfi along with trombonist Brian Bourne as featured musicians for their February performances of Franz Liszt's Les Preludes, Brahms' Piano Concerto and the world premiere of Sparkling Dialogue for trombone and strings. Adults, \$20; 18 and younger, free. Visit [www.wmpamusic.org](http://www.wmpamusic.org) or call 703-799-8229.

### MONDAY/FEB. 2

**History Lecture.** 7 p.m. at the Athanaeum, 201 Prince St., Alexandria. As Saint Valentine's Day approaches come learn about love, lust, and magic in the ancient world from Egyptian love poems to the origins of our Valentine's Day in the Roman Empire. Adult content: not appropriate for children. Free. Visit [nvfaa.org](http://nvfaa.org) or call 703-548-0035.

### WEDNESDAY/FEB. 4

**Bob Hume and Martha Capone.** 7-9 p.m. at John Strongbow's Tavern, 710 King St., Alexandria. Visit [www.johnstrongbows.com](http://www.johnstrongbows.com) or call 703-329-3075.

### THURSDAY/FEB. 5

**Larry Calvert Cookie Class.** 6-8 p.m. at the Athanaeum, 201 Prince St., Alexandria. Join cookie artisan Larry Calvert as he makes hand-decorated sugar cookies. Six different cookies per student will be supplied for creating and taking home. This class is hands-on training with all supplies included. \$45. Visit [nvfaa.org](http://nvfaa.org) or call 703-548-0035.

**City of Alexandria Pipes & Drums.** SEE WINTER FUN, PAGE 17



PHOTO BY MATT LIPPAK

## The Game's Afoot

With inflated egos, boundless bitchiness and great camaraderie, The Little Theatre of Alexandria presents "The Game's Afoot." Starring Simon Bright (Joe Quinn), Aggie Wheeler (Maureen R. Goldman), William Gillette (John Henderson), Felix Geisel (Chuck Leonard), and Madge Geisel (Pam Kasenetz), the Ken Ludwig farce turns an Agatha Christie--like murder mystery into melodramatic mayhem and a fun piece of whodunit nonsense. Playing through Feb. 7 at The Little Theatre of Alexandria, 600 Wolfe St. For tickets or more information, call 703--683--0496 or visit [www.thelittletheatre.com](http://www.thelittletheatre.com).

Please make reservations early for Valentine's Day

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Be sure to include your name, address and phone number, and identify all people and pets in photos. Submission deadline is February 18.





## WINTER FUN

# 'Dare to...Follow Your Heart' for Valentine's Day

BY KIM ALLEN KLUGE  
MUSIC DIRECTOR,  
ALEXANDRIA SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

**I** am very excited about the Alexandria Symphony Orchestra's upcoming Valentine's weekend concerts. They will take place on Saturday, Feb. 14, 8 p.m., at the Rachel M. Schlesinger Concert Hall & Arts Center, and on Feb. 15, 3:30 p.m., at the George Washington Masonic Memorial. The Feb. 15 performance will be the second concert in our new Sunday matinée series at the Memorial. The George Washington Masonic Memorial provides a wonderful concert venue in an iconic Alexandria setting at the vortex of Old Town, Rosemont and Del Ray, making the ASO concerts Metro-accessible.

"Dare to...Follow Your Heart" is the title of this fun and romance-filled concert—the third in our 2014-2015 "Dare to..." Season. I am looking forward to sharing the music from three light classic romances. These delightful and whimsical stories all involve multiple love interests, often fraught with misadventure. Happily, all end with exuberant and joyful unions and celebrations.

These are truly Valentine's weekend concerts.

The music from these enchanting love stories represents some of the freshest sounding music ever written—as if they were written in a blaze of inspiration. And indeed they were.

I still vividly remember the very first time I heard Mozart's "The Magic Flute," it was revelatory and had a profound influence on me. As a child I was far too young to fully appreciate the romances, and certainly too unsophisticated to completely fathom the more serious undertones of the storyline. I simply was mesmerized by the sheer magic and whimsy of it all. Such is the power of masterpieces such as "The Magic Flute"—they speak to audiences on so many different levels.

Guest vocalist Elizabeth Overmann will display astonishing versatility in two Queen of the Night arias from "The Magic Flute," music that shows off almost superhuman vocal fireworks. Ms. Overmann will also sing "Weep You No More, Sad Fountains." This languid melody was penned by Patrick Doyle for his film score to Jane Austen's "Sense and Sensibility" (1995). It's deliciously full of sensuality and longing.

These Valentine's weekend concerts will also feature the beautifully lyrical and beguiling melodies of the cello symphony by Villa Lobos, "Bachianas Brasileiras #1."

The concerts will conclude with Felix Mendelssohn's delightfully evocative incidental music to Shakespeare's "A Midsummer Night's Dream." It contains one of the most often played pieces of music ever written—the rousing Wedding March that is played at the end of practically every wedding ceremony. I never cease to marvel at how Mendelssohn is able to tell Shakespeare's story in music. All of the drama is in the music itself, contained in its very notes.

I can't wait to make music again in the incredibly unique and intimate setting at the George Washington Masonic Memorial. The very special feeling that is created between the orchestra and audience in that remarkable hall is palpable. The semi-in-the-round setting allows the audience to wrap around the orchestra, as if embracing

the musicians...and the music itself. It's a beautiful thing to experience, and especially appropriate for these intimate Valentine's Day stories and music.

During these concerts we will unveil the ASO's 2015-16 Season—a program that I sincerely believe will be the most enthusiastically talked-about season of my long career with the Alexandria Symphony Orchestra.

I am truly looking forward to these Valentine's weekend concerts. Presenting the music to these fantastic and enchanting romances should make for a really

**"The course of true love  
never did run smooth..."**

— Lysander from "A Midsummer Night's Dream" by William Shakespeare

fun concert for the orchestra, audience and me.

See the Alexandria Symphony Orchestra Saturday, Feb. 14, 8 p.m. at Schlesinger Concert Hall and Arts Center, 3001 N. Beauregard St. and Sunday, Feb. 15, 3:30 p.m. at the George Washington Masonic Memorial, 101 Callahan Drive. Visit [www.alexsym.org](http://www.alexsym.org) or call 703-548-0885.

## Alexandria Coin Show

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

(en Español); 6:30 pm  
**Weekday & Saturday**  
**Mornings:** 9:00 am Mass,  
preceded by Rosary (on First  
Friday, Mass followed by  
Eucharistic Adoration)  
**Thursday & First**  
**Friday of the Month:**  
7:30 pm Mass (Español)  
preceded by 7:00 pm  
Eucharistic Adoration

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—Helena Scott

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# WINTER FUN

FROM PAGE 15

9:30-10:30 p.m., at John Strongbow's Tavern, 710 King St., Alexandria. Visit [www.johnstrongbows.com](http://www.johnstrongbows.com) or call 703-329-3075.

## FRIDAY/FEB. 6

**“Elements” Art Exhibit Opening Reception.** 7-9 p.m. at Del Ray Artisans Gallery, 2704 Mount Vernon Ave., Alexandria. John Bordner, Kathryn Brown, Michele Reday Cook, Linda Elliff, Kim S. Joy, Marlin Lord and Tamara Wilkerson present artworks which incorporate elements of earth, water, air and fire in materials, media and subject matter. Gallery hours are Thursdays 12-6 p.m.; Fridays-Saturdays 12-9 p.m.; Sundays 12-6 p.m. Visit [www.TheDelRayArtisans.org](http://www.TheDelRayArtisans.org).

## SATURDAY/FEB. 7

**Coin Show.** 9 a.m.-5 p.m. at at the Springfield American Legion Post 176, 6520 Amherst Ave., Springfield. The coin show features 50 tables with a variety of coins, currency and numismatic collectables. Prizes to the first 500 visitors. An instruction period is included for those new to collecting. Additionally, there is a raffle for Gold & Silver coins. Visit [www.alexandriacoinclub.com](http://www.alexandriacoinclub.com) or email [boots.barnes1@verizon.net](mailto:boots.barnes1@verizon.net).

**Carlyle's Birthday Celebration.** noon-4 p.m. at 121 N. Fairfax Street in Old Town Alexandria. Step back in time to the 1770's at one of Alexandria's finest and oldest houses to commemorate the 295th birthday of Alexandria town founder, Col. John Carlyle. Call 703-549-2997 or visit [www.novaparks.com](http://www.novaparks.com).

**Tea with Martha Washington.** 2-3 p.m. at Mount Vernon, 3200 Mount Vernon Highway, Mount Vernon. Listen to Martha Washington's stories about life at Mount Vernon while enjoying a selection of lite fare prepared by the Mount Vernon Inn. \$30 for adults, \$20 for youth (12 and under), includes tea, lite fare, and general estate admission. Visit [www.mountvernon.org](http://www.mountvernon.org).

**The Beverly Hillbillies.** 7:30 p.m. at MVCCT, Heritage Presbyterian Church, 8503 Fort Hunt Road, Alexandria. After accidentally striking it rich with oil, watch the whole Clampett family find their way in this new land inhabited by movie stars and the fabulously wealthy. \$12. Purchase tickets at [www.mvcct.org](http://www.mvcct.org).

## SATURDAY-SUNDAY/FEB. 7-8

**The Taste & Style of George Washington.** 2 p.m. Mount Vernon's first fine arts tour offers guests the chance to appreciate a lesser known quality of George

Washington – his keen eye. This tour, which includes the mansion as well as the museum, explores Washington's tastes and his selection of decorative fine arts for his home. This tour is included in admission, visitors must register for a tour ticket online or at the ticket window. Limited capacity. Visit [www.mountvernon.org](http://www.mountvernon.org) for more.

**Alice's Restaurant 50th Anniversary Tour.** 7:30 p.m. at the Birchmere, 3701 Mt. Vernon Ave. Arlo Guthrie celebrates the event that inspired the song “Alice's Restaurant Massacre.” Call 703-549-7500 or visit [www.Birchmere.com](http://www.Birchmere.com) for more.

## SUNDAY/FEB. 8

**The Navy Concert Band.** 2 p.m. at the Athanaeum, 201 Prince St., Alexandria. The Navy Band Chamber Music Series features musicians from the U.S. Navy Band. This chamber music recital will feature traditional and modern music for woodwinds and brass. Free. Visit [nvfaa.org](http://nvfaa.org) for more.

**Walk with Washington Tour.** 2 p.m., at Alexandria Convention and Visitors Bureau, 221 King St., Alexandria. The walk focuses on important Old Towne sites associated with George Washington. 60-90 minutes. Free. Call 703-746-3301.

**The Beverly Hillbillies.** 3 p.m. at MVCCT, Heritage Presbyterian Church, 8503 Fort Hunt Road, Alexandria. \$12. Purchase tickets at [www.mvcct.org](http://www.mvcct.org).

**Winter Warmer Tea with Martha Washington.** 3-4:30 p.m. at Gadsby's Tavern Restaurant, 138 North Royal St., Alexandria. Sip a special blend of tea from Gadsby's Tavern Museum, “take” a cup of American Heritage Chocolate, and eat period-inspired delicacies, both sweet and savory, with your 21st-century friends. A historic guest who will be visit during each tea. \$35 per person all inclusive. Reservations are required. To make reservations and purchase tickets, call 703-746-4242 or visit [shop.alexandriava.gov](http://shop.alexandriava.gov). Ticket also includes a tour at 2:15 or 2:45 prior to the tea.

**Philharmonic Performance.** 3 p.m. at The Church of the Epiphany, 1317 G. St. NW, Washington, D.C. The Washington Metropolitan Philharmonic welcomes pianist Thomas Pandolfi along with trombonist Brian Bourne as featured musicians for their February performances of Franz Liszt's Les Preludes, Brahms' Piano Concerto and the world premiere of Sparkling Dialogue for trombone and strings. Adults, \$20; 18 and younger, free. Visit [www.wmpamusic.org](http://www.wmpamusic.org) or call 703-799-8229.

## MONDAYS/FEB. 9 & 23

**The Art of Ballroom Dance.** 7-7:45 and 7:45-8:30 p.m. at the Athanaeum, 201 Prince St., Alexandria. Learn the Fox Trot, Waltz, Tango, Swing, Salsa, Meringue, Rumba, Cha-Cha, and Samba, taught by Gary Stephans. Come with or without a partner. Beginning and advanced dancers welcome. Both classes are invited to practice from 8:30-9 p.m. \$15. Visit [nvfaa.org](http://nvfaa.org) for more or email [garystephans@me.com](mailto:garystephans@me.com) or call 703-505-5998.

## THURSDAY/FEB. 12

**Second Thursday Live.** 7 p.m. at the Athanaeum, 201 Prince St., Alexandria. “The Course of True Love Ne'er Did Run Smooth” — Shakespeare's unhappy love scenes. Just in time for St. Valentine's Day: A reminder that dysfunctional love is eternal. DC-area theatre actors will read scenes of love and discord. Dessert reception follows the reading. \$15. Visit [nvfaa.org](http://nvfaa.org) or call 703-548-0035.

**Andrew O'Day.** 8-11 p.m., at John Strongbow's Tavern, 710 King St., Alexandria. Visit [www.johnstrongbows.com](http://www.johnstrongbows.com) or call 703-329-3075.

## FRIDAY/FEB. 13

**Eric Benet.** 7:30 p.m. at The Birchmere, 3701 Mount Vernon Ave. Tickets \$59.50. Visit [birchmere.com](http://birchmere.com) or call 703-549-7500.

**The Beverly Hillbillies.** 7:30 p.m. at MVCCT, Heritage Presbyterian Church, 8503 Fort Hunt Road, Alexandria. \$12. Purchase tickets at [www.mvcct.org](http://www.mvcct.org).

## SATURDAY/FEB. 14

**“Blues Babies.”** 12:30-2 p.m. at Alexandria Black History Museum, 902 Wythe Street, Alexandria. Enjoy an afternoon of live music interwoven with multi-media and storytelling, exploring the modernization of the Blues and its influence upon Jazz, Gospel, Rhythm & Blues, Rock & Roll, Soul, Soul Blues, and other related music genre. Free. Call 703-746-4356.

**Burlesque-A-Pades in Loveland.** 6 p.m. doors, 7:30 p.m. show, at The Birchmere, 3701 Mount Vernon Ave. In this Valentine's Day production, Burlesque-A-Pades is serving up an evening jam packed with entertainment, including among others, award winning Burlesque Queen Angie Pontani. Full dinner and cocktail service is offered at the show. Visit [www.birchmere.com](http://www.birchmere.com).

**The Beverly Hillbillies.** 7:30 p.m. at MVCCT, Heritage Presbyterian Church, 8503 Fort Hunt Road, Alexandria. \$12. Purchase tickets at [www.mvcct.org](http://www.mvcct.org).

## FOOD & DRINK

### Take the Cherry Challenge

The George Washington Birthday Celebration Committee in Alexandria presents the seventh annual Cherry Challenge. In the spirit of the old cherry tree tale, celebrate with the restaurants participating in this culinary contest through Feb. 10. Vote for favorite drinks, starters, entrees and desserts which include cherries. Each patron who orders a cherry item will have the opportunity to rate the item on taste, creativity, and presentation. At the end, the ballots will be collected, and tallied. Visit [www.washingtonbirthday.net/cherry-challenge](http://www.washingtonbirthday.net/cherry-challenge). Restaurants include:

- ❖ **Bilbo Baggins** — 208 Queen St., [www.bilbobaggins.net](http://www.bilbobaggins.net)
- ❖ **Café Pizzaiolo** — 1623 Fern St., [www.cafepizzaiolo.com/](http://www.cafepizzaiolo.com/)
- ❖ **Casa Rosada Gelato** — 111 South Payne St., [www.crgelato.com/](http://www.crgelato.com/)
- ❖ **Chadwick's** — 203 Strand St., [www.chadwicksrestaurants.com/](http://www.chadwicksrestaurants.com/)
- ❖ **Chart House** — 1 Cameron St., [www.chart-house.com](http://www.chart-house.com)
- ❖ **Del Ray Café** — 205 E. Howell Ave., [www.delraycafe.com/](http://www.delraycafe.com/)
- ❖ **Dishes of India** — 1510 Belle View Blvd., [www.dishesofindia.com/](http://www.dishesofindia.com/)
- ❖ **Fire Flies** — 1501 Mt Vernon Ave., [www.firefliesdelray.com/](http://www.firefliesdelray.com/)
- ❖ **Gadsby's Tavern** — 138 North Royal St., [www.gadsbystavernrestaurant.com](http://www.gadsbystavernrestaurant.com)
- ❖ **The Grille at Morrison House** — 116 South Alfred St., [www.morrisonhouse.com/alexandria-restaurant/the-grille.html](http://www.morrisonhouse.com/alexandria-restaurant/the-grille.html)
- ❖ **Haute Dogs** — 610 Montgomery St., [www.hautedogsandfries.com/](http://www.hautedogsandfries.com/)
- ❖ **Indigo Landing** — One Marina Drive, [www.indigoland.com/](http://www.indigoland.com/)
- ❖ **John Strongbow** — 710 King St., [johnstrongbows.com/](http://johnstrongbows.com/)
- ❖ **Killer E.S.P.** — 1012 King St., [killeresp.com/](http://killeresp.com/)
- ❖ **King Street Blues** — 112 North Saint Asaph St., [www.kingstreetblues.com/](http://www.kingstreetblues.com/)
- ❖ **La Bergerie** — 218 North Lee St., [www.labergerie.com/](http://www.labergerie.com/)
- ❖ **Laporta's** — 1600 Duke St., [www.laportas.net/](http://www.laportas.net/)
- ❖ **Le Refuge** — 127 North Washington St., [www.lerefugealexandria.com/](http://www.lerefugealexandria.com/)
- ❖ **Mackie's Bar and Grill** — 907 King St., [www.mackiesbarandgrill.com](http://www.mackiesbarandgrill.com)
- ❖ **Mount Vernon Inn** — 3200 Mount Vernon Memorial Highway, [www.mountvernon.org/inn](http://www.mountvernon.org/inn)
- ❖ **Murphy's** — 713 King St., [murphyspub.com/murphys/alexandria/](http://murphyspub.com/murphys/alexandria/)
- ❖ **Daniel O'Connell's Bar & Restaurant** — 112 King St., [www.danieloconnells.com/](http://www.danieloconnells.com/)
- ❖ **Olea** — 703 King St., [olearestaurantinc.com/](http://olearestaurantinc.com/)
- ❖ **Pizza Paradiso** — 124 King St., [www.eatyourpizza.com/tag/pizzeria-old-town/](http://www.eatyourpizza.com/tag/pizzeria-old-town/)
- ❖ **RedRocks** — 904 King St., [www.redrocksd.com/old-town/](http://www.redrocksd.com/old-town/)
- ❖ **Tempo** — 4231 Duke St., [www.temporestaurant.com/](http://www.temporestaurant.com/)
- ❖ **TJ Stone's** — 608 Montgomery St., [tjstones.com/](http://tjstones.com/)
- ❖ **Trademark** — 2080 Jamieson Ave., [trademarkdrinkandeat.com/](http://trademarkdrinkandeat.com/)
- ❖ **Vaso's** — 1118 King St., [www.vasosonking.com/](http://www.vasosonking.com/)
- ❖ **Waterfront Market and Café** — 7 King St., [www.thewaterfrontmarket.com](http://www.thewaterfrontmarket.com)

**Alexandria Winter Restaurant Week, Jan. 23-Feb. 1.** First-time participants include BRABO Tasting Room, with its casual Belgian fare, alongside Alexandria newcomers City Kitchen and Mackie's Bar & Grill, as well as Old Town favorite Taverna Cretkou. Restaurants in neighborhoods throughout Alexandria, including Old Town, Del Ray and the West End offer a \$35 three-course dinner or \$35 dinner for two; select locations offering lunch from \$10-20 per person. Visit [www.AlexandriaRestaurantWeek.com](http://www.AlexandriaRestaurantWeek.com) for a menu flip-book or reservations.

**Port City celebrates** it's fourth anniversary with a week of events starting with Port City Brewing Company's Colossal Fourth Anniversary Party on Friday, Jan. 30; Colossal Four Saturday at Port City Brewing Company and a pub crawl in Dupont on Saturday, Jan. 31; Colossal Sunday in the Tasting Room, Feb. 1; Colossal Joggers & Lagers with Pacers Running, Monday, Feb. 2; Colossal Tap Takeover & BeerYoga, Tuesday, Feb. 3; Beer Science with Doctor Lange and Fourth Anniversary on the Fourth at Jackson 20, Wednesday, Feb. 4; DC101 FeBREWary Live on Colossal Thursday and Colossal Port City Pizza Night at RedRocks Old Town, Thursday, Feb. 5; and Firkin Friday: Colossal Edition, Feb. 6. Visit [www.portcitybrewing.com](http://www.portcitybrewing.com) for a complete list of events.

<b>Tree Clearance Sale</b> <b>30% OFF</b> All Trees 2013 & Prior	<b>Free Estimates</b> Patios, Walkways, Retaining Walls, Paver Driveways, Landscaping! <b>OFF-SEASON PRICING</b>
<b>Selected indoor plants 1/2 price</b>	<b>60-75% Off Pottery</b> Lowest Prices Since 2008!
<b>Blooming Tropicals 75% Off</b>	<b>Playground Chips &amp; Organic Compost</b> <b>\$29.99 cu. yd.</b>
<b>Concrete Fountains, Benches, Statuary and Birdbaths 25% off</b>	<b>Bagged, Shredded Hardwood Mulch</b> <b>\$3.49 (3 cu. ft bags)</b>
<b>Bonsai, Cactus, Succulents 25% off</b>	<b>Bulk Mulch</b> <b>\$19.99 cu. yd.</b> <b>FREE FILL</b>
<b>Fragrant, blooming Citrus Plants 10% Off</b>	<b>Cravens Nursery &amp; Pottery</b> 9023 Arlington Blvd., Fairfax, Virginia 2 miles west of I-495 on Rt. 50. 1 mile from I-66 (Vienna Metro) <b>703-573-5025</b> Open 7 days a week Visit our new Web site: <a href="http://www.cravensnursery.com">www.cravensnursery.com</a>

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<b>www.ShredStationVA.com</b>	<b>We shred while you watch:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Paper</li><li>• Computer hard drives</li><li>• Computer backup drives &amp; tapes</li><li>• EMedia</li><li>• Discs, CD's</li><li>• Cell phones</li></ul>
5604 General Washington Dr., Alexandria, VA 22312 2 blocks from intersection of Edsall Road and I-395	

lost (adj): 1. unable to find the way. 2. not appreciated or understood. 3. no longer owned or known
<b>Adopt Donate Volunteer</b>
<a href="http://lostdogandcatrescue.org">lostdogandcatrescue.org</a>




# OPINION

FROM PAGE 10

acknowledge that times are changing, and perhaps adapt to these changing times. With that stated, it is important to recognize when our patron and his family are serving us well, or conversely when they have hindered, this small community.

First of all I want to address reports Lady Mary and the Lord Gillingham were seen leaving Gadsby's Tavern, with luggage, together. While the reports may be credible, rumors that their untoward if acrobatic dalliances may have caused the recent burst pipes and flooding in that noble building are to be disregarded as idle gossip. Similarly, statements that it was Lady Mary's icy heart that froze the pipes will also be disregarded by the gentler members of this community as unnecessarily cruel.

On the other hand, we must applaud the behavior of our Lord and Lady Grantham. Lady Grantham's recent tour of the Torpedo Factory Art Center, accompanied by their head curator, is to be congratulated. Her commentary that it seems "a bit the same" is worthy of note. Say what you will of her constant sideways glances and just-ate-a-lemon pucker smirk, her suggestion that perhaps artists be limited to five years, and be required to show up from time to time, is worthy of note. Being invited to work at this facility is not a royal appointment.

We must also applaud Lord Grantham and Mr. Carson finding common ground to create a memorial to our recent war, and deciding that a location on our main street is the right solution. We would recommend Schuters Hill as the correct location for a memorial. We trust that the proposed memorial will avoid too gaudy of a design, and of course should be of a respectable and humble height.

Most importantly we all applaud Lord Grantham's firm statement that "I will not build 50 modern houses" on the Alexandria Waterfront. This shows real wisdom. Apparently he has taken heed of the example provided by the noble Captain John Harper, who purchased a number of lots and built a historically-sensitive series of houses on the north side of Prince Street at the end of the 18th century. This street is now universally admired and is named Captain's Row in his honor; Lord Grantham has also surely noted the example the recent unfortunate "troubles," recently referred to as urban development, which gave us such ignoble buildings as the sickly yellow Tavern Square and the gravestone-like Alexandria House. It can

not be verified that the head of the BAR during that era, Mr. Barrow, and the head of the City Council, Mr. Spratt, were run out of town with pitchforks and torches soon thereafter; nonetheless the endurance of these rumors is instructive.

On the technological front, the ambiguous feelings the Grantham family holds towards technological advancement is likely not serving us well.

The Lord Grantham's hostility to "the wireless" is reflected in his city council's hostility towards working with Verizon to install "the FiOS" on our quaint streets, and in his indifference to working with all of His Majesty's utilities to restart "the undergrounding," which was abandoned after a comic 100 yards. On the upside, seeing Lady Mary and Lord Grantham work together to bring a new business sense to the Manor shows promise, but a positive outcome is no certain thing. Her recommendation to fire all the chauffeurs and go with "the Uber" is a particularly risky move.

It is also worth noting that the arrival of the new head of ACPS, Ms. Sarah Bunting, shows real promise. The school board should take heed, though, of her habit of offending any occupant of a house larger than a postbox, and require that she put that habit in check.

As a final comment, I would like to join all Alexandrians in greeting to our humble village the recent guests from Russia. We heartily suggest that we welcome them with the same warmth and open arms that we offered to our other recent foreign guests, the British, in 1814.

**Fred Knops**  
Alexandria

## Planning: Then and Now

To the Editor:

In the late 1990s, developers sought to build a significant number of homes on the land surrounding the late Judge Bryant's property on King Street. City of Alexandria officials were concerned that this development could adversely disrupt the surrounding neighborhoods and detract from the residential character of King Street. As conditions for the development of the planned 24 new homes in the Kings Cloister Circle community, the city imposed many limitations.

First, the developer was required to invest a considerable amount of financial resources to construct a state of the art drainage system with bio-retention areas and storm drains. This system was primarily to protect Taylor

Run Parkway homes and other neighborhoods east of Kings Cloister from the added water runoff that so much new impervious surface would generate. Next, the city imposed strict architectural controls on the design of each the 24 homes that would surround the Judge's former home. The architectural plan for each house had to be approved by the city. In addition, for those houses on the new circle that would back onto King Street, the city required that they be designed with a second "false front" facing King Street as well – to make sure that they were consistent with the residential character of the homes in the surrounding King Street community. Finally, the city planners required that all significant modifications to the exterior of any of the homes in this community, be preapproved by the city to make sure that they were architecturally consistent with the character of the area – a requirement very much still in force.

When we purchased one of the homes backing onto King Street in 2003, we did so with an understanding of, and an appreciation for, these restrictions. We understood that they were designed to protect the residential character of this part of King Street, and while they imposed limitations on us as individual homeowners, they provided us, and the greater community, the benefits of stability and predictability as well.

That was then, when city planning officials focus was on making sure that development in Alexandria was consistent with the character of the communities in which we lived. Unfortunately, we now seem to live in a far more commercial "now." Much has been said in recent months about the development issues now confronting the city's residents. Last week's Letter to the Editor entitled "Spending Spiral's Effect on Elections?" fully captures my feelings on the direction that city officials have chosen to take in pursuit of developer dollars. While I do not know that letter's author, I share her view on the inappropriateness of the Woodbine expansion as the latest chapter in the city's quest for all things commercial. When we moved to this community in 2003, we knew Ivy Hill Cemetery was our quiet and stately neighbor, and next to it was a vacant residential lot that we were told was zoned for up to four houses.

The city planners that were so cautious on the planning of the King's Cloister community 15 years ago would have never let a project of the magnitude of the new Woodbine be wedged into a small residential lot. Obviously

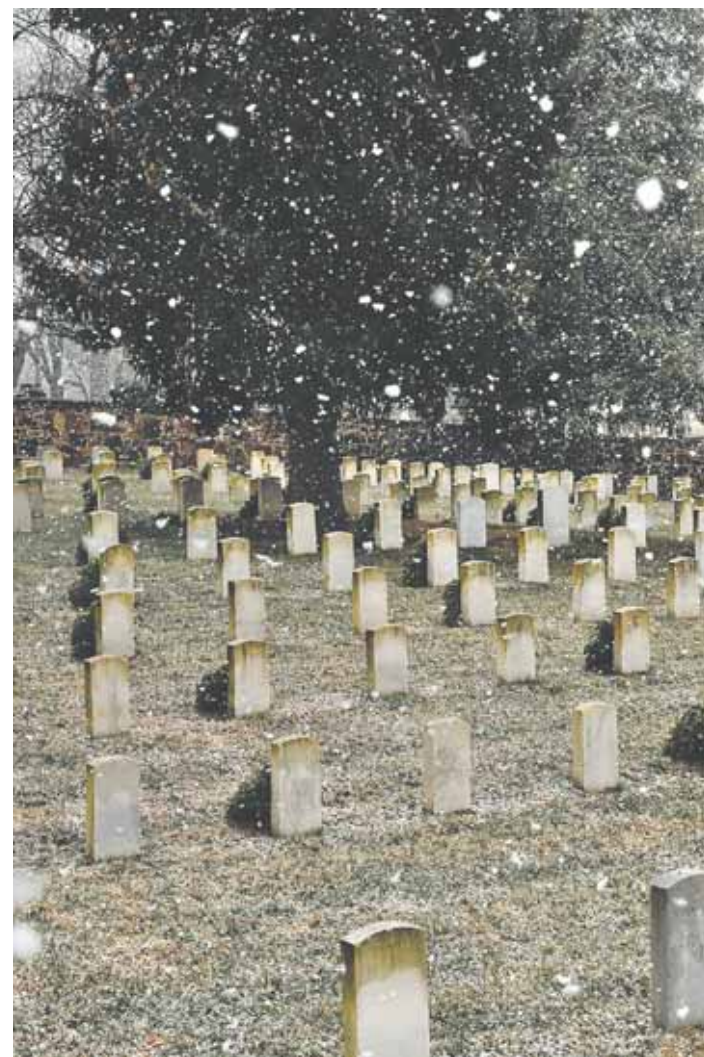


PHOTO BY LOUISE KRAFT / GAZETTE PACKET

## Wintry Snapshot

2:36 p.m., Jan. 21, Alexandria National Cemetery

city planning officials now have different priorities. It is increasingly clear in those priorities where the residents and the voters fit. As was so aptly stated in last week's letter, it is an "increasingly important reality that 2015 is a City Council election year."

**Jacqueline G. Arends**  
Alexandria

## Vision For the City

To the Editor:

One wonders why citizens don't have a say on who becomes city manager.

My question is why Acting City Manager Mark Jinks has not been appointed as permanent city manager since he has been a deputy city manager and acting city manager.

Often it seems that our city managers only stay for two or three years and then Jinks steps in to manage the city until someone else is hired.

For the past 10 years or so, Mark Jinks seems to have done a good job. I just wonder: Would Mark Jinks like to have or hold such position as our city manager?

Why has such a person who has

stood and upheld our city not been appointed for this position?

With no disrespect: Are our city councilmembers a little blindsighted?

**Geri Baldwin**  
Alexandria

## City Stadium Within Reach

To the Editor:

With all the negative news on the city's budget issues, with schools in disrepair, with accusations of moving money in budget transfers, and finding money out of nowhere with project cost overruns I am desperate for some positive news. I feel like things are out of control. I feel like we need something to break the negativity we needed something positive, something earth shattering.

Citizens of Alexandria, the city has recently received a special gift that they have not shared with you so let me be the first to share the news. The city was given a well-positioned, fully turfed field complete with lights already installed and ready for use. Let me repeat that again the city has a field which can be converted into a city

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WWW.CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM



# OPINION

FROM PAGE 18

stadium to showcase T.C. Williams High School sporting events which would include football, soccer and lacrosse, something the city has coveted since 2005. You now have the potential for a city stadium. Can you believe it! I can hear those soccer and lacrosse associations, those semi-pro football teams, as well as the recreation department screaming for joy.

Let me explain. The Clark Construction Company is currently constructing a water treatment plant in the Eisenhower Avenue corridor approximately one-quarter mile from the Hoffman Theater area. The entire infrastructure of this project will be finished to include field lights, a turfed field and any necessary accessory lighting as well as shrubbery and fences. There is ample street parking adjacent to the field, there are parking lots adjacent to businesses in the area and there is a multi-tiered outside parking garage some four blocks away and the field is within walking distance to Metro. The stadium is directly accessible to major highways and the project should be completed by October of this year. How about homecoming at the new stadium this year? Wow!

Listen, the project estimate to place lights at T.C. Williams is grossly underestimated as is customary with School Board. The figure of \$4.5 million is a guesstimate not an estimate. A more reasonable estimate based upon the previous 50-60 percent under-budgeting of tennis lights and the construction of T.C. Williams High school would yield an estimate of \$6,750,000 - \$7,200,000 to play a game or eat a hot dog on that field at night. I am not an architect nor a builder but I would bet that the cost to finish the Eisenhower field — including a press box, a scoreboard, a sound system, grandstands and a concession area, all ancillary expenses would be less than \$750,000. Bottom line you get a city stadium for \$750,000 and save \$6 million-plus which could be well spent on funding school repairs and renovations, repairing playgrounds at Maury and Mount Vernon schools and expanding the academic development of our students. This is a big deal! When was the City Council going to inform us of this good fortune?

So if the city really cares about Friday night lights which will bring our city together (School Board member Bill Campbell's words) and reward our athletes by attracting scouts so as to promote scholarships (Bill Campbell's words again), aid and abet our students development, and rid us once and

for all of our stigma as the only public school in the area with no lights — then folks this is it. This opportunity to customize the stadium will close soon as construction is nearing an end. Remember this is a city stadium not the Taj Mahal so we will look to manage additional expenses and finishes unlike the other structures we have built before (Jefferson-Houston, T.C. Williams). At a cost of less than \$1 million this gift is too good to pass up in a time of budget uncertainty-bordering on crisis. For once the benefits do outweigh the expense. So do it, there are no other spaces left to choose from in this city, just do it. Now!

**William A. Goff**  
Alexandria

## Out of Control Spending

To the Editor:

Building a new Metro in Potomac Yard is a waste of money. But unless an intervention occurs to break a serious spending habit, our mayor and his rubberstamp council will waste your money and others' too. They are addicted to using Alexandria's creditworthiness to borrow until the cows come home.

Thanks to insider help from a passel of Democrats in state office, including Potomac Yard Metro advocate and former council member Krupicka, they are now poised to put our city further into debt. And what is this new debt for? It will pay roughly 20 percent of the cost of a new Metro within Potomac Yard, a new community in Alexandria which is still a-building.

To a discerning reader, you will wonder why this new community deserves a Metro anyway. It's conveniently located between two as it is, National Airport and Braddock Road. For the residents of Potomac Yard, these two Metro stations are a healthy walk for some, a short bike ride for others and a pleasant bus ride for the rest.

So what's the justification to push Alexandria deeper into debt? Short answer: The city believes a Metro will engender more revenue for it to spend. Where from, you ask? Why from taxing the additional structures, their occupants, businesses and their cars that a new Metro is expected to attract to its vicinity. In other words, it's another bet: More Density Now for Maybe More Future Dollars.

Here's what's guaranteed if a new Metro is built: Your taxes will go up, up; more structures will be built; more people will occupy them; more schools will be required for their offspring; more

# Realizing Her Dream

BY KATHARINE DIXON  
CEO, REBUILDING TOGETHER ALEXANDRIA

**2**014 was life-changing for Elizabeth, who works as a travel specialist. She is one of 15 Alexandria residents who became homeowners last year through A Home of Your Own, a Rebuilding Together Alexandria program offered in partnership with the City of Alexandria as part of its Neighborhood Stabilization Program.

## REBUILDING TOGETHER ALEXANDRIA

Through the program, we received a revolving grant to purchase foreclosed or short sale properties, rehab them, and sell them to income eligible, qualifying homebuyers. Every sale we make, allows us to buy another house. Each property is fixed up by our volunteers, creating instant equity for buyers of 5.2 percent on average. Already, Rebuilding Together has been able to help seven first-time, low income buyers — and their families — become homeowners, including Elizabeth.

The idea of becoming a homeowner was part of Elizabeth's plan for some time. She fondly remembers the three-level house where she grew up. Neighbors knew neighbors and held block parties. She walked to school from this home, which was also close to church.

In fact, 12 years ago she applied for the city's First Time Buyer's Certification and kept reapplying every year. But life events kept this longtime Alexandria resident from realizing her dream. She had to put her plan on hold to care for her grandmother, since family is always a priority for her.

In summer of 2013, the time was right. She applied again and learned about the A Home of Your Own program and started working with one of our program officers. Through the program, she took classes where she learned what it meant to be a homeowner, including how to put together a budget for a home. Once completed, she went through the process of getting financing and finding one of the available properties that fit her needs and budget.

This past summer, she moved into an adorable home — completely rehabbed by Rebuilding To-



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

**Rehabbed house became first-time buyer's home.**

gether Alexandria volunteers — that has a welcoming, yellow front door — her favorite color. She has now settled in and met her neighbors and describes the kitchen as her favorite room.

Elizabeth says being a homeowner means “having something of your own to put down roots ... it gives a great sense of pride and security.” And perhaps best of all, she is now able to tell her families and friends: “Come to my house!”

For more information about the program, visit [www.RebuildingTogetherAlex.org](http://www.RebuildingTogetherAlex.org). Interested buyers can also join the online eNews (Affordable Housing Opportunities subscription) at [www.alexandriava.gov/enews](http://www.alexandriava.gov/enews).

cars will be on Alexandria's finite number of roads and, to add insult to injury, Metro travelers will experience a further delay from having to stop at a new station.

What's the payoff by allowing our elected officials to make this bet that increases our taxes, debt, density and delay? I don't know either. But I do know the ideal intervention: Put into office fiscally responsible representatives replacing the borrow, spend and tax addicts now in place, especially the mayor. They're are outta control.

**Jimm Roberts**  
Alexandria

## Legacy of Donated Books

To the Editor:

We write to offer the warmest feelings of gratitude to the Alexandria community for their generous support during last month's season of giving.

I'm on the board of the DreamDog Foundation, a 501c 3 organization that operates a handful of programs aimed at supporting Alexandria's youth.

One of our most successful projects is the Alexandria Book Shelf. This program distributes gently used children's books at 35 sites throughout the city of Alexandria.

A 2010 study by the University of Nevada, Reno found that regardless of whether you're rich or poor, the child of barely literate parents or college graduates, having books in the home will increase the level of education that

children attain.

And that's what Alexandria Book Shelf does — provides children access to books all year long. Our goal is to create a whirlwind of literacy — to put good books in the hands of all children. And this holiday season, thanks to the generous support of Alexandria residents, we gave more than 5,000 books to our at-risk children — part of more than 60,000 free books we have distributed this year. We recently launched similar programs in both Arlington and in Washington, D.C. We'd also like to thank the Potomac Yards Barnes and Noble for making us their December book drive recipient and for Alexandria's Boutique District holding a back-to-school book drive for our program, as well as

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# TC Gymnastics Has Sights Set on Regional Berth

Defending conference champs field 2nd complete team in 3 decades.

BY JON ROETMAN  
GAZETTE PACKET

For the second time in three decades, the T.C. Williams gymnastics program is fielding a complete team, which requires a minimum of four competitors.

In 2014, TC's first full team since the 1980s captured the Conference 7 championship, crushing second-place Woodson by more than 10 points. This year, despite the graduation of conference all-around champion Holland Cathey, the Titans are hoping to secure one of the conference's two regional berths during the Conference 7 championship meet on Feb. 4 at Lake Braddock Secondary School.

Part of what made the 2014 T.C. Williams team so strong was each of the four gymnasts competed for the same club team — the Arlington Aerials. After Cathey's graduation left TC with three gymnasts, the Titans looked to another Aerials teammate to complete the roster — Minnie Howard freshman Schyler Vander Schaaf.

Vander Schaaf joined seniors Grace Girard

and Jordan Mambert, and sophomore Cailyn Lager.

"I knew I had to [join the Titans] because they wouldn't have a team without me, so I'd feel really bad if I said no," Vander Schaaf said. "I always knew that I could do it."

Like last season, the Titans have not consistently had four gymnasts compete during regular-season meets. However, TC has won each of the three meets this season in which it had a complete team.

On Jan. 22, TC won a six-team meet at West Potomac High School, posting a score of 134.475. Westfield finished second (124.7), followed by West Potomac (112.225), Thomas Jefferson (104.725), Falls Church (81.025) and Centreville (80.75).

Lager won the all-around (35.025), Girard placed second (34.9) and Mambert was third (34.325).

Two days later, Lager, Mambert and Vander Schaaf competed in the Barbara Reinwald Invitational at Washington-Lee High School. The Titans placed third as a team (top-three format) with a score of 97.725, finishing behind W-L and Yorktown.

Lager placed fifth in the all-around (34.925).

"Holland was really good last year and she carried us and she's gone now," Lager said, "but I think we're still really good as a whole."

Titans head coach Pete Novgrod said Lake Braddock is considered the favorite to win the conference title, though T.C. Williams, South County and West Springfield could challenge for the championship and one of two regional berths.

"I think they can make regionals," Novgrod said of the Titans. "I think it's going to come down to a three-way battle, maybe four."

Girard, the defending conference beam champion, was the only gymnast competing for T.C. Williams during her freshman year in 2011-12. Girard said she's pleased the Titans were able to field another complete team.

"It's my senior year and I was hoping that we'd finish out with a whole team so we'd have a chance to go further than districts," she said. "It's exciting that it didn't end so quickly."



PHOTO BY LOUISE KRAFT/GAZETTE PACKET

**Cailyn Lager helped the T.C. Williams gymnastics team win the 2014 Conference 7 championship.**

**D.C. United Academy player and T.C. Williams senior Eryk Williamson, seen last season as a junior, was named to the U.S. U18 men's national team's roster for a tournament in Mexico. The U.S. begins play Friday, Jan. 30.**



GAZETTE PACKET FILE PHOTO

## TC's Williamson Named to U18 Men's National Team Roster

D.C. United Academy player and T.C. Williams senior Eryk Williamson was named to the U.S. Under-18 men's national soccer team's 20-player roster for the 2015 Copa Chivas Internacional tournament in Guadalajara, Mexico.

The United States, competing in Group A, will open play against Monarcas Morelia at 1 p.m. on Friday, Jan. 30 before facing Cruzeiro Esporte Clube at 10 a.m. on Jan. 31, Club Tijuana at 10 a.m. on Feb. 2 and Club Deportivo Universidad Catolica at 10 a.m. on Feb. 3.

The top eight seeds advance to the quarterfinals, which begin Feb. 5. The

semifinals are scheduled for Feb. 6, and the championship game is Feb. 7.

The tournament includes three groups of five teams.

Williamson competed in two friendly matches for the U18 team in December. He joined the D.C. United Academy in the summer of 2014 and scored a U18 team-high 10 goals in 11 matches during the fall.

As a junior, Williamson led the T.C. Williams boys' soccer team to the VHSL 6A state championship in the spring of 2014. He scored a goal in the Titans' 2-0 state final victory over Washington-Lee, and netted a hat trick against C.D. Hylton during a 6-2 win in the state semifinals.

## 1,700 To Participate in MidAtlantic Erg Sprints

The MidAtlantic Erg Sprints, the 30th iteration of this annual event, will be held at T.C. Williams High School in Alexandria this Saturday, Jan. 31. This year's competition will feature more than 1,700 athletes from 135 teams in 13 states and the District of Columbia.

The competition will feature more than 100 events for junior, college, and masters rowers, as well as events designed for lightweight rowers, coxswains, parent/child teams and children. The Erg Sprints will also feature events for adaptive rowers — a category specifically designed for individuals with disabilities. Rowers considering their future options and looking for tips on fitness and nutrition can attend one of two seminars on Rowing in College and Beyond. Olympians Esther Lofgren, Giuseppe Lanzone and Linda Miller, along with other top collegiate rowers and coaches, will provide advice and answer questions at the seminars.

Races will begin at 8 a.m.; the final event will be held at 4:30 p.m. Among the most anticipated races are the junior 2,000 meter competitions at 1:30 p.m., the college and open 2,000-meter races at 2:30 p.m., the Adaptive Rowers' events at 3:20 p.m., and the relay and 500-meter sprints championships at 4:20 p.m. The seminars will take place at 10 a.m. and 2:45 p.m.

A brief ceremony to commemorate the 30th anniversary of the MidAtlantic Erg Sprints will take place around 1:30 p.m.

More than 135 teams will compete at the MidAtlantic Sprints, including high school and university rowers. High schools with the largest participations include Yorktown,

Robinson, T.C. Williams, Walt Whitman, Bishop O'Connell, Gonzaga, Woodrow Wilson, Washington Lee, Oakton, Sidwell Friends, Bishop Ireton, National Cathedral, James Madison, St. Albans, St. Stephen's & St. Agnes and Episcopal. Universities that will be represented include Liberty, George Mason, Maryland, Catholic, Georgetown, St. John's, University of Miami, and the Naval Academy.

The MidAtlantic Erg Sprints are hosted by the Alexandria Crew Boosters, the Alexandria City Public Schools, and T.C. Williams High School. More than 250 local volunteers will staff the event, and more than 20 exhibitors and vendors will be present.



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

**Approximately 1,700 athletes from 135 teams will compete at the 2015 MidAtlantic Erg Sprints, to be held at T.C. Williams High School in Alexandria on Jan. 31. It is the second-largest indoor rowing competition in the country and the largest for high school athletes.**



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-Archimedes

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-William Van Horne

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## 21 Announcements

## 21 Announcements

## 21 Announcements

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FROM PAGE 19

public and private schools that have been  
kind enough to hold

school-wide book drives for this program.

This year, Alexandria Book Shelf gave free  
books at events including but not limited  
to the ARHA's Winter Wonderland event, a  
book party at the ALIVE Child Development  
Center, a holiday party with Mayor Bill  
Euille at Charles Houston Recreation Cen-  
ter, an event at the Domestic Women's Vio-  
lence Center and events at William Ramsay  
and Mt. Vernon Rec Centers.

These events were sheer joy this holiday  
season – both to the volunteers involved in  
the DreamDog Foundation and to the chil-  
dren who absolutely lit up when they were  
offered the gift of reading this holiday sea-  
son. The gift of literacy doesn't end with a  
new year: Alexandria Book Shelf will take  
gently used donations throughout the new  
year. We accept gently used books at Local  
Motion Studio, 2377 South Dove St.; Hoo-  
ray for Books at 1555 King St.; Mt. Vernon  
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hang onto that title as the Alexandria Book  
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**Jessica Wehrman**  
Alexandria

## Worth Preserving

To the Editor:

Here we go again. Again, the owner of  
the Old Town Theatre wants to convert the  
building to retail use, totally altering the  
interior of the building to two floors for re-  
tail use. This would mean the irreversible  
loss of Alexandria's only historic theater.  
Luckily there will be a public hearing on  
Feb. 3 at the Planning Commission, as he is  
required to get a special use permit to  
expand the floor area ratio in the building.

I first opposed removing the vestiges of  
the theater in place of the theater marquee  
and ticket booth at a Board of Architectural  
meeting. At the time the owner proposed  
replacing them with plain glass doors. I  
opposed it because there would be no hint  
that the building was ever a theater with-  
out any evidence of its historic use. If this  
SUP is allowed I will not be surprised to  
see a proposal to remove the marquee and  
ticket booth again. If it is not a theater then  
what is the point of these? At the Board of  
Architectural Review I did not discuss the  
interior of the building, because the inter-  
ior is not the purview of the board. But it  
was “due to public efforts” as the SUP re-  
port says, from myself and others, that I  
believe the owner realized there was inter-  
est in having a theater. But now it seems  
like because of failed efforts to operate it,  
which involved a mixed variety of program-  
ming, we should give in and lose what is  
irreplaceable.

In the report it says “Staff is aware that  
the loss of the 100-year old theater use is  
not an ideal situation, but this project, and  
the potential change of use, is a result of  
the current state of single-auditorium the-

aters throughout America that have great  
difficulty remaining viable. The loss of the-  
aters along America's Main Streets is preva-  
lent in towns and cities across the country  
resulting from changes in movie projection  
methods and consumer behaviors as well  
as the limited resources available for per-  
forming arts projects.” This is definitely not  
an ideal situation and should be of concern  
to all our historic boards, commissions and  
organizations. The owner did an outstand-  
ing job of renovating the theater, but oper-  
ating a theater, especially at a profit, is defi-  
nitely difficult. So should we join the ranks  
of all those other cities that have lost there  
theaters, or can we be more creative about  
finding a solution? What if there was a dif-  
ferent model than a for-profit model, and  
the city were to purchase the theater from  
the present owner? We know the Torpedo  
Factory Arts Center attracts visitors, and  
Metro Stage does a marvelous job in North  
Old Town, and for a short time a theater  
was considered as part of the Waterfront  
Plan. We have a venue on the West End of  
the city, the Schlessinger Center, where the  
Alexandria Symphony plays. Would this be  
successful if it was not supported by the city,  
and had to run at a profit? I doubt it would  
exist. The arts are a draw and a showcase  
that can bring community together. An arts  
venue can bring visitors to Old Town who  
will shop and dine, support stores, and bring  
revenue through sales taxes. It would be a  
great venue for First Night, Christmas con-  
certs or film festivals. The city is able to  
spend \$5 million to buy the Old Dominion  
Boat Club, build a \$45 million school a few  
blocks from the theater, and is considering  
spending \$250 million or more on a Metro  
Station. I believe the Old Town Theater  
would be also be an economic asset for the  
city. I also suspect that there would be many  
grants available if it was run as a non-profit  
than as a for profit venture.

And for those of you who might say,  
“There he goes again!” I want to let you  
know that I am not advocating for this the-  
ater because I want a theater to go to, but  
because I think it is in the long-term inter-  
est of Alexandria to maintain it. Visitors to  
Alexandria come primarily because of its  
history, and heritage tourists, as they are  
called, spend three times as much and stay  
three times as long. If Alexandria is no  
longer a unique place to visit and there is  
another retail in place of our theater, we  
will lose in the long term. This theater is  
100 years old, and is surely a part of our  
history worth preserving.

**Boyd Walker**  
Alexandria

## Tale of Two Historic Districts

To the Editor:

On Jan. 21, the Board of Architectural  
Review (BAR) conducted its

5th Concept Review of the EYA Robinson  
Terminal South redevelopment. Outside of  
the door leading to the hearing chamber  
the developer's representatives passed out  
“Revitalize the Waterfront” badges to many  
who did not even live in the Old and His-  
toric District.

However, the real issue is that BAR mem-

bers are appointed by the desperate, devel-  
oper-loving City Council, which approves  
every large development without any mean-  
ingful concessions. The motivation behind  
this rubber stamping of developments is to  
increase the tax base to offer some relief  
from the city's half billion dollar debt, and  
its annual \$64 million debt service.

This desperation is the motivation behind  
stacking the BAR with individuals who will  
support unconstrained development. At the  
end of this hearing, the BAR chairman  
stated that although 10 citizens had spo-  
ken against the development, 17 had en-  
dorsed it, so it must be a good development  
plan. And that's the way they voted.

It is glaringly apparent that EYA has no  
intention to alter the mass, scale,

flat roofs and general inappropriateness  
of this particular development. They have  
only “tweaked” the setbacks on the hulking  
Wolfe Street condo building, but as of yet,  
they have done nothing to the other mono-  
lithic buildings directly on the waterfront.  
These buildings drastically alter the  
riverscape and aerial view of Alexandria's  
Old and Historic District because they evoke  
National Harbor, which is a unique and  
separate venue without any connection to  
Old Town except for the water taxi.

The Wolfe Street condo should be relo-  
cated to the middle of the development, or  
over to Duke Street opposite the Carr Ho-  
tel, while bisecting or trisecting the two  
other oversized condo buildings on the  
waterfront. In addition, the 26 redundantly  
grouped town houses, (which replicate the  
Lofts development opposite the Wythe  
Street Post Office) have no connectivity to  
the historic waterfront. Nothing in this par-  
ticular development is connected to any-  
thing in the Old and Historic District ex-  
cept for 2 Duke Street itself.

The real sad commentary on this entire  
process is that EYA tossed a very small bone  
to the citizens by providing some minor  
setbacks on the upper floors of the Wolfe  
Street condo building, while keeping the  
egregious mass and scale of the entire de-  
velopment.

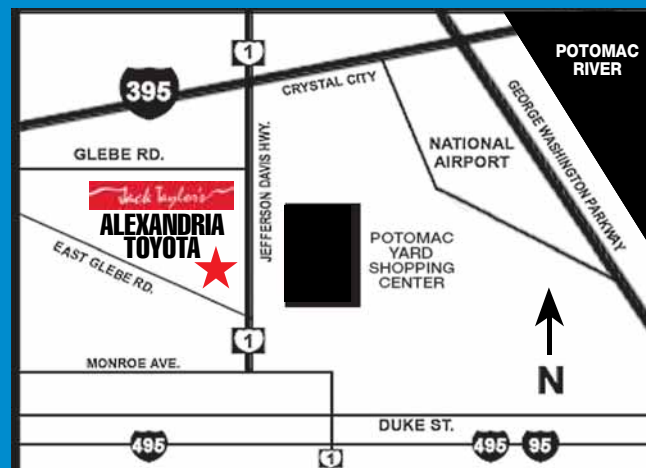
As a contrast, Charleston, S.C. is a city  
that is comparable to Alexandria in many  
ways. It too, is on the water, and it has an  
Old and Historic District. It also has signifi-  
cant development pressures, but the mayor  
(Joseph P. Riley Jr.) knows how to shepherd  
developments in his historic area. He en-  
sures that all new buildings fit in or con-  
nect somehow to the Historic District, and  
he respectfully regards his historic district  
with a touch of reverence due to its place  
in history. Also, since its tourism is greatly  
dependent on retaining the historic char-  
acter of Charleston, it was the first city in  
the nation to be covered by a preservation  
ordinance. When one compares the careful  
stewardship of Charleston to the reckless  
squandering of the historic nature of Old  
Town Alexandria by the City Council and  
its minions, it is apparent that Alexandria  
is in for a long and slow process of killing  
the goose that laid the golden egg, and in  
due course, the Old and Historic district will  
become a meaningless jumble of buildings  
that few will want to visit.

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Add Dealer Processing Fee of \$599. \$1,250 Cash Back from Toyota Motor Sales USA, Inc. available on new 2015 Prius. Customers can receive cash back from Toyota or can apply to down payment. Excludes plug-in models. See dealer for details. ToyotaCare covers normal factory scheduled service. Plan is 2 years or 25k miles, whichever comes first. The new vehicle cannot be part of a rental or commercial fleet, or a livery/taxi vehicle. See participating Toyota dealer for plan details. Valid only in the continental U.S. and Alaska. Roadside assistance does not include parts and fluids. Prius plug-in hybrid comes with an extra year of roadside assistance, for a total of three (3) years from date of purchase. Lease, APR and Cash Back offers may not be combined. See dealer for details. Offers expire 2/16/2015.

Add Dealer Processing Fee of \$599. 0.9% APR financing up to 60 months available to qualified buyers thru Toyota Financial Services. Total financed cannot exceed MSRP plus options, tax and license fees. 60 monthly payments of \$17.05 for each \$1,000 borrowed. Not all buyers will qualify. ToyotaCare covers normal factory scheduled service. Plan is 2 years or 25k miles, whichever comes first. The new vehicle cannot be part of a rental or commercial fleet, or a livery/taxi vehicle. See participating Toyota dealer for plan details. Valid only in the continental U.S. and Alaska. Roadside assistance does not include parts and fluids. Prius plug-in hybrid comes with an extra year of roadside assistance, for a total of three (3) years from date of purchase. Lease, APR and Cash Back offers may not be combined. See dealer for details. Offers expire 2/16/2015.



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The spacious family room in this split-level home is perfect for your next Superbowl party! There are 4 roomy bedrooms and 3 full baths, including a master with jetted tub. It has been meticulously maintained with beautiful landscaping surrounding. 3801 Cameron Mills Road.

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Parker Grey gem, this 2-bedroom with 1 full and 1 half baths is nestled in the NW quadrant of Old Town. Updated kitchen with newer appliances and a great outdoor space for entertaining. Near King Street, the waterfront, Braddock Road Metro & local parks. [www.809oronoco.mcneaney.com](http://www.809oronoco.mcneaney.com)

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