

# Mount Vernon Gazette

MOUNT VERNON'S HOMETOWN NEWSPAPER • A CONNECTION NEWSPAPER

NOVEMBER 26, 2015

## Finding New Row to Hoe

**Arcadia Farms offers veterans more purpose in life, business.**

By TIM PETERSON  
THE GAZETTE

**B**eads of sweat on Laron Murrell's forehead glisten under his grey wool beanie as he digs his hoe into the live earth. On one side, the Woodlawn Plantation mansion stands, a relic from 1800. The plantation overlooks Fort Belvoir, situated across Route 1 bustling on a gleaming Monday morning in November.

Murrell, 36, is turning over soil at Arcadia Farm for the winter, a two-acre project of intensive vegetable cultivation that's bringing new life to the plantation grounds and surrounding communities.

An 11-year veteran of the U.S. Army and Army reserves specializing in equipment repair, Murrell is the first full-time fellow in Arcadia's Veteran Farmer Program. He started his year-long post in October and will divide his time among classes on botany, soil chemistry and farm business practices, as well as working on the farm and helping manage volunteers that assist with planting, harvesting and other farm tasks.

Upon completion, Murrell plans to return to 55 acres of land that belongs to his family in Dover, N.C. and begin a vegetable farm of his own.

Independent farming is one of the main goals of the Veteran Farmer Program: giving former military a renewed sense of purpose and re-populating a farmer workforce that is aging and dying.

"There's nobody tougher in this country than farmers and veterans," said Pam Hess, executive director for Arcadia Center for Sustainable Food and Agriculture, of which the farm is one component.

"They share many of the same character qualities and



PHOTO BY TIM PETERSON/THE GAZETTE

**Laron Murrell turns over soil for winter at Arcadia Farm after pulling stalks of okra.**

are really up for this kind of work. Farming is hard, risky, nerve-racking. But it's also meaningful and a true meritocracy — something people who've served really excel with."

The Arcadia Center comprises a larger food system including the farm, which produced 6,300 pounds of fresh produce between May and November 2015, that goes out through two mobile food markets to be sold at reduced cost in neighborhoods with little access to fresh food. The markets make 19 weekly stops in Washington, D.C. and the South County Government Center.

In 2016, Hess said they will continue to work on expanding the reach of the mobile markets in northern Virginia. "We're focused to figure out if we can crack that nut," she said. "There are plenty of people not getting good food in the suburbs, but we haven't fig-

ured out quite yet how we can get to them."

In addition to the farm and the mobile markets, Arcadia offers classes on growing and preparing fresh produce for schools, and then the Veteran Farmer Program, which recently began accepting applications for a reservist track, thanks to a grant from the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

Those veterans will spend one weekend each month and taking classes like Murrell, working on the farm and visiting working farms for practical experience with livestock, dairy, hydroponics and other styles of farming.

This Arcadia system is the brainchild of Michael Babin, a co-owner of the Neighborhood Restaurant Group.

"The beautiful part is all of  
SEE ARCADIA, PAGE 3

## IMParting Hope

**Art therapy helps veterans recover from PTSD.**

By VERNON MILES  
THE GAZETTE

**I** was messed up," said Tor Peery. "I still am. I have some bad days, but this helped me to use another medium to express myself without having to use words. It's amazing what art can do."

Peery isn't alone. He's one of 70 active duty and retired military personnel whose found a new hope for recovery with IMPart, a program run by Alexandria's Art League which helps victims of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder. The program has been gaining national attention, from First Lady Michelle Obama in October to a visit Nov. 18 from Jane Chu, chairman of the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA). The recovering soldiers displayed their work for Chu, from clay sculptures to pictures of water garden ornamentation.

The IMPart program, run by the ceramics department chair Blair Meerfeld, meets on Wednesdays at the Art League's Madison Annex in North Old Town. The program

was started in 2012, but Suzanne Bethel, executive director of the Art League, said its roots stem from the 2007 Walter Reed Army Medical Center neglect scandal.

"I wanted to see if there was something we could do at Walter Reed," said Bethel. "We learned that there was a burning need and it wasn't being well filled. So we looked at Ft. Belvoir, which was becoming an epicenter for army medical treatment. It was right in our backyard, and with our ceramics program, it seems like a natural fit."

Meerfeld said the program has benefitted greatly from the recent addition of Jackie Jones, an art therapist working at Fort Belvoir on an endowment from the NEA, but volunteers with IMPart

"We benefitted by having Jackie in the room," said Bethel. "She knows what's going on ... she can see things from a therapy side."

Jon Meadows joined IMPart in 2013 and is one of the program's longest outstanding participants. Jon Meadows was beginning to create art that the doctors he was seeing were concerned about and didn't understand. When it was announced that Jones would be volunteering at IMPart, Melissa Meadows kept pushing for her

SEE ART THERAPY, PAGE 3

## One Dead, Two Injured In Hybla Valley Shooting

**P**olice identified Marquel Davis, 22, of Audubon Avenue in Alexandria, as the man who died in a Hybla Valley shooting on Nov. 18. His cause and manner of death have yet to be determined by the medical examiner.

Another man, 27, was hospitalized with gunshot wounds along with Davis. The other man's injuries were determined to be non-life-threatening.

An additional 21-year-old man with gunshot wounds came to the

Mount Vernon Hospital emergency room following the incident, police said. Detectives believe he was involved with the shooting as well.

Police originally responded after a shooting at an apartment was reported around 10 p.m. in the 7900 block of Audubon Avenue. The investigation into the incident is continuing but police said detectives believe the shooting came about from a dispute within the apartment.

— TIM PETERSON

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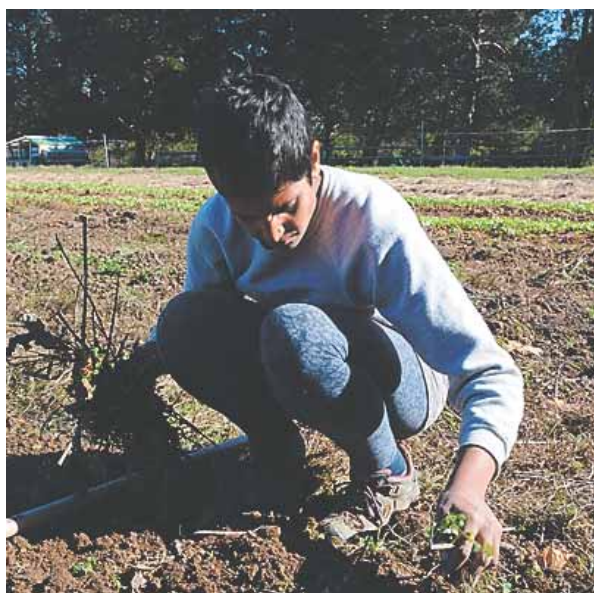
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**Laron Murrell of Woodbridge is the first full-time Veteran Farmer program fellow at Arcadia Farm on Woodlawn-Pope Leighey.**



**Arcadia Farm Manager Anita Adalja of Washington, D.C. pulls remaining debris as they turn over soil for the winter.**



**Tysons Corner Ritz Carlton employees Tyler Donahue of Arlington (left) and Emily Gauthier of Maryland (right) volunteer at Arcadia Farm once a month. The pair are bundling stalks of okra which will be used to build an arbor elsewhere on the farm.**

PHOTOS BY TIM PETERSON/THE GAZETTE

## Arcadia Farms Offers Veterans More Purpose in Life

FROM PAGE 1

our programs support one another,” Hess said. “That’s not an accident, but well thought out by Michael [Babin]. We’re growing food and growing farmers, getting people really loving and wanting healthy food. It goes out to mobile market and people actually buy it, then the demand goes back to the farmers, it goes around and around.”

The mobile markets were one of the big draws for Murrell when he applied for the Arcadia fellowship.

“They’re helping more,” he said. “It’s the best idea since sliced bread: You get your product out there and teach them how to prepare it.”

When Murrell left the Army in 2009, he worked in facilities maintenance for a phar-

maceutical company for several years. “I felt like it didn’t have purpose,” said Murrell, who served in two tours in Iraq. “I knew I needed something else.”

He began talking to friends and Googling “What jobs are vets doing?” in an attempt to find something that would restore his sense of direction in life. That led him to agriculture, farming, something he remembered from his grandparents’ sharecropping town.

He took a class at Pitt Community College in North Carolina and then while searching for apprenticeships came across Arcadia.

“I didn’t really believe it at first,” Murrell said when he heard he was accepted. “I was happy, excited. I wanted to come out the same week.”

Though his future veteran colleagues in the reservist program will begin early in 2016 with a dormant farm, focusing more on preparing for the new growing year and farming concepts, Murrell came on during the harvest, getting to see the end result first.

“He’s taken the ropes, with a lot to learn initially, it’s been full immersion,” said Farm Manager Anita Adalja of Washington, D.C. “Soil, beds, volunteer management — he’s definitely an asset to the farm.”

This Monday morning, Murrell has been helping lead volunteers from the Tysons Corner Ritz Carlton to harvest okra and turn over the soil for winter. Then they’ll plant “cover crop” like oats, peas and winter rye, to fix nitrogen and restore nutrients to the soil.

The learning has been constant and different every day, but Murrell is picking it up quickly.

“There’s a difference between not knowing why you’re there, to where there’s something to be done every day, like in the service,” Murrell said. “You’re doing this for a reason, for your community. It can solve a lot of your problems.”

Murrell used to go into the field with his grandparents on their North Carolina farm as a boy of nine or 10. He wants to go back to that land and develop it into an organic farm, for years to come.

“I can see being an old man,” he said, “passing it down.”

For more information on the Arcadia Center for Sustainable Food and Agriculture, visit [www.arcadiafood.org](http://www.arcadiafood.org).

## Art Therapy Helps Veterans

FROM PAGE 1

husband to see Jones. She said that as soon as they found out an art therapist would be joining the program, she began pressing on the people who ran the program, asking when she would arrive. Jon Meadows was the first patient Jones worked with when she started at IMPart.

“It’s helped me out with my vision and dexterity,” said Jonathan Meadows. “Is saved my life.”

Melissa Meadows said her husband used art therapy in conjunction to other treatments.

“I don’t know where he would be without it,” said Melissa Meadows.

Jon Meadows said he was skeptical at first, and others agreed that they had been as well, but each of them now said that Jones’ sessions was the therapy they looked forward to.

“I thought it was crazy, ‘drawing my feelings,’ but this works,” said Peery.

Jones said the reluctance isn’t uncommon. “Pretty much everyone who walks in is hesitant,” said Jones, “but most leave the first day feeling the benefits.”

Peery described one of the exercises he worked through with Meadows. Jones told him to imagine a box, and to put all of his happy memories inside the box while leaving all of the dark thoughts outside. For Peery, it’s a way of separating out the bad moments from the good.

“It’s not about forgetting,” said Peery, “it’s about processing.”

Jones said this type of processing is at the center of the art therapy work.

“You can see moments of insight and self understanding,” said Jones. “Many find something they’ve suppressed. You also notice progression through emotions; depression to hope and acceptance. We do a lot to honor and celebrate aspects of career and self.”

Jones said that the art can sometimes be jarring, but that it’s all based in personal experiences. According to Jones, the clay is also a very helpful part of that process.

“It’s great for frustration tolerance,” said Jones. “You don’t know what your chemical changes will be, so sometimes you have to just be willing to let [your preconceptions] go.”



**Tor Peery shows one of his ceramic mugs to National Endowment for the Arts Chairman Jane Chu.**

Meerfeld says clay is the perfect medium for those surviving with PTSD.

“Clay is very tactile,” said Merrfeld. “It activates so many senses that can help the healing process.”

For Jon Meadows, the clay helped him regain many of the fine motor skills his injuries had taken from him.

“It really helped me,” said Jon Meadows. “If you didn’t like it, you can squish it and redo it again. You can sit there and play with the clay, feel it with your fingers through it.”

Since the program’s inception, Bethel said the program has served between 60 and 70



**Jon Meadows with one of his clay sculptures.**

victims of PTSD with an average of 18 regular patients each week. With many of them stationed in Ft. Belvoir, Bethel said they regularly see soldiers cycling through. Many are discharged from active duty. Bethel said she tries to follow up with the local areas the soldiers move towards afterwards, but many locations don’t have programs like IMPart.

“For many of them, [these programs] haven’t taken off in their home towns,” said Bethel. “But with NEA making this a focus point, maybe in the future there could be stronger focus on networking with those local groups.”





PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

## Scholarship

Dr. Douthard R. Butler, chairman, Northern Virginia Black Chamber of Commerce, officially recognized and presented on Oct. 15 a scholarship check in the amount of \$2,000 to Gabrielle Lozama who graduated from South Lakes High School in Reston and is now a first year student at Virginia Tech with a double major — multi-media journalism and fashion merchandise and design. The Northern Virginia Black Chamber of Commerce, is based in Gum Springs. Visit [www.northernvirginiabcc.org](http://www.northernvirginiabcc.org).



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

## Food Collection

To mark Oct. 25 as World Pasta Day, Gold's Gym Alexandria on Richmond Highway issued a "World Pasta Day Challenge" to its members during October, encouraging them to donate boxes of pasta to help stock the Food Pantry at United Community Ministries. Above is personal trainer John Scott lifting one of the bins of 100 pounds of donated pasta — just part of the more than 750 pounds collected. To host a Holiday Food Collection Drive for UCM, email [marcos.castillo@ucmagency.org](mailto:marcos.castillo@ucmagency.org). December Holiday Food is due no later than Dec. 11.

## CRIME REPORT

The following incidents were reported by the Mount Vernon District Police Station.

**HIT&RUN, DWI, ASSAULT ON A LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICER:** Buckman Road/Russell Road, Nov. 23, 12:57 a.m. An officer responded to the report of an Acura sedan that hit a telephone pole and was attempting to drive away. As the officer arrived and parked: emergency lights on, the female driver of the Acura failed to stop before striking the police cruiser. The driver was detained and found to be highly intoxicated. As she was being placed under arrest, she kicked the officer. The 39-year-old woman was charged with DWI-3<sup>rd</sup> offense, hit and run, obstruction of justice and assault on a law enforcement officer.

**ROBBERY,** 3700 block of Shannons Green Way, Nov. 19 around 8:06 p.m. The victim met the suspect via an Internet website and agreed to meet the suspect for the sale of an electronic device. The suspect took the device by force and fled. The victim did not require medical attention. The suspect was described as black and wearing all-white clothing.

**ATTEMPTED ROBBERY/TRESPASSING/DESTRUCTION,** 6007 Richmond Highway, Nov. 19 around 8:15 a.m. Two men and two women entered a hotel room through an unsecured door. Hotel staff confronted them and told them to leave. As one of the hotel employees called police, one of the suspects attempted to take the phone by force.

**HIT & RUN CRASH W/APPREHENSION:** Rt. 1 and Old Mt. Vernon Hwy., Nov. 18, 11:55 p.m. An officer observed a hit and run crash where an injury was sustained. That officer broadcast a lookout for the striking vehicle. The vehicle was spotted by another officer and a traffic stop was initiated. The driver of the striking vehicle initially failed to stop and a short pursuit ensued. The suspect vehicle stopped without incident and the driver was arrested. The driver, a 33-year-old man from Alexandria, was charged with felony hit and run, eluding, DUI, and possession of marijuana. The occupants of the vehicle that was struck were transported to a local hospital with non-life-threatening injuries.

**NOV. 23 LARCENIES**  
1600 block of Belle View Boulevard, purse from business  
7200 block of Jon Paul Drive, mirrors from vehicle  
7800 block of Richmond Highway, phone from business

**NOV. 20 LARCENIES**  
2400 block of Fairhaven Avenue, property from business.  
2300 block of Huntington Avenue, wine from business.  
6200 block of Quander Road, cash from residence.

**NOV. 19 LARCENIES**  
2500 block of Parkers Lane, property from vehicle

**NOV. 18 LARCENIES**  
2300 block of Huntington Avenue, merchandise from business

# Finding Treasure on 'Treasure Island'

BY JACOB ATAGI  
WEST POTOMAC HIGH SCHOOL

It's the 1700s, pirates are sailing the high seas, and there's treasure to be found. With lively main actors, an energetic ensemble, and carefully choreographed scenes, Oakton High School's "Treasure Island" on Nov. 13 captures the swash-buckling adventures of the time.

**CAPPIES REVIEW** Premiering in the Tony award-winning Alley Theatre in 2007, Ken Ludwig's play adaptation of Robert Louis Stevenson's book "Treasure Island" follows the story of a young Jim Hawkins (Madison Carter) and his journey for buried treasure. The drunk and paranoid pirate Black Dog (Max Torti) stumbles into Jim's family tavern, and after dying from a heart attack leaves Jim with a map leading to buried treasure. Jim with

the help of a wealthy but eccentric Squire Trelawney (Madeline Doane) and the intelligent Dr. Livesy (Sam Harmic) embarks on a voyage to Treasure Island. On the way to Treasure Island the charismatic and calculating Long John Silver (Michael Williamson), a pirate who has joined the crew as a cook, leads a mutiny leaving Jim and his allies on the island. With a little quick thinking and the help of the marooned sailor Ben Gunn (Tim Cerva) Jim is able to outwit the pirates and come home with treasure and the story of a life time.

The main actors in the play grabbed your attention the moment they stepped on stage. Especially notable was Williamson. His well crafted pirate voice rang throughout the theatre adding to his already strong stage presence. Williamson's peg leg walk, and excellent facial expressions made the play very believable. Doane wonderfully

alleviated the darker parts of the play with great comedic timing.

The energy and engagement of the pirate ensemble made every scene vibrant and exciting. One stand out in the ensemble was Erick McIntosh playing Israel Hands, a rough and tumble pirate mutineer. Torti, while only in the first act, was the highlight of the scenes he was in. Torti made use of every second he was on stage to really capture the paranoia of the pirate Black Dog.

The real treat of the evening was the fight scenes, choreographed by Craig Lawrence. They spanned the entire stage and incorporated blood for wounds, and characters handsomely handled their weapons. This along with the great choreography of the fight, made for a visually impressive scene.

*Cappies is a high school critics and awards program involving more than 50 schools in the Virginia, Maryland and D.C. area.*



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From left : Jeff McKay (Springfield District supervisor), Linda Smyth (Providence District supervisor), Gerry Hyland (Mount Vernon District supervisor), Penny Gross (Virginia Association of Counties immediate past president and Mason District supervisor), Sharon Bulova (Fairfax County Board of Supervisors chairman) and Sallie Clark (National Association of Counties president)

## State Group Honors Hyland

The Virginia Association of Counties presented its highest award to former VACo President and current Fairfax County Supervisor Gerald W. Hyland on Nov. 8 during VACo's 81<sup>st</sup> Annual Conference in Bath County. Hyland was the sixth Fairfax County supervisor to serve as VACo President when he was elected in 2002.

The former 30-year Air Force veteran contributed his time and talent to multiple VACo committees as well as assisting and partnering with supervisors from across the state. "I have served on the VACo Board of Directors for the past 19 years," said Past President and fellow Fairfax County Supervisor Penny Gross. No former VACo board member has more 'street cred'

in VACo and NACo than Gerry Hyland.

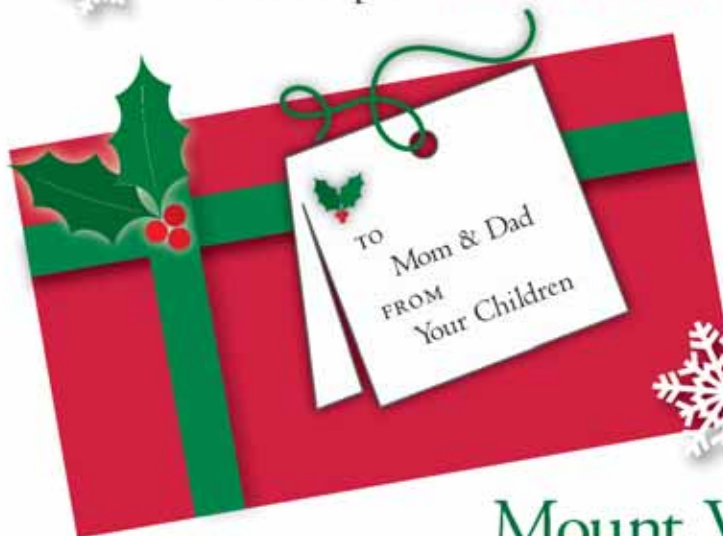
During his many terms in office, Gerry has built bridges to elected officials in other counties and other states, which helped put VACo on the national map." Hyland is a member of the NACo board of directors through his VACo appointment.

He has served on numerous NACo committees and task forces, including the Finance Committee and the Programs and Services Committee. Hyland runs a private law practice, Hyland and Hyland. He also owns a working farm on Virginia's Eastern Shore. Hyland is the first Jefferson Cup recipient since 2012 when VACo honored former Henrico County Manager Virgil Hazelett.

Looking for that perfect holiday gift?

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Mount Vernon *At Home* is a nonprofit "village" dedicated to helping seniors age-in-place.



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**Alex./Sunny View \$390,000**  
**3411 Little Hunting Creek**

This wonderful, all-brick Rambler with vaulted, exposed beam ceilings, is bursting w/charm & character. Beautiful hwd floors, 6-panel interior doors, freshly painted interior, all maintained meticulously by its owners, makes this the perfect starter

home. Combine this w/a beautiful lot, detached garage/workshop & you have a total winner. 5 mins to Ft. Belvoir (S), 15 mins to OldTown, Alex (N), an ideal location & a very affordable price. Turn-key, ready for you!

OPEN  
SUNDAY



**Alex./Stratford Landing \$529,900**  
**2403 Cavendish Drive**

Lovely 3 BR, 2.5 BA Colonial bursting w/charm - wood flrs under quality carpeting on main & upper levels. Spacious eat-in kitchen w/beautiful oak cabinets & Corian counters - upgraded baths. Family rm & den along with workshop/utility rm on lower level. Tons

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**Alex./Riverside Estates \$674,900**  
**8425 Mt. Vernon Highway**

Beautiful home w/over 4,000 sq ft & 2-lvl addition in lovely Riverside Estates. Great rm on main lvl w/gas fpl & wet bar. Adjacent family rm w/wood-burning fpl. An office adjoins the gorgeous

20' x 32' master bedrm addition w/vaulted Douglas Fir ceiling & skylights. Library/studio on upper lvl addition. Both HVAC systems. HWH & roof replaced 2011. Close to Fort Belvoir.



**Hollin Hall \$489,000**  
**7924 Jackson Rd.**

1,300 sq. ft. Hollin Hall Rambler is an oasis for NATURE LOVERS: perennials abound in the front yard, and a huge Koi pond, greenhouse and raised garden beds are in the backyard. Beautiful upscale renovated kitchen. Newly refinished hardwood floors and interior painting. 2 baths and 2

bedrooms, but 3rd bedroom could be easily configured from part of the large Family Room addition. Walk-in closet. Newer HVAC, replacement windows, new hot water heater. WAYNEWOOD ELEMENTARY.

**Alex./Mt. Vernon Woods 4006 Buckman Road \$449,900**



Builders - Beautiful .73 acre lot, zoned R-3. Dominion Surveys has done preliminary survey report for subdivision which can be e-mailed upon request - looking for quick sale/settlement and priced the property accordingly.

**For more information: www.RexReiley.com**



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# OPINION

## Celebrate, Shop, Dine Locally

### Every day can be “small business day.”

There is a joy to participating in community traditions and celebrations during the holidays, from walking along a sidewalk with the streets decked out for the holidays, to shopping in local stores, to being greeted by someone likely to be the owner of the store, to finding gifts that are not mass-produced.

One way to be sure holiday shopping comes with some holiday spirit is to do a portion of your shopping in some of the area's locally owned stores. There is special holiday ambiance available by shopping in the heart of a town that is decked out for the season. Small retail shops are part of defining any community. Their livelihood depends on the livability and quality of the neighborhoods around them. A small business owner pays attention to every detail in his or her business in a way that is otherwise unmatched.

We all benefit when local stores thrive, when local business districts beckon. An effort to support locally owned businesses has resulted in the recognition of Small Business Saturday, the Saturday after Thanksgiving, also called Shop Small. This year that day is Nov. 28.

Locally owned retail shops, services, restaurants depend on vibrant local communities to thrive, and communities depend on those businesses as well. Most small, locally owned businesses invest in community, helping to transform our towns and communities with a sense of place.

Frequently, it is the small retail person who is active in fundraising for local charities, advocating for improvements, for fire and rescue service, for local schools and in organizing holiday events.

#### EDITORIAL

Local retail stores, mom-and-pop stores, face tough challenges right now. Competition from big box stores and online sellers makes the holiday shopping season all the more important to locally owned retailers. But local families will literally spend millions of dollars to shop and exchange gifts during the next month in a variety of places.

Everyone will do some of their shopping at the mall. Everyone will shop online. Many will answer the call of the big box. But local shoppers should be sure to do some celebrating, shopping and dining locally. We promise it brings more joy.

— MARY KIMM

MKIMM@CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM

#### LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### More Trails, Please

To the Editor:

Among the many benefits of living in the Mount Vernon area, my family and I count the Mount Vernon Estate as among the top. As members for many years we have enjoyed all the seasons at this cherished historical site. Residents of the Mount Vernon area are very fortunate to live near the home of our nation's first President. Most of you have undoubtedly visited Mount Vernon and enjoyed, firsthand, walking in the footsteps of the Father of our Country.

In particular, we are grateful for the gracious hospitality of the Mount Vernon Estate — that not only opens its doors and beautiful grounds to people — but welcomes our canine family members as well. We have walked many dogs over the years around the Estate, some better behaved than others, but what remains unchanged is our enthusiasm and love of its walkability and natural beauty.

However, while there are wonderful walking paths in and around the estate, hundreds of acres remain largely inaccessible to visitors. Mount Vernon encourages nearby residents to join as yearly members both as a way to ensure its solvency and to bolster support from the community. While many local residents enjoy the wine tastings, fireworks and other events, many of us simply join each year for the benefit of walking the grounds and taking in one of the most outstanding views of the Potomac in the D.C. area.

For this reason, I hope the Mount Vernon



PHOTO COURTESY OF ANNE P. HOLLOWAY

#### Pooka Belle takes in the view at the Mount Vernon Estate.

Estate would consider opening up additional grounds to visitors through the creation of more trails. I do understand that the Estate has limited funds and many financial obligations, however, I believe that more Mount Vernon residents might be drawn to yearly memberships by additional walking paths throughout the estate. I know there are many in our local community who enjoy

hiking the grounds of the Estate and the creation of more walks — down by the water or in the forested areas — would be a welcome benefit.

Perhaps the trails could be a blazed as part

### Children's Gazette

During the last week of each year, The Gazette devotes its entire issue to the creativity of local students and children. It is a keepsake edition for many families. The annual Children's Gazette is a tradition of well over a decade.

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

We ask that all submissions be digital so they can be sent through email or delivered on CD or flash drive. Writing should be submitted in rich text format (.rtf). Artwork should be photographed or scanned and provided in jpeg format.

We welcome contributions from public and private schools, individuals and homeschoolers. To be published, we must have first and last name of the student. Please include the student's age and/or grade, school attended and town of residence.

Identify each piece of writing or art, including the student's full name, age, grade and town of residence, plus the name of the school, name of teacher and town of school location. Please provide submissions by Friday, Dec. 4.

Email submissions for the Children's Gazette to [gazette@connectionnewspapers.com](mailto:gazette@connectionnewspapers.com).

of a community project or during the summer months when many students seek temporary employment in our area. And, while there are certainly costs associated with these additional trails, they could be offset by the increase in membership.

In short, I believe the creation of additional walking paths at Mount Vernon could be a win-win for the Estate as well as for local residents and out-of-town visitors alike. John Muir said, “in every walk with nature one receives far more than he seeks.” I thank the Estate for providing my family such a wonderful sanctuary and hope that by opening more of the beautiful natural surroundings to visitors we can offer even more than we seek.

Anne P. Holloway  
Alexandria

### Join Effort To Help Schools

To the Editor:

School Superintendent Garza's Budget Task Force recently released recommendations for budget cuts to meet Fairfax County Public School's (FCPS) potential 2017 FY budget shortfall of \$50-75 million. Dr. Garza established the Budget Task Force last spring in anticipation of this expected shortfall caused by declining per pupil funding by the State of Virginia and Fairfax County, increased costs associated with increased student enrollment (with high needs), past state pension underfunding

SEE LETTERS, PAGE 7

### Mount Vernon Gazette

[www.MountVernonGazette.com](http://www.MountVernonGazette.com)

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# LETTERS

FROM PAGE 6

and health care costs. The Task Force recommendations proposing increases in student fees and class sizes and other cuts in administrative expenses, programs and staffing represent the first steps in Dr. Garza's proposed balanced budget to the School Board that she will be presenting Jan. 7.

In addition to the approximately 75 percent local funding and 20 percent state funding, the FCPS budget is also dependent on receiving federal funding for impact aid, Title 1 and special education. The funds made available by each of these funding bodies impacts the ability of the school system to meet the needs of Fairfax County's students, especially in districts such as Mt. Vernon where the percentages of educationally needier students is much higher and the costs of educating students to meet state standards much greater.

Per student school budget funding is less than what it was in real dollars 10 years ago, even while state standards have risen and our students have greater needs. Governor McAuliffe has expressed his intent to increase funding for K-12 education in his budget to be released in December. Similarly, Chairman Bulova has urged the governor to make more funds available for our schools. Our Mt. Vernon and Lee elected state and local representatives have expressed their support for this initiative, especially "Cost to Compete" funding which

helps supplement our area's higher costs and we get a larger share. Education funding is a critical legislative priority for not only your local representatives, but it needs your direct support as well to reduce the need for major budget cuts. We urge you to show your support by directly contacting the Governor's office at 804-786-2211, Governor@virginia.gov or:

The Honorable Terry McAuliffe  
Governor of Virginia  
1111 East Broad Street  
Richmond, VA 23219

There are numerous opportunities for community members to provide insights into the budgeting process, beginning with a Mount Vernon District FCPS budget town meeting on Dec. 9 at 7 p.m. at Sandburg Middle School. We need you to be involved before the Superintendent releases her proposed budget on Jan. 7, 2016, the County Executive releases his FY 2017 Advertised Budget Plan on Feb. 16, the Board of Supervisors advertises their tax rate on March 1 and adopts the County Budget and tax rate on April 26, and the School Board adopts its final budget on May 26, 2016. If you are as concerned as we are about the continued impact on school funding on Mt. Vernon District students, please write or call your representatives and attend our Dec. 9 meeting. We look forward to serving you in our new roles.

SEE LETTERS, PAGE 9

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## Fairfax Water

### NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING ON WATER RATE AND PROPOSED 2016 BUDGET

At 6:30 p.m. on Thursday, December 17, 2015, Fairfax Water will conduct a public hearing on its proposed Schedule of Rates, Fees and Charges and its proposed 2016 Budget. The hearing will be held in Fairfax Water's offices at 8570 Executive Park Avenue, Fairfax, VA.

The proposed changes to the Schedule of Rates, Fees and Charges, to be effective April 1, 2016, include the following:

1. An increase in the Availability Charge from \$3,950 to \$4,100†.
2. An increase in the Local Facilities Charge from \$9,750 to \$10,240.
3. An increase in the Service Connection Charge from \$1,090 to \$1,150†.
4. An increase in the Account Charge from \$36 to \$37.
5. An increase in the Quarterly Billing Service Charge from \$9.80 to \$10.10†.
6. An increase in the base Commodity Charge from \$2.55 to \$2.68 per 1,000 gallons of water.
7. An increase in the Peak Use Charge from \$3.55 to \$3.80 per 1,000 gallons of water.
8. An increase in the Turn Off / Turn On Charge from \$50 to \$52.
9. An increase in the Fees for Use of Fairfax Water Fire Hydrants to include the increase in the Commodity Charge and Peak Use Charge.
10. A decrease in the Overhead Charge for Labor from 110% to 104%.
11. A decrease in the Overhead Charge for Materials from 25% to 16%.
12. An increase in the Installation of Sewer Use Meter Charge from \$45 to \$46.

†Charges reflect fees associated with a standard 5/8" residential meter. Changes in charges for larger residential and commercial meters are reflected in the proposed Schedule of Rates, Fees, and Charges.

Fairfax Water is proposing a \$170.4 million budget for calendar year 2016\*. Revenues are expected to be \$170.4 million in 2016. Water sales are expected to provide \$147.3 million. Approximately \$23.1 million is expected from connection charges, investment income and other sources.

The major areas of operation and maintenance expense are:

Category	-- \$1,000s --	
	2015	2016
Personal Services & Employee Benefits	\$ 53,891	\$ 55,581
Power and Utilities	10,677	10,750
Chemicals	6,335	7,857
Purchased Water	6,717	6,090
Supplies and Materials	4,985	5,113
Insurance	1,017	1,050
Fuel	781	880
Postage	637	664
Contractual Services	9,930	10,422
Professional Services	1,146	1,046
Other	2,363	2,447
<b>Sub-Total</b>	<b>98,479</b>	<b>101,900</b>
Transfer to Improvement Fund	(9,669)	(9,616)
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 88,810</b>	<b>\$ 92,284</b>

Net revenues are expected to be appropriated as follows:

Debt Payment	\$41,417,000
Improvement Fund	\$11,000,000
General Fund	\$24,131,000

\*Fairfax Water's Board will continue to monitor economic factors and review revenues and expenditures at mid-year to determine if additional action is needed.

A copy of the proposed changes to the rates and the 2016 budget can be viewed on our Web site at [http://fairfaxwater.org/current/public\\_hearing\\_2015\\_12\\_17.htm](http://fairfaxwater.org/current/public_hearing_2015_12_17.htm). Those wishing to speak at this hearing or desiring a copy of the proposed changes should call Mr. Ken Lasso at 703-289-6194. Interested parties also may submit written comments to [PublicHearingComments@fairfaxwater.org](mailto:PublicHearingComments@fairfaxwater.org) or mail written comments to:

Fairfax Water  
Public Hearing Comments  
8570 Executive Park Avenue  
Fairfax, VA 22031

All written comments must be received by close of business on Wednesday, December 16, 2015 to be included in the record of the public hearing.



# Importance of Virginia's Port

By SCOTT A. SUROVELL  
STATE DELEGATE (D-44)  
STATE SENATOR-ELECT (D-36)

Last week, I joined the Virginia Senate's Finance Committee in Portsmouth for briefings on Virginia's economy, revenue projections and other important issues facing the state legislature. More on that later. While in Portsmouth, I toured two significant and under-appreciated Virginia assets.

While neither the shipyard nor the Port is located in Northern Virginia, both have a significant impact on our quality of life and the entire state's economy. A healthy Port of Virginia has beneficial ripple effects across the whole state.

Newport News Shipbuilding, dating to 1886, is the only facility in the U.S. capable of constructing an aircraft carrier and one of two in the country that can build a submarine.

## COMMENTARY

We started in the foundry where they manufacture large steel ship components. The level of precision, craftsmanship and quality that goes into making these pieces cannot be understated — it was amazing and there are no do-overs in this process. They walked us through all the steps: they model a wooden replica of the piece packed it in a casing with a plumbing system to facilitate even cooling, pack in sand, fill it with molten steel and cool it. Then, they break the molds apart.

Next, in the facility where submarines are assembled, we saw three different Virginia Class submarines in various stages of construction. Workers assemble four segments in this facility. General Dynamics Electric Boat in Norwalk, Conn., assembles other segments. After they complete the segments, they ship them by barge and put them together. Leaders showed us how they have reduced manufacturing time by over a year through efficiencies.

Lastly, we had a drive-by tour of the U.S.S. Gerald R. Ford, the Navy's next nuclear aircraft carrier — and the U.S.S. Enterprise, which they are decommissioning before tugging it to the West Coast and scrapping it.

Newport News Shipbuilding has its own college which trains workers who earn college de-



grees. The company has many traditions, including its own challenge coin. It employs 20,000 very proud workers, mostly Virginians, 50 percent of whom are members of United Steelworkers Local 888. Everyone there does incredible work.

I also toured two segments of the Port of Virginia, first Norfolk International Terminals (NIT). NIT was alive with activity. We watched people thousands of containers being loaded, unloaded and waiting for pickup or shipment back across the sea.

Port Authority officials described their need for about \$380 million in capital investment to keep pace with competing ports in New York, Baltimore and Charleston. Bigger ships are coming after improvements to the Panama and Suez Canals and efficiency is critical.

Next we toured the Virginia International Gateway (VIG). A soybean farm in 2007, today VIG is one of only two semi-automated cargo centers in the western hemisphere.

We watched a series of rail-guided cranes automatically take containers on and off ships and put them onto trucks. When trucks come through the entrance, cranes start to move containers into place for delivery. The only part of the process that is not automated is positioning containers onto the trailer chassis.

The Port currently receives over 5,000 tons of cargo worth over \$15 million to and from businesses headquartered in the 36<sup>th</sup> Senate District. That excludes goods sold at retail stores such as Costco, Walmart, car dealerships and grocery stores.

The Port needs a major capital infusion to automate remaining port facilities, deepen channels, and complete an expansion on Craney Island in order to increase capacity by nearly 700,000 containers per year, about a 50 percent increase.

Next week, I will write about the health of the Virginia economy, the state budget outlook and some major budget drivers facing the 2016 General Assembly convening in January.

It is an honor to serve you in Richmond. Please email me at [scott@scottsuorvell.org](mailto:scott@scottsuorvell.org) to share your views and questions.

## VIEWPOINTS

### "What are you thankful for, this Thanksgiving?"

PHOTOS BY RENÉE RUGGLES/  
THE GAZETTE



**Linda Williams:** "I have my faith in the Lord, knowing he is always going to be there and has his hand on things. I'm so thankful for special needs children; learning to have empathy and I'm much more patient."



**Renee Belletomasini and daughter, Winter Kosz.** Winter is thankful for books and ice skating practice. Renee: "I'm thankful for her health. I'm thankful that she's a good girl and for family and friends."



**Tracy Dore:** "I really thank God that I am alive and have a beautiful daughter, family, and friends. I'm thankful just for being able to get out of bed in the morning. We take so much for granted. It helps to have a thankful heart."



**Peter Huang (right) and his son, Alex:** "I am thankful for Special Olympics taking care of special needs children. Alex learned figure skating. He can skate on one foot, now."

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# LETTERS

FROM PAGE 7

**Dan Storck**, Mt. Vernon Member of the Fairfax County School Board and Mt. Vernon Supervisor Elect  
**Karen Corbett Sanders**, Mt. Vernon Member Elect of the Fairfax County School Board

## Dumfries Honors Toddy Puller

To the Editor:

*Town of Dumfries Mayor Jerry Foreman presented state Senator Linda "Toddy" Puller a Town Resolution at her home in Alexandria, honoring her years of service as a delegate and senator for the State of Virginia.*

Senator Puller is an outstanding individual; I have supported her efforts in the past and remain committed to her efforts. As a Marine and a proponent of transportation, veterans benefits, education, economic development and ensuring our first responders are taken care of .... these are the same concerns Senator Puller has advocated.

Toddy has served the 36th Senatorial District of Virginia with distinction and has always fought for her constituents with a firm commitment to resolve concerns; and has earned the admiration and high regard from fellow General Assembly members, as well as from constituents she has proudly served for many years. Senator Puller, 36th Senatorial District of Virginia, is recognized for

her leadership, dedication, and unselfish distinguished public service to Virginia and the citizens of the Town of Dumfries.

It is with gratitude and best wishes from the Town Council, staff, and all the citizens of the Town of Dumfries be extended to Senator Puller for continued good health, good fortune, and happiness in a pleasurable retirement and all other future endeavors.

**Gerald "Jerry" Foreman**  
 Mayor  
 Town of Dumfries

## Herrity Is Silent

To the Editor:

One of the most pressing issues facing the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors is our proposed appointment of a Citizen Review Panel that would accept and investigate citizen allegations to the Chief of Police and/or the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors. While a majority of the Board of Supervisors have gone on record as favoring our proposal, there is a minority that have ignored it including Supervisor Pat Herrity. His refusal to address this issue is a perfect example of dereliction of duty by an elected public official. In Supervisor Herrity's district there have been several incidents

SEE LETTERS, PAGE 10

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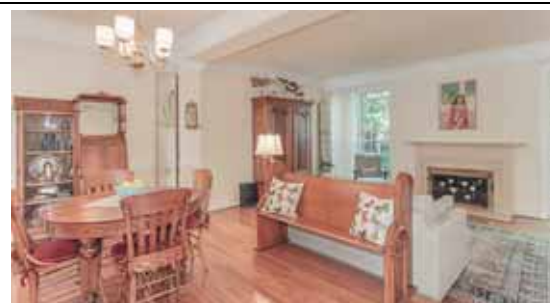
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**Potomac Yard**  
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**Quaker Village**  
**49 Arell Court, Alexandria VA**  
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 Ann-Marie Grotticelli & Susan Gray Chambers  
 MLS # AX8695286

**Williamsburg Manor North**  
**2408 Apple Hill Road,**  
**Alexandria VA**  
 Single Detached Home in 22308 for under \$550k! Refinished hwd's, new kitchen, new baths, fin. basement all means a great time to buy and great value!  
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## Aquinas and Old Town Montessori Schools

Upcoming events in December:

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### OPEN HOUSE

Wednesday, December 2, 7 – 8 PM

8334 Mount Vernon Hwy, Alexandria, VA 22309  
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**Old Town Montessori School**

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112 South Columbus Street, Alexandria, VA 22314  
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Mount Vernon Gazette

## LETTERS

FROM PAGE 9

where the police have shot and killed unarmed citizens without justification or provocation. Our own Supervisor Hyland has also ignored our proposal. This would clearly indicate Supervisor Herrity's disregard for the safety of his constituents. Hopefully he will soon speak up and reveal how he feels about these despicable

acts. For him to remain silent is unconscionable. We have asked Supervisor Herrity about his feelings and opinion regarding this issue. He has failed to respond to our request. The question is why?

**Nicholas R. Beltrante**

Executive Director  
Virginia Citizens Coalition for Police Accountability, Inc.

## BULLETIN BOARD

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.

### THROUGH DEC. 4

**Accepting Donations.** At Christian Relief Services, 8301 Richmond Highway. Christian Relief Services provides more than 2,700 frozen turkeys to its grassroots partners in Georgia, Kentucky, Tennessee and West Virginia during the Christmas season. This year, they are asking for support to help ensure children will receive at least one toy from "Santa" this year. Visit [www.christianrelief.org](http://www.christianrelief.org).

### THROUGH DEC. 11

**Citrus Sale Deadline for Orders.** The Mount Vernon Evening Lions Club will be taking orders for oranges and grapefruit. Order deadline is Friday, Dec. 11; delivery on Dec. 19. Call Andrea Corsillo 703-960-4973.

### TUESDAY/DEC. 1

**"Guiding the College-Bound Athlete."** 7:30 p.m. at Mount Vernon High School, 8515 Old Mount Vernon Road. This seminar is to prepare parents and athletes with information and topics for every student-athlete in middle and high school and their parents to educate and prepare them for opportunities and careers after graduation. Free. Email [MountVernonHS.KeepInTouch@fcp.edu](mailto:MountVernonHS.KeepInTouch@fcp.edu).

### SATURDAY/DEC. 5

**School Open House.** 2-4 p.m. at Burgundy Farm Country Day School, 3700 Burgundy Road. School serves pre-kindergarten to 8th grade. Childcare available. Call 703-329-6968 to RSVP or schedule a personal tour. Visit [www.burgundyfarm.org](http://www.burgundyfarm.org) for more.

### SUNDAY/JAN. 10

**School Open House.** 2-4 p.m. at Burgundy Farm Country Day School, 3700 Burgundy Road. School serves pre-kindergarten to 8th grade. Childcare available. Call 703-329-6968 to RSVP or schedule a personal tour. Visit [www.burgundyfarm.org](http://www.burgundyfarm.org) for more.

### VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

**United Community Ministries** seeks volunteers to act as food pantry assistants, basic needs counselors, youth tutors and mentors, office admin/data entry, community outreach, ESL teachers and co-teachers, and teacher aides. Visit [www.ucmagency.org/volunteer-at-ucm.html](http://www.ucmagency.org/volunteer-at-ucm.html).

The **Hollin Hall Senior Center** needs

a volunteer to maintain a fish aquarium upkeep and instructors for the following classes: Basic Guitar, Italian, Pottery and Ballroom Dance. Call 703-324-5406 or visit [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/olderadults](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/olderadults) for more.

**The Mount Vernon Adult Day Health Care Center** in Alexandria needs a licensed beautician, a social companion and a Spanish-speaking social companion. For these and other volunteer opportunities, call 703-324-5406, TTY 711 or visit [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/olderadults](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/olderadults) and click on Volunteer Solutions under "Get Involved."

**Mount Vernon At Home** is a non-profit organization that relies on volunteers to assist older adults aging in place in their homes. Volunteers are needed for local transportation to medical and personal appointments, errands, and grocery store trips; light handyman chores, home technology and more. No minimum number of volunteer hours required. Call Mount Vernon At Home 703-303-4060 or e-mail [info@mountvernonathome.org](mailto:info@mountvernonathome.org) or visit [www.mountvernonathome.org](http://www.mountvernonathome.org) for more.

**For these and other volunteer opportunities**, call 703-324-5406, TTY 711 or visit [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/olderadults](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/olderadults) and click on Volunteer Solutions:

- ❖ The Kingstowne Center for Active Adults needs instructors for Mosaic Art and Jewelry Making.
- ❖ The Mount Vernon Adult Day Health Care Center needs volunteer English and Spanish-speaking social companions, and front desk volunteer.
- ❖ The Hollin Hall Senior Center a ballroom dance instructor to teach a class on Thursday afternoons, and an Italian instructor.
- ❖ The Gum Springs Senior Center needs a Spanish teacher.

**Volunteer Advocates for Nursing Home & Assisted Living Residents** needed throughout Northern Virginia. Contact the Northern Virginia Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program at [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dfs/olderadultservices/ltombudsman/](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dfs/olderadultservices/ltombudsman/), or email [Lisa.Callahan@fairfaxcounty.gov](mailto:Lisa.Callahan@fairfaxcounty.gov) or call 703-324-5861, TTY 711.

**Volunteers needed in Fairfax County** to drive older adults to medical appointments and wellness programs. For these and other volunteer opportunities, call 703-324-5406, TTY 711 or visit [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/olderadults](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/olderadults) and click on Volunteer Solutions.

**Respite Care** volunteers give family caregivers of a frail older adult a well-deserved break so they can go shopping, attend a doctor's appointment or just have coffee with a friend. Volunteers visit and oversee the safety of the older adult for a few hours each month. Support and training are provided. Contact Kristin Martin at 703-324-7577, TTY 711, or [Kristin.Martin@fairfaxcounty.gov](mailto:Kristin.Martin@fairfaxcounty.gov).

Forget the Fruitcake.  
Give a gift that really matters  
this holiday season.



Enough with all the snowflake ties and reindeer sweaters, too. This year, there are lots of great ways to give and give back at the same time. Now you can donate to any of these Fairfax County nonprofits in honor of anyone on your gift list. It makes shopping easy and offers you a nice tax deduction. But best of all, it helps those organizations succeed in bringing goods and services to those who need them most at this special time of year. Learn more at [givefairfax.net](http://givefairfax.net)



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To request reasonable ADA accommodations or information in an alternative format, call 703-324-5171 TTY 711 | Concept and design by Williams Whittle





# CHRIS WHITE

*Planning to sell in 2015?  
Now is the time to call Chris & Peggy White!  
Leading the Area in Real Estate. SOLD!!!*



**9329 Mount Vernon Circle \$1,195,000**  
**One of Area's Most Admired Properties!**

Classic Georgian manor home crafted by legendary master builder, Eugene Cullinane to serve as model for homes in upscale Mt Vernon on the Potomac neighborhood. Special home contains builder's trademark features including custom brickwork, elaborate plaster moldings, estates size rooms, stately 10' ceilings & imposing 13' wide foyer. Private marina access in area's leading waterfront community. True one of a kind property!



**4005 Mavis Ct \$698,900**  
**Stunning Open Floor Plan!**

Spacious & open-truly spectacular property with stunning family room addition. Expansive glass walls, soaring cathedral ceilings & open floor plan bring light to every corner of the home. Other features include custom, gourmet kitchen with huge 17x6 pantry. Updated baths and oversize 2 car garage. Huge deck capitalizes on private back yard. Prime location on quiet cul-de-sac in heart of Mt Vernon!



**9408 Brambly Lane \$1,140,000**  
**New Home Feel!**

Spacious Colonial by Wakefield Homes-the area's leading custom builder! Home has striking open floor plan accentuated by high ceilings and large windows which bring light to every corner of the home. Numerous fabulous features include: 3 luxurious finished levels, open kitchen-family room, spacious master suite and oversize 3 car garage. Deck overlooks private wooded yard. Prime location on quiet cul-de-sac. Impossible to duplicate at close to this price!

**3719 Riverwood Rd \$709,000**  
**Fabulous Opportunity- Prestigious Riverwood!**

Exceptionally attractive price for updated Colonial in premier riverfront community. Recent work including custom interior paint and beautifully refinished hardwood floors provide true "move-in" opportunity! Other features include main level family room w/fireplace & custom built-ins, bright white kitchen, 4 spacious bedrooms, thermal windows, 2 car garage. Gorgeous setting on large fenced lot.

**8708 Plymouth Rd \$1,499,000**  
**Classic American Four Square Design—Special Pre-Construction Price!**

Best of both worlds—classic American Four Square exterior combined with stunning modern floor plan and amenities. Numerous features include open floor plan, high ceilings, top line kitchen and baths. Prime location on half acre level lot in popular Plymouth Haven. Pre-construction contract provides maximum opportunity to customize and discounted price!

**4204 Old Mill Rd \$489,000**  
**Best Value Under \$500,000 in Area!**

Amazing Value! Stunning price for fabulous home and custom two car garage on half acre lot just three mile from Mt. Vernon Estate. Home is in pristine condition with updated kitchen, open floor plan, gorgeous hardwood floors, gas heat and more! Gorgeous elevated half acre lot with private level back yard. Super Value!

**9429 Forest Haven Dr \$699,000**  
**Spectacular Contemporary!**

**4831 Stillwell Ave \$549,500**  
**Absolutely Adorable!**

**8824 Stratford Lane \$949,000**  
**Best New Home Value in Stratford**

**3232 Woodland Lane \$659,000**  
**Gorgeous Designer Kitchen!**

**9312 Heather Glen \$599,000**  
**Stunning Opportunity!**

**4008 Robertson Blvd \$649,900**  
**A True Gem!**



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Alexandria/Old Town Historic - 400 King Street, Alexandria, VA 22314





# ENTERTAINMENT

## For Buzz Bakeshop, Fresh New Season

Maggie Austin takes the helm as culinary director of newly renovated Buzz Bakeshop.

BY HOPE NELSON  
THE GAZETTE

There's a new buzz at Buzz these days. The first thing regular customers will notice upon walking in the door is the new name: What was once Buzz Bakery has transformed into Buzz Bakeshop. Step into the shop, and it's easy to see that the name change has manifested into a wholesale renovation of the space itself.

As the bakeshop settled into its first decade in existence, it was time for a change, says Neighborhood Restaurant Group's Megan Bailey. The time had come "to make it a little more modern ... to make it feel a little more elegant," she said.

But the changes aren't only façade-deep. There's a new culinary director at the helm, as well: haute couture cake artist Maggie Austin, of Maggie Austin Cake. And Austin's influence is already being felt throughout the shop, from the menu to the décor.

Buzz's display case overflows with Austin's creations, from a soft, decadent pumpkin muffin that has a cream-cheese filling hiding inside to a s'mores cupcake that just screams out for a nearby campfire. The cornmeal thumbprint cookie is Austin's mother's recipe, and the tiny bumblebees that adorn many of the sweets are quickly becoming one of Austin's signatures.

Sweet treats aren't the only offerings Austin has debuted since she took the helm. Buzz has just unveiled its new quiche, as well, to give the menu a more savory tone.

"Breakfast is busy ... and what I've noticed is people are coming in and really wanting something savory," Austin said.



"Our quiche just came out — the quiche is so good. It is so good."

Baked with Gruyere and caramelized onions and served in a "real-deal crust," the quiche is indeed proving itself worthy of the morning display case. And new items are on the horizon — just in time for the holidays.

"We're just starting to brainstorm about what we can offer through the holidays. One



**Couture cake artist Maggie Austin has brought her own flavor – and recipes – to the bakeshop's menu. (Left) Buzz Bakeshop sports a new name and logo alongside its renovated interior and new culinary director Maggie Austin.**

of the things that we're really excited about ... (is) a 'Buzz Bites' kind of line," Austin said. "We're going to have miniature tastes of things," such as muffins made in bite-sized portions, presented in a "clear, beautiful case" — perfect for holiday gifts.

Also on the Christmas list: decorated sugar cookies. "I love just good-eating food, but a little part of me is like, 'I just want to make something a little bit fancy,'" Austin

laughed.

The recent facelift at Buzz — both in structure and taste — is only Phase 1 of the staff's plans for the future. Given Austin's vocation, it only makes sense that cakes will begin to emerge in various ways in the coming months, from holiday rum cakes to what Austin is calling Buzz's "celebration cake line," catering to offices, birthday festivities, and the like. And the menu itself will continue to move with the seasons.

"Food is such a subjective thing, so that in developing all of these recipes ... it's a really tough thing because you can't please everyone. And you just have to kind of go with what you believe is the best representation of any of these products. Our chocolate-chip cookie is not going to be everyone's chocolate-chip cookie. But it's my chocolate-chip cookie. And I think it's really good."

If the empty plates and steady orders are any indication, that opinion isn't Austin's alone.

Hope Nelson owns and operates the Kitchen Recessionista blog, located at [www.kitchenrecessionista.com](http://www.kitchenrecessionista.com). Email her any time at [hope@kitchenrecessionista.com](mailto:hope@kitchenrecessionista.com).

### 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

**Torpedo Factory's Post-Graduate Studio.** Through Nov. 29, during gallery hours at the Torpedo Factory Art Center, 105 N. Union St. To wrap up the inaugural year of the Torpedo Factory Art Center's post-graduate in-house residency program, the Target Gallery will feature the work of the four participating artists in a group exhibition. Free. Visit [www.torpedofactory.org](http://www.torpedofactory.org) for more.

**PHOTO '15.** Through Nov. 29, gallery hours at Multiple Exposures Gallery, 155 N. Union St. Senior Curator and Head of the Department of Photographs at The National Gallery of Art Sarah Greenough will jury the "PHOTO '15" exhibit. Thirty-one fine art photographers will display their work. Admission to the gallery is free. Visit [www.multipleexposuresgallery.com](http://www.multipleexposuresgallery.com)

for more.

**Mike McConnell: "Flip Side."** Through Dec. 13, during gallery hours at The Athenaeum, 201 Prince St. Mike McConnell was a commercial illustrator who recently dedicated himself to fine art. Free. Visit [www.nvfaa.org](http://www.nvfaa.org) for more.

**Green Spring Gardens Art Show.** Through Dec. 27, gallery hours at Green Spring Gardens, 4603 Green Spring Road. Artist Carol Higgs works in batik, oil, watercolor, and collage. Painter Joan Wolfe works with acrylic and Erik and Caroline Hottenstein use watercolors. Free. Call 703-642-5173 for more.

**"A Broadway Christmas Carol."** Through Dec. 27 at various times at MetroStage, 1201 N. Royal St. Created by Kathy Feininger and directed by Michael Sharp, this MetroStage holiday tradition is a cross between the classic Dickens' tale and Broadway parodies. Tickets are \$50. Visit [www.metrostage.org](http://www.metrostage.org).

**"Not-So-Modern" Jazz Quartet Performance.** Thursdays through Dec. 31, 7:30-10 p.m. at St. Elmo's Coffee Pub, 2300 Mount Vernon Ave. Not So Modern Jazz Music plays music from the glory days of traditional jazz, including tunes from

traditional Dixieland and the Swing era. Free. Visit [www.stelmoscoffeepub.com](http://www.stelmoscoffeepub.com).

**Tag on 3rd: Gallery 311 Opening Exhibit.** Through Dec. 31, 11 a.m.-6 p.m. at The Associates Gallery at the Torpedo Factory, 105 N. Union St. The Associates' Gallery is re-opening in a renovated space on the Torpedo Factory's third floor, studio 311. The exhibit will honor Robert Rosselle, a sculptor who died in July. He occupied Studio 311 for many years, and two of his sculptures will take center stage in the group's new show. Free. Visit [www.torpedofactory.org](http://www.torpedofactory.org).

**"Nature's Journey."** Through Jan. 2, at American Horticultural Society, 7931 East Boulevard Drive. Darlene Kaplan will exhibit more than 60 of her original oriental brush paintings in a one-person art exhibition. Free. Visit [www.darlenekaplan.com](http://www.darlenekaplan.com) for more.

**Potomac Fiber Arts Gallery: "Winter Wonderland."** Through Jan. 3, gallery hours at The Torpedo Factory Art Center—Studio 18, 105 N. Union St. Artists working in textile focus on "sparkle and shine, clean and white." Free. Visit [www.potomacfiberartsgallery.com](http://www.potomacfiberartsgallery.com).

**"George Washington's**

**Thanksgiving Proclamation."**

Through Jan. 6, 9 a.m.-5 p.m. at George Washington's Mount Vernon, 3200 Mount Vernon Memorial Highway. This exhibit will detail the history of Thanksgiving at Mount Vernon. On October 3, 1789, Washington issued his Thanksgiving proclamation, designating for "the People of the United States a day of public thanks-giving." Admission to the exhibit is included in Mount Vernon ticket prices. Tickets are \$17 for adults, \$9 for children, and free for children ages 5 and younger. Visit [www.mountvernon.org/thanksgiving](http://www.mountvernon.org/thanksgiving).

**VCA Alexandria Animal Hospital Art Show.** Through Jan. 31 at VCA Alexandria Animal Hospital, 2660 Duke St. The artwork is on display in waiting areas and examination rooms as a part of Del Ray Artisans' Gallery Without Walls program. Free. Visit [www.TheDelRayArtisans.org](http://www.TheDelRayArtisans.org) for more.

**"Ancient Art of Movement."** 1 p.m. at Hollin Hall Senior Center, 1500 Shenandoah Road. Carmen Shippy, retired professional dancer, teaches a series designed for ages 50 and above. Movements are designed to strengthen core muscles and increase flexibility. Adjustments will be made

for those with physical limitations. First lesson in the series is free for non-center members. To continue lessons, a yearly membership to all Senior Center programs is \$48. Call 703-765-4573 to sign up.

**Flamenco Show.** Wednesdays and Thursdays, 7:30-8:30 p.m. at La Tasca, 607 King St. Watch dancers and guitarists perform traditional flamenco. Free to attend. Call 703-299-9810 or visit [www.latascausa.com](http://www.latascausa.com).

**French Movie Night.** Every Thursday, 7 p.m. in the back room of Fontaine Caffe & Creperie, 119 S. Royal St. View a French film. Free, no reservation necessary. Call 703-535-8151 or visit [www.fontainecaffe.com/reviews.html](http://www.fontainecaffe.com/reviews.html).

**Journey to Be Free: Alexandria Freedmen's Cemetery.** Through March, Tuesday-Saturday, 10 a.m.-4 p.m. Alexandria Black History Museum, 902 Wythe St. A new exhibit tracing the 150-year history of the long-forgotten Freedmen's Cemetery, its rediscovery and how the new Contrabands and Freedmen's Cemetery Memorial was created at the site. Call 703-746-4356.

**Their Fates Intertwined: The Lees**



# ENTERTAINMENT



IMAGE COURTESY OF VISIT ALEXANDRIA

Each year, the City of Alexandria holds a formal ceremony celebrating the illumination of the city tree that stands in front of City Hall, 301 King St. Free. Visit [www.alexandriava.gov](http://www.alexandriava.gov) for more.

**of Alexandria in the War of 1812.** Wednesday- Saturday, 10 a.m.-4 p.m. Sunday, 1-4 p.m. Lee-Fendall House and Gardens, 614 Oronoco St. A new exhibit on the experiences of the Lee family in Alexandria during the War of 1812 examines the contributions of Alexandria's citizens during the conflict that led to the writing of our national anthem through the lives of this iconic Virginia family. Visit [www.leefendallhouse.org](http://www.leefendallhouse.org) or call 703-548-1789.

**Alexandria Cars and 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.-5 p.m., Sundays 12-5 p.m. Fort Ward Museum, 4301 W. 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.

**National Inventors Hall of Fame Exhibit.** Through November 2016 at The National Inventors Hall of Fame-USPTO campus, 600 Dulany St. The exhibit features the stories of Inductees of the National Inventors Hall of Fame who served their country during World War II and returned home to help build the nation with their innovations. Free. Visit [www.inventnow.org](http://www.inventnow.org).

**Dinner for the Washingtons.** 12 p.m. 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.

## FRIDAY/NOV. 27

**BlackFriday Alexandria and Festivities.** 6 a.m. and all day at boutiques in Alexandria. More than 50 local boutiques will open early, offering once-a-year deals. Free. Visit

[www.visitalexandriava.com/blackfriday](http://www.visitalexandriava.com/blackfriday).

**Tea With Santa Claus.** 3-5 p.m. at Union Street Public House, 121 S. Union St. Tea, cocoa, and other sweets will be served alongside storytelling and magic tricks. At the end of the tea, Santa and Mrs. Claus will lead a parade to Old Town's tree lighting ceremony. Tickets are \$10 for children under 12 and \$20 for adult or child 12 and older. Visit [www.unionstreetpublichouse.com](http://www.unionstreetpublichouse.com).

**City of Alexandria Tree Lighting Ceremony.** 6-8 p.m. at Market Square in front of City Hall, 301 King St. The mayor and Santa Claus will light the city tree. Mr. and Mrs. Claus visit, and more. Free. Visit [www.alexandriava.gov](http://www.alexandriava.gov) for more.

## NOV. 27-JAN. 6

**Christmas at Mount Vernon.** 9 a.m.-4 p.m. at George Washington's Mount Vernon, 3200 Mount Vernon Memorial Highway. Visit George Washington's estate and see Aladdin the camel on the grounds, in honor of the camel that Washington paid to visit Mount Vernon in 1787. Stroll through Mount Vernon's modern buildings and view sparkling holiday decorations, featuring 12 dazzling Christmas trees, and historical chocolate-making demonstrations. Also visit the rarely-open third floor of the Mansion. All is included in the general admission price which is \$17 for adults, \$16 for seniors, \$9 for youth ages 6-11, and free for children 5 and under. Visit [www.mountvernon.org/christmas](http://www.mountvernon.org/christmas) for more.

## NOV. 27-28, DEC. 4-5, DEC. 20

**Mount Vernon by Candlelight.** 5-8 p.m. on Saturdays and Sundays, at George Washington's Mount Vernon, 3200 Mount Vernon Memorial Highway. Take character-guided tours, listen to caroling, watch 18th-century dancing, and see a reproduction of Martha Washington's "Great Cake" recipe. "Mrs. Washington" and Aladdin the Christmas camel will also be on site. Tickets are \$22 for adults and \$15 for youth. Visit

[www.mountvernon.org/christmas](http://www.mountvernon.org/christmas) for more.

## SATURDAY/NOV. 28

**Pete Kennedy.** 7:30 p.m. at The Birchmere, 3701 Mount Vernon Ave. Pete Kennedy performs with his wife Maura and Seldom Scene. Tickets are \$35. Visit [www.birchmere.com](http://www.birchmere.com) for more.

## MONDAY/NOV. 30

**Meditation Classes.** 7 p.m. at James M. Duncan Branch Library, 2501 Commonwealth Ave. Learn how to meditate or renew a stalled habit. Terri Carr will lead a class on the benefits of group meditation with guided breathing, concentration and visualization exercises. Free. Call 202-489-3619.

**Kirkin of the Tartan and Evening Prayer.** 7:30 p.m. at St. Andrew & St. Margaret of Scotland Anglican Church, 402 E. Monroe Ave. The service will include a blessing of Scottish tartans, a bagpiper, and Scottish music. It will be followed by a reception with Scottish foods and beverages. Free. Call 703-683-3343.

## TUESDAY/DEC. 1

**Open House & Mary Thonon Awards Ceremony.** 4-7 p.m. at El Paso Mexican Restaurant, 6151 Richmond Highway. Learn more about the Southeastern Fairfax Development Corporation, over complimentary drinks and appetizers. The winners of the Mary Thonon Highway Beautification Awards will be announced. Free. Visit [www.sfcd.org](http://www.sfcd.org) for more.

## WEDNESDAY/DEC. 2

**Movie Screening.** 6:30-9 p.m. at Duncan Branch Library, 2501 Commonwealth Ave. This is the next installment of the "Classic Screwball Comedies of the Thirties and Forties" series. Free. Call 703-746-1705 for the film title.

**Holiday Children's Magic Show.** 7-8:15 p.m. at Bishop Ireton High School, 201 Cambridge Road. Four children's magicians perform.

## art league Holiday Ceramics Sale

The Art League's Madison Annex, December 4-6, 2015

Purchase one-of-a-kind ceramic vessels & sculptures created by students & associates of The Art League. These handmade creations by more than 30 artists are perfect for holiday gift giving.

### Location:

The Art League's Madison Annex  
305 Madison Street  
Old Town Alexandria, VA

### Hours:

Friday, December 4: 12:00 noon-9:00 pm  
Artfête holiday party, 6:00-9:00 pm!  
Saturday, December 5: 10:00 am-6:00 pm  
Sunday, December 6: 12:00 noon-5:00 pm

### Information:

[theartleague.org@theartleague](mailto:theartleague.org@theartleague)



Ring in the holiday season with a return of the classic by Charles Dickens. A must see for the entire family.

SHOW DATES:  
December 4-19  
2015



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# ENTERTAINMENT

Children and attending adults can bring a toy (preferred) or canned food item to be donated to the Alexandria Citadel of the Salvation Army. Free. Contact Danny Selnick at 703-347-5540 or [daniel.selnick@yahoo.com](mailto:daniel.selnick@yahoo.com).

## THURSDAY-SATURDAY/DEC. 3-5

**"The Nutcracker."** 7 p.m. on Friday and Thursday, 1 p.m. and 7 p.m. on Saturday at the Richard J. Ernst Community Cultural Center, 8333 Little River Turnpike, Annandale. Metropolitan School of the Arts of Alexandria and Lorton, presents a classic performance of Clara and her Nutcracker in a journey from her home through the Land of Snow and into the Land of Sweets. Tickets are \$27 for adults and \$21 for seniors and students. Visit [www.metropolitanarts.org](http://www.metropolitanarts.org).

## DEC. 3-5, DEC. 7-8

**"Snow Day."** 10:30 a.m. on Dec. 3, 4, 7, and 8; 10 a.m. and 11:30 a.m. on Dec. 5 at The Lab Theatre at Convergence, 1819 N. Quaker Lane. Arts on the Horizon will present "Snow Day" about a young girl's first snow. This play is nonverbal and will feature live music. Tickets are \$9. Visit [www.artsonthehorizon.org](http://www.artsonthehorizon.org).

## FRIDAY-SUNDAY/DEC. 4-6

**Artfête.** Various times at The Art League's Madison Annex, 305 Madison St. The Art League hosts an annual art celebration and open house featuring exhibits, live music, artist demonstrations, and refreshments, as well as a weekend-long ceramics and jewelry sale of handmade wares by Art League

students and associates. Free. Visit [www.theartleague.org](http://www.theartleague.org).

**Scottish Christmas Walk Weekend & Parade.** Various times throughout Old Town. In 1749, the City of Alexandria was officially established by three Scottish merchants and named after its original founder, John Alexander, also of Scottish descent. The weekend celebrates Alexandria's heritage with a parade, a taste of Scotland event, holiday marketplace and more. Visit [www.campagnacenter.org/scottishwalkweekend](http://www.campagnacenter.org/scottishwalkweekend).

## DEC. 4-19

**"A Christmas Carol."** 8 p.m. Thursday-Friday, 3 p.m. and 6 p.m. Saturday-Sunday. The Little Theatre of Alexandria performs the classic Victorian tale of Ebenezer Scrooge who travels with ghostly guides through Christmas past, present and future to find the true meaning of the holidays. Tickets are \$15. Visit [www.thelittletheatre.com](http://www.thelittletheatre.com).

## DEC. 4-20

**Del Ray Artisans Holiday Market.** Various times at Del Ray Artisans, 2704 Mount Vernon Ave. Del Ray's annual Holiday Market offers handmade fine arts and crafts from local artists (including pottery/ceramics, photography, jewelry, fiber, paper crafts and glass). Find different artists each weekend. Free to attend. Visit [www.thedelrayartisans.org/holidaymarket](http://www.thedelrayartisans.org/holidaymarket).

## DEC. 4-23

**Alexandria's Holiday Market.** Various Times at John Carlyle

Square, 300 John Carlyle St. Visitors can enjoy live entertainment, traditional European food and sweets, wine and beer, while shopping for arts and crafts. Free. Visit [www.alexandriaholidaymarket.com](http://www.alexandriaholidaymarket.com).

## SATURDAY/DEC. 5

**Photos with Santa.** 10 a.m.-2 p.m. at @home Real Estate, 111 S. Alfred St. Families are invited for photos with Santa and hot cocoa. Free. Visit [www.athomedcmetro.com](http://www.athomedcmetro.com) for more.

## Book Sale and "New Look" Open House.

10 a.m.-4 p.m. at The Barrett Branch of the Alexandria Library, 717 Queen St. Hundreds of gently used books, cds, and dvds will be available for purchase. All ages can make a holiday card for a retired veteran (supplies provided) and listen to the G.W. Middle School Choir. Free. Call 703-746-1713 for more.

**A Soldiers' Christmas at Carlyle House.** 1-4 p.m. at Carlyle House, 121 N. Fairfax St. The "Soldiers' Christmas" event will feature re-enactors from the First Virginia Regiment, who will highlight colonial life in Alexandria during the holidays at the time of the American Revolution. Free, \$1 suggested donations. Visit [www.carlylehouse.org](http://www.carlylehouse.org).

## Ornament Decorating Workshop.

1-4 p.m. at the Alexandria Archaeology Museum, 105 N. Union St. Decorate and take home artifact-

shaped ornaments. Free. Visit [www.torpedofactory.org](http://www.torpedofactory.org).

## Holiday Festival: "Take a Walk in the Woods."

4-9 p.m. at the Torpedo Factory Art Center, 105 N. Union St. More than 140 artists will keep their studios open late for patrons to shop. The Alexandria Choral Society and the Braddock Brass Quintet will perform. Santa Claus will visit. Free. Visit [www.torpedofactory.org](http://www.torpedofactory.org).

**16th Annual Alexandria Holiday Boat Parade of Lights.** 5:30 p.m. at Alexandria's waterfront at the foot of Cameron Street near the Torpedo Factory Art Center, 105 N. Union St. Dozens of illuminated boats cruise the Potomac River at the historic waterfront, led by Alexandria's

fireboat The Vigilant and Washington, D.C.'s fireboat John Glenn. DC media personality Tommy McFly of 94.7 Fresh FM will be the parade announcer. At the marina before and after the parade, visit the "Holiday Festival: Take a Walk in the Woods" at the Torpedo Factory Art Center to find live music and holiday shopping at open studios. Free. Visit [www.visitalexandriava.com/holidays](http://www.visitalexandriava.com/holidays).

**Holiday on the Avenue.** 6 p.m. at Del Ray Farmers Market. Take a stroll down Mount Vernon Avenue and see the "luminarias." Free. Visit [www.visitdelray.com](http://www.visitdelray.com).

**John Gorka.** 7:30 p.m. at The Birchmere, 3701 Mount Vernon Ave. Folk musician John Gorka is touring in support of his 12th studio album

## 'True Colors: Like a Rainbow'

In "True Colors: Like a Rainbow" Del Ray Artisans interpret colors from the rainbow. "True Colors" will be on display in the Del Ray Artisans Gallery Jan. 8-30. The opening reception will be held on Friday, Jan. 8, 6-9 p.m. Admission to both the exhibit and reception is free. Visit [www.thedelrayartisans.org](http://www.thedelrayartisans.org) for more.



**"True Colors Shining Through," Elizabeth Guerry Mead**



## European Christmas at PATINA

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All are welcome to attend this FREE celebration!

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**El Paso Mexican Restaurant**  
(6151 Richmond Highway, Alexandria, VA)

**RSVP: [ow.ly/TLNa3](http://ow.ly/TLNa3)**



A  
**Mount Vernon Gazette**  
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# ENTERTAINMENT



PHOTO BY KEVIN LANCAN

Folk/rock band **Carbon Leaf** will celebrate the release of their new album “**Love Loss Hope Repeat Reneaux**,” a complete re-recording of a 2006 album titled “**Love Loss Hope Repeat**” on Dec. 17-18 at 7:30 p.m. at the Birchmere Music Hall, 2701 Mount Vernon Ave. Visit [www.birchmere.com](http://www.birchmere.com) for more.

“Bright Side of Down.” Tickets are \$35, \$10 for students. Visit [www.birchmere.com](http://www.birchmere.com) for more.

## SATURDAY-SUNDAY/DEC. 5-6

**Christmas Tree Sale.** 7 a.m.-5 p.m. at 2911 Cameron Mills Road. Find 4-13 foot fresh-cut Fir trees. Trees priced \$35-175. Cal 304-703-1350.

## SUNDAY/DEC. 6

**Breakfast With Santa.** 10:30 a.m. and 1 p.m. at Hotel Monaco, 480 King St. Breakfast with Santa features the Metropolitan School of the Arts, of Alexandria and Lorton, Frosty Follies show. Watch a Broadway-style revue, get pictures with the cast, and eat brunch with Santa. Tickets are \$45 for adults and \$35 for ages 9 and younger. Visit [www.metropolitanarts.org](http://www.metropolitanarts.org).

**Del Ray Studio and Sale Show.** 12-6 p.m. at Studio of Del Ray Arts, 8 East Howell Ave. Find carved/turned wood creations, jewelry, pottery, fiberwork, paintings, and more. Free. Email [slallypottery@gmail.com](mailto:slallypottery@gmail.com) for more.

**Lessons and Carols.** 4:30 p.m. at Virginia Theological Seminary, 3737 Seminary Road. The public is invited to the annual Lessons and Carols with the Awarding of the Dean's Cross for Servant Leadership in Church and Society. Free. Visit [www.vts.edu/chapel](http://www.vts.edu/chapel).

## MONDAY/DEC. 7

**Dance Class: The Art of Ballroom Dance.** 7-7:45 p.m. class and 7:45-8:30 p.m. dancing at The Athenaeum, 201 Prince St. Ballroom dance professional Gary Stephans teaches the Fox Trot, Waltz, Tango, Swing, Salsa, Meringue, Rumba, Cha-Cha, and Samba. Tickets are \$15. Contact [garystephans@me.com](mailto:garystephans@me.com).

## TUESDAY/DEC. 8

**Handmade Holiday Card Making.** 7-8:30 p.m. at Beatley Central Library, 5005 Duke St. Learn card-making techniques. Free. Call 703-746-1754.

**Bell's Beer Dinner.** 7-10 p.m. at Union Street Public House, 121 S

Union St. Find a special menu paired with beer from Bell's Brewery. Tickets are \$65. Visit [www.unionstreetpublichouse.com](http://www.unionstreetpublichouse.com).

**FOURPLAY: Bob James, Nathan East, Chuck Loeb, and Harvey Mason.** 7:30 p.m. at The Birchmere Music Hall, 3701 Mount Vernon Ave. Bob James and Nathan East celebrate the release of “The New Cool” with band members. Tickets are \$55. Visit [www.birchmere.com](http://www.birchmere.com) for more.

## WEDNESDAY/DEC. 9

**Parent-Child Music Class.** 10:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. at Mount Vernon Presbyterian Church, 2001 Sherwood Hall Lane. Accelerando Music is offering a free parent-child music class at the MOMS Club of Alexandria South monthly meeting. MOMS Club of Alexandria South serves at-home parents as well as parents who work part-time or have home-based businesses and who reside in zip codes 22303, 22306 and 22307. Free. Email [Southalexmomms@yahoo.com](mailto:Southalexmomms@yahoo.com) or [visitsouthalexandriamommsclub.webs.com](http://visitsouthalexandriamommsclub.webs.com).

**“A Christmas Carol.”** 6:30 p.m. reception, 8 p.m. performance at Little Theatre of Alexandria, 600 Wolfe St. Attend a fundraising performance of “A Christmas Carol” complete with a visit from Santa Claus. Proceeds benefit Gadsby's Tavern Museum. Tickets are \$25. Visit [www.gadsbystavernmuseum.us](http://www.gadsbystavernmuseum.us).

**“The Historical Impact of Military Chaplains in Shaping the Ethical Climate.”** 7:30 p.m. at Church of St. Andrew and St. Margaret, 402 E. Monroe St. The Rev. John Weatherly will explore the roles of armed forces chaplains before, during and after the Civil War, including the foundation of the Chaplain Corps. Free. Call 703-963-9616 for more.

## THURSDAY/DEC. 10

**All That Glows.** 7 p.m. at Woodlawn, 9000 Richmond Highway. The Woodlawn Council invites the public to a holiday open house with a “reimagined” 19th century menu. Tickets are \$200. Visit [www.eventbrite.com/e/all-that-glows-tickets-19335619358](http://www.eventbrite.com/e/all-that-glows-tickets-19335619358).

## THURSDAY/DEC. 10-13

**“A Stable Christmas.”** Various times at First Baptist Church Alexandria, 2932 King St. Join the cast, chorus, and orchestra of First Baptist Church of Alexandria's 2015 production of the Living Christmas Tree, “A Stable Christmas.” The production features traditional and contemporary holiday music, a 25-foot Christmas tree filled with 110+ singers and 50,000+ synchronized lights and the story of Jim and Dot, as they begin their lives together. Tickets are \$7 each plus a \$1 service charge per transaction. Visit [www.fbcalexandria.org](http://www.fbcalexandria.org).

## SATURDAY/DEC. 12

**Breakfast with Santa.** 8:30 a.m.-10:30 a.m. at Mount Vernon High School, 8515 Old Mount Vernon Road. Eat a pancake breakfast, make crafts, and play games. \$5 per person, families of 5 or more pay a flat \$25 family rate. Visit [www.facebook.com/MVHSClassof2019](http://www.facebook.com/MVHSClassof2019).

**Brunch with Santa.** 9-11:30 a.m. at The Pub by Wegmans, 7905 Hilltop Village Center Drive. Families are invited to a breakfast with a special brunch menu and a visit from Santa. Free to attend. Call 571-527-2465.

**Civil War Christmas in Camp at Fort Ward.** 12-4 p.m. at Fort Ward Museum & Historic Site, 4301 W. Braddock Road. Visitors meet a Civil War-era Santa at this holiday event exploring how Christmas was observed during the Civil War. The program features living-history interpreters, a Victorian Christmas tree, refreshments, readings of The Night Before Christmas and a patriotic Santa Claus inspired by a Thomas Nast illustration for Harper's Weekly newspaper. Suggested donation is \$2 for adults, \$1 for children. Call 703-746-4848 or [www.fortward.org](http://www.fortward.org).

**Christmas Candlelight Service.** 5:45-8 p.m. at Alexandria Presbyterian Church, 2405 Russell Road. This service of lessons and carols will feature APC choirs, brass quintet and carol singing. Reception to follow. Free. Visit [www.alexandriapres.org](http://www.alexandriapres.org) for more.



*The Living Christmas Tree*

December 10-13, 2015

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*A Stable Christmas*

DECEMBER 10 - 13

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## SPECIAL CONNECTIONS CALENDAR

Advertising Deadlines are the previous Thursday unless noted.

## DECEMBER

12/2/2015.....Wellbeing  
12/9/2015...Holiday Entertainment & Gift Guide II  
12/9/2015..HomeLifeStyle; Home for the Holidays  
12/16/2015.....A+ Camps & Schools; Holiday Entertainment & Gifts Pages  
12/23/2015.....Special Issue – Safe for the Holidays  
12/30/2015.....Children's Connection

## JANUARY

1/6/2016.....Wellbeing, Renewal, Resolutions  
1/13/2016.....HomeLifeStyle  
*Martin Luther King Jr. Day is Jan. 18*  
1/20/2016.....A+ Camps & Schools  
1/27/2016.....Community Guide  
1/27/2016.....Winter Fun, Food, Arts & Entertainment; Valentine's Preview

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West Potomac senior guard Ozzie Opoku, right, earned second-team All-Conference 7 honors this season.



West Potomac junior running back Justine Annan earned second-team All-Conference 7 honors in 2015.

PHOTOS BY RICHARD MAPLE

## WP Football Suffers Playoff Loss to South County

### Lineman Opoku, RB Annan discuss semifinals, other teams and next season.

The West Potomac football program's best season since 2011 ended with a 42-9 loss at South County on Nov. 20 in the 6A North region quarterfinals.

The No. 9 seed Wolverines ended a three-year postseason victory drought with a 40-19 win over No. 8 West Springfield in the opening round on Nov. 13, but West Potomac became the latest team to fall short against top seed South County, which improved to 12-0.

The Wolverines, led by head coach Jeremiah Ross, ended the season with an 8-4 record, including 7-3 in the regular season. West Potomac lost twice to South County, once to No. 2 seed Lake Braddock, and once against No. 8 seed West Springfield.

On Friday, West Potomac sophomore running back Daiimon Cleveland carried 22 times for 125 yards against South County,

according to stats on maxpreps.com. Cleveland, a second-team All-Conference 7 selection as an all-purpose offensive player, finished the season with 1,155 yards and 20 touchdowns on the ground, and 12 receptions for 132 yards and a score.

Cleveland, junior running back Justine Annan (second team all-conference), junior quarterback Mark Ellis (second team), and junior receivers Brandan Lisenby (second team) and Khalil Williams-Diggins (second team) should provide West Potomac with some offensive weapons next season.

Annan rushed for 780 yards and 11 touchdowns this season. Ellis completed 51 percent of his passes for 2,242 yards and 22 touchdowns, with seven interceptions.

West Potomac's top skill-position loss will be CJ Burch, a first-team all-conference selection at receiver.

While the Wolverines will return some

valuable skill position players, West Potomac will need to replace four of five starting offensive lineman. The team will graduate left tackle Jordan Burgess (first team all-conference), left guard John Leon (second team), right guard Ozzie Opoku (second team) and right tackle Tay Diggs. The team will also graduate tight end Grant Monson, a second-team selection.

On defense, West Potomac will lose Monson, a first-team end, Horace Johnson, a first-team linebacker, lineman Diggs (second team), linebackers Kreshawn Dikes (second team) and Antoine Grice (second team all-around), and defensive back Okrah Opoku (second team).

Annan and Ozzie Opoku recently participated in a Q&A with The Gazette, discussing West Potomac's accomplishments this season and their plans for Thanksgiving.

**Q: Your season ended last week with a 42-9 loss to South County in the region quarterfinals. What makes the Stallions such a strong**

**team?**

Annan: They come off the ball hard and play aggressively. They don't make very many mistakes and they execute well.

Opoku: They have strong leadership, and strong up front, and they go fast and execute on a high level.

**Q: The region semifinals are South County/Robinson and Lake Braddock/Westfield. You faced two of those teams this season. Which teams do you think will win this weekend?**

Annan: Those are going to be some very good games. Whoever wants it more will win.

Opoku: South County, because of their interior, and I think Westfield is going to pull this one.

**Q: Which team do you think will win the region?**

Annan: I think the team that executes the best and turns the ball over the least will win the region.

Opoku: South County.

**Q: West Potomac went 7-3 during the regular season and won a playoff game. What are your thoughts about what the team accomplished this season?**

Annan: I'm very proud of myself and my teammates. It was no easy feat to accomplish. Next year I hope we go even further and I think we earned the success we had.

Opoku: [We put] West Po back on the map, and showed the community West Po football is back and out coach is one of the best in the region.

**Q: Justine, the program will return several talented players next season, including you, Daiimon Cleveland and quarterback Mark Ellis. How do you feel about West Potomac football in 2016?**

Annan: Our whole team is very talented. I have a lot of faith in my guys and they have a lot of faith in me as well. 2016 should be a good year for us.

— JON ROETMAN



PHOTO BY RICHARD MAPLE

### Sports Banquet

Pictured are the winners from West Potomac High School's fall of 2015 sports banquet.



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## 21 Announcements

**ABC LICENSE**  
Walkers Grille, LLC trading as Walkers Grille, 6909 Metro Park Dr., Alexandria, VA 22310. The above establishment is applying to the VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGE CONTROL (ABC) for a Wine and Beer on and off premises license to sell or manufacture alcoholic beverages. Usama Misleh, Member  
NOTE: Objections to the issuance of this license must be submitted to ABC no later than 30 days from the publishing date of the first of two required newspaper legal notices. Objections should be registered at [www.abc.virginia.gov](http://www.abc.virginia.gov) or 800-552-3200.

## 21 Announcements

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

## 21 Announcements

**ABC LICENSE**  
Braddock Place Deli, LLC trading as Sophias Cafe, 1320 Braddock Pl., Alexandria, VA 22314. The above establishment is applying to the VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGE CONTROL (ABC) for a Wine and Beer On and Off Premises license to sell or manufacture alcoholic beverages. Usama Misleh, Member  
NOTE: Objections to the issuance of this license must be submitted to ABC no later than 30 days from the publishing date of the first of two required newspaper legal notices. Objections should be registered at [www.abc.virginia.gov](http://www.abc.virginia.gov) or 800-552-3200.

## 21 Announcements

**Public Notice Availability of a Supplemental Environmental Assessment (SEA) and Draft Finding of No Significant Impact (FNSI) for the Fort Belvoir Residential Communities, Fort Belvoir, Virginia**  
The U.S. Army has prepared a SEA that evaluates the construction of new family housing and related amenities with a proposed 102 housing units including recreation areas and related facilities on approximately 53.5 acres known as the Woodlawn East/Berman Tract at Fort Belvoir. The proposed residential community is located on North Post east of Woodlawn Village of Fort Belvoir. Implementation of the proposed action is not expected to result in significant environmental impacts; therefore, preparation of an environmental impact statement is not required in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act. Copies of the EA and draft FNSI are available for review and comment at the following libraries: Fort Belvoir Van Noy Library, Lorton Branch, Sherwood Regional Branch, and Kingstowne Branch. The documents are also available at:  
[http://www.belvoir.army.mil/envirodocssection2\\_ArmyRCI.asp](http://www.belvoir.army.mil/envirodocssection2_ArmyRCI.asp). Comments on the EA and draft FNSI should be submitted to Mr. Felix M. Mariani, Fort Belvoir DPW Environmental and Natural Resources Division, Building 1442, 9430 Jackson Loop, Fort Belvoir, VA 22060, or [usarmy.belvoir.imcom-atlantic.mbx.enrd@mail.mil](mailto:usarmy.belvoir.imcom-atlantic.mbx.enrd@mail.mil). Comments must be received no later than 30 days after publication of this Notice of Availability.

The biggest things are always  
the easiest to do because there  
is no competition.  
-William Van Horne

## 21 Announcements

**OBITUARY**  
**Alma Deane MacConomy, 96**, retired editor and head of book publishing at the National Wildlife Federation, died November 13, 2015 in Alexandria, VA. She taught one-room country schools in Kansas from age 16 to 19, then worked her way through Kansas State University and earned a degree in journalism.

Mrs. MacConomy came to Washington in 1944 as a reporter covering the Senate for Congressional Intelligence. Later she held public relations posts with the American National Red Cross, American Forest Products Industries, and the Campfire Girls.

As a free lance writer following her marriage to Edward N. MacConomy in 1957, she launched the Merry Go Round, a weekly children's calendar of events, now known as the Capital Carousel, for The Washington Post in 1966 and published a children's book, Odd Jobs in Lumbering, in 1967.

In 1970 she helped the National Wildlife Federation create the Conservation Summit, a popular nature vacation for families.

As a young woman, she was an active member of the New York Avenue Presbyterian Church in Washington, setting aside her professional career for four years to be housekeeper for the manse for Dr. Peter and Catherine Marshall during the latter's long illness. As well as research assistant to Catherine Marshall for her books Catherine Marshall's Story Bible and the novel Christy. Since 1979 she has been a member of Grace Episcopal Church in Alexandria where she served on the vestry and as chairperson of Outreach and Ordination Committees.

She is predeceased by her husband. She is survived by their son, Scott and his wife Kelly of Alexandria, granddaughter, Kiera Thompson of Boston, MA, and a grandson, Cameron of Los Angeles, CA.

The family will receive friends on Sunday, November 29th from 5-8 pm at Everly Wheatley Funeral Home, 1500 W. Braddock Rd., Alexandria, VA 22302. A service will be held on Monday, November 30th at Grace Episcopal Church, 3601 Russell Rd., Alexandria, VA. Interment will immediately follow at Ivy Hill Cemetery. Online tributes can be made at [www.everly-wheatley.com](http://www.everly-wheatley.com). Donations may be made in honor of Alma Deane to the Campagna Center in Alexandria, VA.

## 21 Announcements

**ABC LICENSE**  
EMS Food Group, LLC trading as Chickpea and Olive, 529 E. Howell Ave. Alexandria, VA 22301. The above establishment is applying to the VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGE CONTROL (ABC) for a Wine and Beer on Premises license to sell or manufacture alcoholic beverages. Erik Dorn Member/Manager  
NOTE: Objections to the issuance of this license must be submitted to ABC no later than 30 days from the publishing date of the first of two required newspaper legal notices. Objections should be registered at [www.abc.virginia.gov](http://www.abc.virginia.gov) or 800-552-3200.

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## 21 Announcements

## OBITUARY



**Margaret A. Lawler** (Nov 20, 1913-Nov 19, 2015) passed away peacefully in her sleep. She was a lifetime resident of the City of Alexandria and the only child of Nicholas (an Alexandria City Council member) and Annie Lawler. She grew up in the historic French-Lawler House at 517 S. Wash. St., which she eventually inherited from her parents. Margaret attended Trinity College in Washington, DC, where she studied foreign languages and history, receiving a Master of Arts degree in 1937. She worked for the Federal gov't her entire career. She cared for her parents, her dear friends, her church, and her cats. She travelled a good deal. Everyone who met Margaret felt like they were her best friend. She lived a prayerful life and she was very charitable, both in word and in deed. A funeral mass will be held at noon on Sat. Nov. 21 at St. Mary's Catholic Church. A private burial will take place at a later time at St. Mary's Cemetery, Alexandria, VA.

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## 21 Announcements

## LEGAL NOTICE

Notice is hereby given to members of the NY, nonprofit, American Society of Clinical Oncology, Inc., that eligible ASCO members may vote by proxy ballot from Nov. 3 to Dec. 3, 2015 to elect the President-Elect, four seats on the Board of Directors, and three seats on the Nominating Committee for service beginning on June 6, 2016. Eligible ASCO members may also vote on a proposed ASCO Bylaws amendment by proxy ballot from Nov. 3 to Dec. 3, 2015. Information about proxy ballots is available at [www.asco.org/election](http://www.asco.org/election). Completed proxy ballots will be delivered to the ASCO President or her designee for casting at a meeting to be held on Dec. 8, 2015, 9:30 AM - 10:00 AM at ASCO Headquarters, 2318 Mill Road, Suite 800, Alexandria, VA 22314. Members with questions can email [ascoelection@asco.org](mailto:ascoelection@asco.org) or call 571-483-1316.

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## 21 Announcements

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## 21 Announcements

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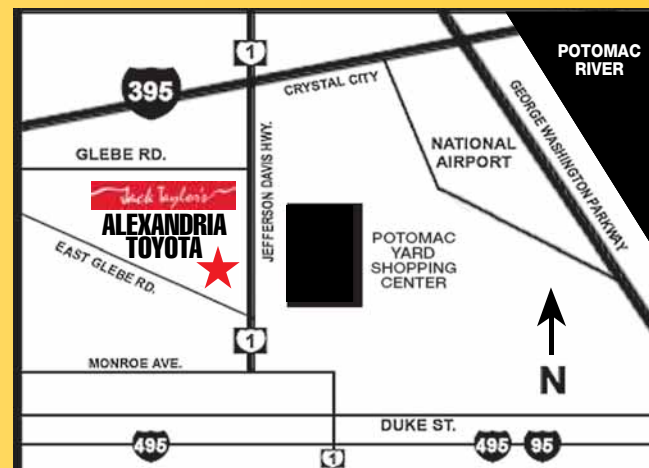


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