



PHOTOS BY NICHOLAS LINDSEY/THE GAZETTE

Paying Tribute on Veterans Day
Active duty and retired military parents accompanied Waynewood Elementary School students in raising the flag and planting American flags in the front lawn of the school on Veterans Day. Many students shook hands with the military parents thanking them for their service.

Day of Service

Christian Relief Services partners with Accenture and Operation Renewed Hope Foundation.

BY TIM PETERSON
THE GAZETTE

More than a dozen volunteers from the consulting firm Accenture spent the afternoon on Nov. 11, Veterans Day, improving the grounds at Huntington Gardens residential community.

The effort was a “Day of Service” project organized together with Operation Renewed Hope Foundation, an Alexandria-based non-profit organization that supports homeless veterans.

Gay Shane of Franconia is the foundation board’s Housing and Veterans Services Committee chair. “They’ve been policing and cleaning up for three and a half hours,” Shane said. “They do a wonderful job — they don’t stop until they’re done.”

The volunteers picked up trash, did some planting and spread soil and mulch around plants and in the playground area.

Shane has worked with Accenture volunteers on four previous projects, and immediately thought of them when she heard about the Huntington Gardens purchase by another Alexandria-based non-profit — Christian Relief Services — which filled the 113 units with low-income renters.

CRS CEO Brian Krizek explained they bought the property in September of this year, taking advantage of a \$12.6 million mortgage from Federal Housing Administration-Housing Urban Development

SEE VOLUNTEERS, PAGE 3



Christian Relief Services rents out all the Huntington Gardens units to people making no more than 60 percent of the area’s median household income. Twenty-eight of those are specifically set aside for residents who are placed by Fairfax-based non-profit Pathway Homes.

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OPEN SUN 11/20, 2-4



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Wellington Heights \$995,000

Exceptional 4-bedroom, 3-bath custom home on a cul-de-sac in Waynewood E.S. district. Move-in ready "Holiday House" features half-acre landscaped gardens, gazebo, spa tub, stone patio off spacious master suite. Enormous 2-car garage & first-floor family room. 7614 Holiday Dr.
Robin Arnold 703.966.5457
www.robinarnoldsells.com

OPEN SUN 11/20, 2-4



Alexandria \$599,000

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www.suedickersonrealtor.com

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Waynewood \$599,950

Great home, great street, double carport! Updated kitchen and baths, wood floors, gas fireplace, sunroom overlooks "park-like" yard, deck and brick patio! New HVAC system, water heater, windows replaced & newer roof. Waynewood school. 915 Croton Drive
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OPEN SUN 11/20, 2-4



Old Town \$534,900

Two-bedroom townhouse with loft in wonderful Arch Hall! All brick, three stories, fireplace, and a private patio. Stainless and stone kitchen, and newly refinished hardwood floors. 655 S Columbus Street

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www.CrouchRealtyGroup.com

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Alexandria \$1,200,000

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Betty Mallon 703.989.8548
www.BettyMallon.com



Alexandria \$525,000

4-bedroom, 2.5-bath colonial backing to private parkland in Bush Hill Woods. Spacious & bright layout. Large eat-in kitchen opens to family room with fireplace. Separate dining & living room. Hardwood floors. Unfinished basement. Quiet cul-de-sac location.
Jen Walker 703.675.1566
www.JenWalker.com



Old Town \$1,995,000

Backyard Boats corner townhouse features an interior elevator to all floors, is richly appointed with detailed moldings, high ceilings, hardwood floors, a paneled library and 2 gas fireplaces. The stainless-granite kitchen and open family room is a great gathering place. Private patio and 2-car attached garage.

Babs Beckwith 703.627.5421
www.BabsBeckwith.com

OPEN SUN 11/20, 1-4



Old Town \$1,224,000

Nestled in the heart of Old Town this gracious Cameron Mews end-unit home, located peacefully in the center of the

Mews, offers 2,900 finished square feet, 4 bedrooms, 3 full and 2 half baths, a walled garden, 2 fireplaces, and 1 off-street parking space. 112 Cameron Street

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OPEN SUN 11/20, 1-4



Old Town \$849,999

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townhouse with gorgeous kitchen, tall ceilings, wood floors, large windows, tons of sunlight, fireplace, deck off kitchen, 2-car garage, and extra parking. It's a 10! 1113 N Royal Street
Delaine Campbell 703.299.0030
www.DelaineSells.com

OPEN SUN 11/20, 2-4



Alexandria \$750,000

Wonderfully updated end-unit townhouse just blocks from 2 Metro stations. Gorgeous hardwoods on the main level, stainless steel appli-

ances and granite counters. New roof, windows and all baths, lighting and fixtures updated. 3 bedrooms, 2 full & 2 half baths with room on the lower level for a 4th bedroom. 19 W Chapman St.
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Volunteers Beautify Huntington Gardens Complex

FROM PAGE 1

and a \$5.65 million affordable housing mortgage from Fairfax County.

Then CRS added \$1.5 million in equity from their own organization's supporters.

"Donations give a charity leverage that individuals would never have," Krizek's brother Paul said. "Some people say, 'Wouldn't it be better if I give \$20 to a homeless person,' but if everyone gives \$20 to us, we can actually house someone, a family."

Paul Krizek is a delegate to the Virginia General Assembly representing the 44th District and serves as CRS executive director and general counsel.

CRS rents out all the units to people making no more than 60 percent of the area's median household income, the brothers said.

Twenty-eight of those are specifically set aside for residents who are placed by Fairfax-based non-profit Pathway Homes.

Pathway supports adults with serious mental illness and other disabilities, including homeless individuals and people making even less than 60 percent MHI.

Most of the rest, Paul Krizek said, are referrals from other charities.

Especially with nearby access to the Metro's Yellow Line and possible expansion of Metro south along the Route 1 corridor, housing costs could become much less affordable than they already are.

"This would be like rent control for 35 years," Paul Krizek said of the housing being offered at Huntington Gardens. "At the very least, 113 units are going to be affordable housing right near a Metro."

Presently all but a few of the Gardens' mostly one- and two-bedroom units are filled.

"Housing that people can afford is so scarce," Shane said. "Some people work two jobs, 80 hours a week, and still can't afford to pay rent on a place. This gives them a hand up, not a hand out."

"For this to be a place where people feel safe, and clean, it makes them proud to tell people where they live," she continued. "It gives hope to the community."

Paul Krizek acknowledged there's an understandable element of surrounding community members having concerns about low-income renters living next-door.

"They're people too," Paul Krizek said, "hard-working people who care about the community they live in. Everyone deserves a place to live."

At the same time, he said, "Our



PHOTOS BY TIM PETERSON/THE GAZETTE

More than a dozen volunteers from the consulting firm Accenture spent the afternoon on Nov. 11, Veterans Day, improving the grounds at Huntington Gardens residential community.

goal is to provide housing but don't do it at expense to community. We want to be responsive and supportive of the community, and active in it. They know they can

come here and call us any time."

CRS owns 98 single units—condos, townhouses and single family homes — around Fairfax County that it similarly rents out

to low income tenants.

"We've been going to community association meetings and have a good dialogue with them," Paul Krizek said.



On Veterans Day, volunteers from Accenture picked up trash, did some planting and spread mulch around plants and in the playground area.



Volunteers from consulting firm Accenture Kyle Malik of Arlington (left) and Huyen Le of Fredericksburg (right) plant and spread soil at Huntington Gardens affordable housing complex on Veterans Day.



Accenture volunteers Thomas Huggins of Falls Church (left) and Sumner Shambaugh of Fairfax (right) spread and pat down soil at Huntington Gardens on Veterans Day.

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PRICE IMPROVEMENT



Alexandria \$2,995,000

310 Mansion Dr Stunning estate on coveted Mansion Drive. This extraordinary residence features six bedrooms, five full bathrooms, two powder rooms, a grand kitchen, a main level bedroom suite and an expansive lower level. This gorgeous home is ideal for large scale entertaining. This exquisite property features private tranquil grounds with a waterfall and koi pond, a large terrace with outdoor kitchen and custom built jacuzzi surrounded by a beautiful variety of professionally landscape designed gardens.

Bobi Bomar - 703.927.2213 Ellen Patrick - 703.328.9430

UNDER CONTRACT



Alexandria \$929,900

414 Pitt Mews Captivating 3 Bd 3.5 Ba Pitt Mews End TH w/\$105k+ upgrades & GARAGE...Gourmet kitchen incl Wolf 5-burner cooktop & hood; Miele D/W, window seat...Master Bedroom w/exposed beams & huge, sunny loft....super upgraded baths....wood burning FP....1 Block King St., 4 Blks to river. Call listing agent to view.

Philip G. Matyas - 571.332.0963

NEW LISTING



OPEN SUNDAY

Old Town \$925,000

422 Queen St Historic placqued Old Town charmer (Circa 1820) in an amazing location. Semi-detached with 2 sides of windows 2/3 Bedrooms, 2 Baths, Updated kitchen, Off-street Parking for 1 car, lovely private garden and patio.

Leslie Atkinson - 703.967.1471

PRICE REDUCTION



Old Town 899,000

911 Cameron St Historic circa 1820 plaqued 2 bedroom, 2 bath semi-detached home with expansive gardens. Living room tall ceilings, beautiful moldings and a fireplace. Formal dining room and adjacent kitchen with brick floors, and an oversize window looking out to the private garden. Upper level with 2 bedrooms and a sitting room. Prime location just 1 block off of King Street!

**Christine Garner
703.587.4855**

First Open Sunday 1-4pm



Old Town

\$892,500

701 Arch Hall Lane Spacious & bright, this NV Homes end townhome features 4 bedrooms/3 baths (including in-law/guest suite w/ full bath on lower level); 2 car garage; updated kitchen & new HVAC; fireplace; wood on main level. In quiet enclave close to Metro, Parkway, shops & restaurants. Tour @ 701ArchHallLn.com.

**Cindy Baggett 703.593.1418
Leslie Rodriguez 703.400.3010**

OPEN NOVEMBER 20



Old Town Yates Gardens

\$835,000

924 S. St. Asaph You'll love this charming stone front townhouse in the southeast quadrant. Two large BRs, 2 full baths, finished lower level, updated kitchen, two FPs. The bonus is a stunning FR addition with built-ins, 11 foot ceilings and French doors to a deck and private brick patio. Open 2-4, Sunday.

**Mary Hurlbut
& Michael Seith
703.980.9595**



Old Town

\$799,900

116 Wolfe St Stylish renovation to this c. 1790 historic plaqued home. Excellent location steps to King Street & riverfront. 4 fully finished levels + charming patio garden.

**Diann Hicks Carlson
703.628.2440**

Open Sunday 1-4pm



PRICE IMPROVEMENT

Alexandria \$769,900

418 E. Luray Beautifully renovated brick colonial, just a short stroll to Braddock Rd Metro features 3 bedrooms and 2 full bathrooms. Stunning kitchen offers open floor plan with breakfast bar, stainless steel appliances and granite counter tops. Fabulous sunroom addition makes a perfect home office or family room. Finished lower level, walkout to fully fenced backyard with spacious deck for entertaining and convenient off-street parking. www.HomesofAlexandria.com

Bobi Bomar - 703.927.2213 Ellen Patrick - 703.328.9430



Old Town

\$668,000

304 South Fairfax St. Charming in-town cottage, well located, with 2 bedrooms, original plank floors, fireplace and patio garden. Renovated kitchen/bath.

**Diann Hicks
Carlson
703.628.2440**



Park Ridge \$619,000

1659 Francis Hammond Pkwy Price, Location, and Charm, this 3 bedroom, 2 bath brick home with 2 finished levels and an attached garage has it all! Expanded with a light filled dining room and sitting room addition that is open to the kitchen. Living room with fireplace, finished lower level with recreation room, full bath and storage. Large fenced yard with brick patio. Only 3 blocks to MacArthur Elementary and 1.2 miles to the King St. Metro.

Christine Garner - 703.587.4855



Alexandria \$515,000

6808 Derrell Ct Wonderful Single Family Brick Home with Large Fenced Yard. 3 large Bedrooms, 2 Baths Hardwood Floors, 2 Wood Burning Fireplaces and a Great All Weather Sun Porch Addition.

Mary Smith - 703-626-9207

NEW LISTING



Open Sunday 2-4pm

Alexandria \$395,000

220 Duncan Ave #A Fabulous Del Ray condo with private first floor porch! Beautifully updated 2 bed condo with new kitchen, new bath, laminate floors in living spaces, carpet in both bedrooms. Private entrance on this first floor unit. Off street parking. Shared washer/dryer in basement. Storage Unit. Close to Braddock Road Metro, DC, The Avenue.

Michelle Zelsman - 202.390.8714

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NEWS

Suspect Sought in Robbery

Fairfax County Police responded to a report of a commercial armed robbery in the 5900 block of North Kings Highway on Monday, Nov. 14.

Police spokesman Master Police Officer Don Gotthardt said the suspect entered the New China Taste restaurant, displayed a handgun, demanded money and left with an undisclosed amount of cash.

CRIME REPORT

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

NOV. 15

LARCENIES

8400 block of Frye Road, beer from business
7400 block of Mount Vernon Square Center, cash from business
2500 block of Parkers Lane, license plate from vehicle
8000 block of Richmond Highway, wallet from business
8600 block of Richmond Highway, merchandise from business

NOV. 14

LARCENIES

1600 block of Belle View Boulevard, merchandise from business
2300 block of Huntington Avenue, beer from business
6100 block of North Kings Highway, merchandise from business
7700 block of Richmond Highway, merchandise from business
7900 block of Richmond Highway, credit

There were no injuries and the crime is under investigation, Gotthardt said.

Police described the suspect as a male African American in his 30s, six-foot tall, around 200 pounds and wearing a black jacket and pants. They said it's possible he was last seen driving a silver sedan.

— TIM PETERSON

Gang Member Convicted in 'Cold Case' Murder



Wilkins

In 2013, detectives from the Major Crimes Division, Cold Case Squad, reviewed the murder case of 19-year-old Cristian Aranzana Vasquez from 2004 and were able to develop new evidence against a suspect, 23-year-old Cory Wilkins, of Woodbridge.

On Wednesday, July 16, 2015, a Multi-Jurisdictional Grand Jury returned indictments for Wilkins, charging murder and use of a firearm in the commission of a felony. That same day, Wilkins was arrested at his home by members of the Capital Area Regional Fugitive Task Force and Cold Case detectives.

On Tuesday, Nov. 1, 2016, Cory Wilkins was convicted of first degree murder and use of a firearm in the commission of a murder. The jury recommended a sentence of 22 years in prison for the murder and three years for the firearm charge. Formal sentencing is scheduled for Feb. 24, 2017.

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w/patio, fire pit, shed. Located in Waynewood Elementary district, & short walk to Hollin Hall shopping center.



Alex/Wessington \$679,900
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& Din rms w/fireplace, wall of windows brings outdoors inside - Garage & Deck -Community boat ramp, swimming pool, & walking trails. Minutes to Old Town (N) and Ft. Belvoir (S).



**NEW
LISTING**

Alex/Sequoyah \$162,500
3879 El Camino Place
Lovely, well maintained, 2 bedroom & 1 bath, w/open floor plan-Large living room w/raised fireplace & sliding glass doors to front patio. Spacious kitchen w/large pantry, opens up to living room-New carpeting installed & new bathroom vanity. Master BR

has large walk-in closet - Both bedrooms have sliding glass doors that open to rear patio-Rear & front patios are fenced w/gates for your convenient access. Close to Ft. Belvoir, Old Town Alexandria.



SOLD

Alex/Riverside Ests \$492,000
3400 Ramsgate Terrace
Charming, beautiful, updated 4BR, 3BA Split on a large lot in popular Riverside Terrace - updates: Kitchen, all 3 baths, windows, doors, siding, HWH, deck, and A/C. Driveway resurfaced this month-large laundry room with lots of storage-wonderful community and commute along Potomac River to Old Town (N) 15 mins, Ntl Airport 25 mins, 30 mins to Pentagon, and 5 mins (S) to Ft. Belvoir.



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En Español:
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Thursday, 7:30 pm;
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News



Walk to Bust Cancer

Approximately 500 people participated in Walk to Bust Cancer's inaugural event on Oct. 16 at Fort Hunt Park to benefit the National Breast Center Foundation. See www.walktobustcancer.org.

From left are Dr. David Weintritt, founder of the National Breast Center Foundation; Martha Carucci, executive director of the National Breast Center Foundation; McArthur Myers, son of the late Vola Lawson; and Delia Sullivan, breast cancer survivor and photographer.



BULLETIN BOARD

Email announcements to 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.

VOLUNTEERS WANTED

AARP Foundation Tax-Aide is seeking volunteers to participate in a free, non-profit program, offered in conjunction with the IRS, that provides tax filing assistance to people of low- and middle-income, with special attention paid to those aged 60-plus. Training will be available in December and January to help taxpayers Feb. 1-April 18, 2017. Visit www.aarp.org/taxaide.

Sponsors Needed. Britepaths Family Sponsoring. Fairfax-based non-profit Britepaths (formerly Our Daily Bread) is seeking community members to sponsor families in need who live throughout the Fairfax County area. Sponsors are matched with an individual or family with demonstrated need, and may opt to provide a Thanksgiving meal, December holiday meal, and/or gifts for children under 18. Cash donations and gift cards are welcome to assist those who are not sponsored. Britepaths is expecting to have 3,000 households on its assistance list. A great family, company or group holiday service project. Register and learn more at <http://britepaths.org>. Contact 703-273-8829 or hpassist@britepaths.org.

SECOND WEDNESDAYS

Art Making as Meditation. 7-8:30 p.m. St. Aidan's Episcopal Church, 8531 Riverside Road. Art making as meditation can be an active form of contemplative practice. Each session begins with a short reading and a brief introduction to

materials. Silence for making and meditation lasts an hour followed by sharing images or insights gained through the process, if desired. Children able to participate in silence are welcome to come with a parent's quiet supervision. RSVP not necessary for attendance, but helpful for planning purposes. Call 703-360-4220, email info@centerforspiritualdeepening.org or visit www.staidanepiscopal.com/Center-for-Spiritual-Deepening.

THURSDAY/NOV. 17

AAUW Discussion "Barriers and Bias: The Status of Women in Leadership". 7 p.m. Mt. Vernon Governmental Center, 2511 Parkers Lane, American Association of University Women Mt. Vernon Branch discussion of report. Everyone will receive a free copy of the research report book. Light refreshments will be served. 7 p.m., Mt. Vernon Governmental Center, 2511 Parkers Lane, 703/360-8678, <http://mtvernon-va.aauw.net>, Free admission.

SATURDAY/NOV. 19

Survivors of Suicide Loss Day. 11 a.m.-3 p.m. at St. Mark's Episcopal Church, 6744 S. Kings Highway. The American Foundation for Suicide Prevention, is hosting International Survivors of Suicide Loss Day events worldwide. All Survivor Day gatherings will include a screening of "Life Journeys: Reclaiming Life after Loss," a new AFSP-produced Survivor Day documentary that traces the grief and healing journey that follows a suicide loss over time.

SATURDAY/DEC. 3

School Open House. 2-4 p.m. at Burgundy Farm

SEE BULLETIN BOARD, PAGE 22

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PEOPLE

Huntley Meadows Park Volunteer Wins State Award

Catherine Ledec, president of the Friends of Huntley Meadows Park (FOHMP) in Alexandria, has received this year's Distinguished Volunteer Service Award from the Virginia Recreation and Park Society (VRPS). The award to recognize dedication and contributions to the parks and/or recreation field was presented to her on Nov. 7, during the VRPS annual conference in Roanoke.

Ledec began volunteering at Huntley Meadows in summer 2003 and even met her husband through volunteering at an annual Huntley bird count. Park Manager Karen Sheffield called her "a passionate leader, advocate and friend." Longtime Huntley Meadows staffer Carolyn Gamble said, "Cathy is very knowledgeable about environmental issues in the Mount Vernon and Lee Districts."

Under her leadership, the FOHMP has advocated on behalf of the wetland park, helping to shield it from adverse impacts of activities both inside and outside of the park. She has devoted hundreds of hours to those efforts, ensuring this oasis in a rapidly urbanizing setting was safe.

Ledec also has fought for environmental protections in the park and helped celebrate the culmination of Huntley's two-decade long wetland restoration efforts. She was instrumental in the nurturing and positive direction of an active and engaged coalition of Friends groups. Recently, FOHMP hosted representatives from nearly two dozen Friends organizations that are united as the Federation of Friends with shared



Catherine Ledec

goals for the county's parks.

Ledec also works closely with Lee District Supervisor Jeff McKay. "Cathy has been an instrumental part of making Huntley Meadows Park what it is today," McKay said. "Her leadership and environmental stewardship have ensured the health and long-term safety of Lee District's crown jewel, and her work with my office has been nothing short of amazing."

The Virginia Recreation and Park Society is a private, non-profit professional organization that unites professionals, students, and interested lay persons from the field of recreation, parks and other leisure services in the Commonwealth of Virginia into one body.



Scouting for Food

PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

Cub Scout Pack 1503 participated in the annual Scouting for Food Drive the last two weekends and had a banner year. They collected 280 bags of food, an all-time high for their pack. Pack 1503 is active in the Mount Vernon area and is chartered by the Washington Mill Elementary School PTA.

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OPINION

Holidays Are for Giving

Give thanks and share locally; tens of thousands of families in Fairfax County are in need.

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

Northern Virginia is among the wealthiest areas in the country. Many if not most of us go through our daily and seasonal routines without encountering evidence of the needy families among us. More than 52,000 children who attend Fairfax County Public Schools are poor enough to receive free or subsidized meals, a significant measure of poverty. That's 28 percent of students in Fairfax County Public Schools. (Nearly 7 percent of students in FCPS live below the poverty line, a harrowing \$24,000 for a family of four.)

All of these are children who are living in families who may be on the brink of homelessness, families who must choose between medical bills, car repair, heat and food. Some of these are children who may not be sure that they will have a meal between the meals they get in school.

School holidays can bring uncertainty and hunger, a far cry from the celebrations, gifts and plenty that we associate with Thanksgiving and Christmas.

Hundreds of homeless students attend the public schools, and their needs are greater.

Many nonprofits in the county need your help to provide a holiday meal for Thanksgiving or Christmas, to provide children with gifts.

There are literally hundreds, probably thousands, of ways to give locally this season. Here are a few ideas. We will rerun this list again after Thanksgiving, so please let us know what we have missed.

— MARY KIMM.

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Where to Give Locally

❖ **United Community Ministries**, Mount Vernon, 703-768-7106, 7511 Fordson Road, Alexandria, 22306 assists low-income families and individuals living along the Route 1 Corridor, UCM provides four different housing programs as well as a Workforce Development Center to help prepare people for moving forward with their jobs. Last year, for the holidays, donations of nearly 10,000 toys, books, games, clothing, and other gifts ensured a joy-filled holiday for more than 1,200 children in 600 families. Bring all donations no later than Friday, Dec. 9, to UCM's main office at 7511 Fordson Road, Alexandria VA 22306. Weekdays from 9 a.m. - 5.30 p.m. Or donate online www.ucmagency.org. Donations of cash/checks and gift cards are also welcome. Make an online donation, or make checks payable to "UCM." Designate "Holiday Gift Room" online or in memo line on the check. For questions or if interested in organizing a Holiday Gift Room collection drive, email Laurel Cunnane, holiday coordinator, Laurel.Cunnane@ucm.org or call 571-255-8974.

❖ **Good Shepherd Housing and Family Services**, 8305-17B Richmond Highway, PO Box 15096, Alexandria, VA, 22039. 703-768-9419, <http://www.goodhousing.org/> The mission of Good

Shepherd Housing (GSH) is to reduce homelessness, increase community support, and promote self-sufficiency. GSH housing manages more than 70 housing units.

❖ **Boys and Girls Clubs of Greater Washington Fairfax Area** operates clubs in two of the neediest areas of the county, Culmore and the Route 1 corridor, focusing on character and academic success. www.bgcgw.org/fairfax

❖ **Christian Relief Services**, 8301 Richmond Highway, Suite 900, Alexandria, VA 22309, 703-317-9086, 703-317-9690 <http://christianrelief.org/>

❖ **Friends of Guest House Northern Virginia** offers structure, supervision, support and assistance to female ex-offenders who want to improve their lives and break the cycle of incarceration. Friends of Guest House offers the only program for women of its kind in Northern Virginia. One East Luray Avenue, Alexandria, VA 22301-2025, 703-549-8072, info@friendsofguesthouse.org, <http://friendsofguesthouse.org/>

❖ **Northern Virginia Family Service**. Just \$50 provides a complete holiday meal to a family of four. Donate online or via check payable to "NVFS" with "Operation Turkey" on the memo line, or send grocery store gift cards. Northern Virginia Family Service, attn: Holiday Initiatives, 10455 White Granite, Drive, Suite 100, Oakton, VA 22124. Gifting for Families was able to bring some extra holiday cheer to more than 2,000 children in Northern Virginia last year. Monetary contributions and online donations help the most at www.nvfs.org. www.nvfs.org/holidayprograms. Or donate toys. New toys for children of all ages are needed to stock our Toy Closet. (If possible, shop for infants/toddlers or teens, as these age groups can be overlooked.) Drop off on Monday, Dec. 12, 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. and Tuesday, Dec. 13, 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. 13939 Metrotech Drive, Chantilly, VA 20151

❖ **Alternative House** — Abused and Homeless Children's Refuge, 2100 Gallows Road, Vienna, VA 22182, 703-506-9191. Alternative House provides shelter and services for homeless, runaway or abused teenagers, unaccompanied youth, and young mothers and their children. Requests for food and clothing are up more than 50 percent. www.thealternativehouse.org.

❖ **FACETS** helps parents, their children and individuals who suffer the effects of poverty in the Fairfax area, a partner in efforts to end homelessness in Fairfax County. FACETS is always in need of volunteers, and offers a variety of one-time and ongoing opportunities. 703-865-4251 or volunteer@facetscares.org. www.facetscares.org. 10640 Page Avenue, Suite 300, Fairfax VA 22030

❖ **Britepaths** will have 3,000 individuals and families in need of holiday assistance list this fall. Sponsor a family or donate to provide a family with a Thanksgiving meal, December holiday meal and/or gifts for their children. Join Britepaths at Wine & Wonderment, Nov. 30, at 2941 Restaurant britepaths.org

❖ **Food for Others** provides a safety net for people who suddenly face unforeseen emergencies such as a family illness or the loss of a job or a spouse. Located at 2938 Prosperity Ave., Fairfax, VA 22031, 703-207-9173. 2938 Prosperity Ave. info@foodforothers.org Hours: Monday-Friday, 9:30 a.m. – 5 p.m. www.foodforothers.org

❖ **Ecumenical Community Helping Others** (ECHO), 703-569-9160. Open to receive donations at 7205 Old Keene Mill Road, Springfield. Provides food and financial assistance to those in short-term emergencies, and provides clothing and household goods to low income families, helping more than 5,000 people last year. www.echo-inc.org.

❖ **Lorton Community Action Center** (LCAC) will provide Thanksgiving and Holiday assistance to

more than 450 families this year. Thanksgiving and Christmas food baskets along with fulfilling gift wishes for more than 1,000 children and teens will help low-income families during this holiday season. Consider making a basket or "adopting" Christmas wishes this year to help a neighbor. More information about LCAC's holiday program can be found at <http://lortonaction.org/seasonal-assistance/>. Volunteers are needed for these events as well. Register online at <http://lortonaction.org> or call 703/339-5161, ext. 140.

❖ **Assistance League of Northern Virginia** is an all-volunteer nonprofit organization that feeds, clothes and educates children in need. Assistance League's philanthropic programs touch the lives of thousands of children at 11 Title I schools in Northern Virginia, serving children most in need at selected schools in Fairfax and Prince William counties and the City of Alexandria. To learn more about volunteer and sponsorship opportunities, contact alnorthernva@gmail.com or visit <http://www.northernvirginia.assistanceleague.org>

❖ **Comfort for America's Uniformed Services** (CAUSE) ensures that recuperating service members have opportunities for recreation and social interaction and receive concrete signs of appreciation for all that they have done. 4114 Legato Road Suite B, Fairfax, VA 22033, 703-591-4968, cause-usa.org

❖ **Shelter House** provides crisis intervention, safe housing and supportive services to promote self-sufficiency for homeless families and victims of domestic violence in Fairfax County. <http://www.shelterhouse.org/get-involved/>

❖ **National Capital Food Bank**, 6833 Hill Park Drive, Lorton, serving all of Northern Virginia, 703-541-3063. www.capitalareafoodbank.org

❖ **Homestretch** is the largest provider of transitional housing in Fairfax County and offers a services to help the homeless better their lives through education. Email: jhenderson@homestretchva.org; 703-237-2035 x125; <http://homestretchva.org/volunteer/>

❖ **Pathway Homes** focuses on providing housing and support services to individuals with serious mental illnesses, with the mission to help these individuals reach their full potential and lead stable lives. They offer both in-home programs, semi-independent houses and assisted living facilities. 10201 Fairfax Boulevard, Suite 200, Fairfax, VA 22030. 703-876-0390 info@pathwayhomes.org <http://www.pathwayhomes.org> <http://www.pathwayhomes.org/support-pathway/>

❖ **Habitat for Humanity of Northern Virginia** transforms the lives of lower-income families in need by providing affordable homeownership opportunities in Alexandria, Arlington, Fairfax and Falls Church. Learn more at www.habitatnova.org.

Volunteer Locally Through Volunteer Fairfax

New Hope Housing: Thanksgiving and Christmas holiday, New Hope Housing provides nearly 200 food baskets to clients living in our community housing programs. Volunteers ensure that families are able to have a special and memorable holiday. Volunteers can sign up to help by hosting a Thanksgiving or Christmas food drive, donating a food basket for a single adult or family, donating grocery store gift cards for clients to purchase turkeys (grocery stores along Route 1 are best), signing up to drop off Christmas dinner at one of New Hope's Permanent Supportive Housing sites. <http://volunteerfairfax.civicore.com/index?section=volunteerNOW&action=viewOpportunity&fwiD=22511> Sign up to help ensure that children in those families receive holiday gifts this year. You can volunteer to help by adopting a child and fulfilling his or her holiday wish list. Donating gift cards for parents to purchase their children new clothing. Stores along Route 1 are best. To sign up, fill out the following form and a member of the New Hope Housing team will respond as soon as possible <http://volunteerfairfax.civicore.com/index?section=volunteerNOW&action=viewOpportunity&fwiD=21556>

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HOLIDAY DECOR

Setting a Holiday Table

BY MARILYN CAMPBELL
THE GAZETTE

As Thanksgiving draws near, thoughts of table settings and holiday décor abound. In the midst of a flurry of activity — from shopping to chopping and roasting the perfect turkey to creating seating charts — it's easy to let holiday décor and tablescapes become an afterthought. The right accessories, however, can set the tone for a festive gathering.

"Decorating for the holidays in my house is always done with candles, fruit and flowers," said interior designer Gretchen Fuss of Gretchen Fuss Works of Art and Interior Design. It's "festive but simple."

Look to nature, advises Anne Walker of Anne Walker Interior Design, because some of the best holiday decorations are found not at a store, but in your own backyard. "Holly branches in a big white vase make a beautiful centerpiece," said Walker. "Pinecones in a ceramic bowl or galvanized steel bin can add interest to any otherwise empty corner."

"Placing greenery in unexpected locations like a chandelier can also bring another interesting element to the tabletop," agreed Marika Meyer of Marika Meyer Interiors and Marika Meyer Textiles.

A local produce stand can also serve as inspiration for autumnal décor. Mini pumpkins,



PHOTO BY ANNE WALKER

An arrangement of wildflowers, such as this one by interior designer Anne Walker, adds a natural touch to a holiday tablescape.

for example, can be used as place cards, suggests Courtney Thomas of The Picket Fence in Burke. "Simply write each guest's name on a small pumpkin or gourd and place at each seat," she said. "Finish off each place setting with a chocolate turkey tied up with a festive bow. [This] lets the food be the star."

Hollowing out a large pumpkin and using it as a vase to hold flowers for a centerpiece helps keep the autumnal theme consistent, she adds. "Keep things simple," said Thomas. "Scatter gourds or acorns down the middle of the table and add some seasonal candles in your favor-

ite candlesticks."

She also recommends decorative pumpkins, especially velvet pumpkins: "Add some luxe to your Thanksgiving décor with velvet pumpkins. Made with stems from real pumpkins, each one is unique. Group a few on an entry table or sideboard or add some to your table décor."

An easy way to change up your everyday dinnerware and make a statement is to upgrade your salad plates. "An interesting salad plate sitting on top of your dinner plate can add a pop to your tabletop," said Meyer. "Custom napkins can also bring color or pattern to the tabletop."

However, before purchasing new holiday décor, Walker advises editing what you already own. "Go through your holiday decorations with a keen eye, and weed out any that no longer bring you joy for whatever reason," she said. "Maybe they've gotten a bit old and worn or maybe they don't match the current style of your furnishings or maybe you've just grown tired of them."

Maybe your wreath has seen better days as well. In fact, one of the keys to holiday decorating, according to Meyer, is layering and it starts at the front door. "We love to dress a front door by flanking it with white poinsettias and a wreath for the door," she said. "Magnolia or boxwood wreaths are a perfect option to welcome your guests."



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ALEX. / Hawthorne Manor \$ 584,900 OPEN SUN 2 - 4

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Decking the Halls, Stuffing Bellies

Cooking schools offer crash courses in holiday dishes.

BY MARILYN CAMPBELL
THE GAZETTE

Ever since Bernadette Lott can remember, she's had a sweet tooth as big as a sugar cane field. Describing herself as a hard and fast confection lover of the extreme type, she thinks her predilection for all things candy-coated probably started with her grandmother, who pretended not to notice when she devoured spoonfuls of sugar while the two were baking.

"I must have been three or four, standing on a stool in the kitchen, craning my neck to see," said Lott.

In fact, baking was a hobby she honed at her grandmother's hand, which later became a practical skill. She learned that to satisfy her ravenous sugar cravings, be they for shiny glazed lemon tarts or gooey chocolate trifles moistened with rum, she needed to learn to bake.

"I think my first word was cake," Lott said. "I love to bake, but I also do my fair share of tasting."

It's no wonder that for Lott and other foodies, the holidays offer a chance to legitimize an obsession with baking marathons that might appear to be chocolate-covered insanity.

Dozens of local chefs and culinary enthusiasts are rolling out a slew of holiday cooking classes this season. Want to make your own lemon rugelach? Considering letting your children take over the gingerbread baking? Interested in assembling a buche noel? From the informal classes that Lott runs out of her Alexandria, Va. kitchen to formal cooking schools with classes taught by professional chefs, there's instruction for students at both ends of the skills spectrum.

Even as adults, life-long friends can relive their childhood sugarplum fantasies. At the start of the holiday season, Terri Carr and Elaine Agran gather in Carr's Potomac, Md. kitchen to preserve a baking tradition that spans more than three decades. For four days and four nights, the two friends lose themselves in a shrine of softened butter, flour and sugar, emerging with several thousand sugar cookies that they package and ship to friends, family and colleagues.

"We take turns. One of us sleeps while the other one bakes," said Carr, of Terri's Table, a cooking school she runs out of her home.

This year, Carr's holiday classes are focused on Thanksgiving, teaching students to make both main and side dishes, and ending with such as a crunchy and deeply nutty pecan pie.

At the end of her classes, Carr sets a festive table around which her apprentices gather, raising a chorus of oohs and aahs and noshing on the fruit of the holiday labor until the last crumb is devoured.

"These cooking classes help people get into the holiday spirit," said Toni Lipe of Culinary Cooking School in Vienna, Va. "They learn to make things that they can wrap in paper and ribbon and give as gifts."

Students at Culinary enter a holiday cookie paradise of softened butter, vanilla and coconut, and spend hours cutting, rolling and decorating, emerging at the end of class with boxes of rugelach, almond macaroons and other confections.

"The classes are filled with laughter and chatter,"



PHOTO COURTESY OF TERRI CARR

Terri Carr bakes, decorates and packages holiday cookies, in her Potomac kitchen which she sends to friends and family.

said Lipe. "It's like a party, such a wonderful experience."

In Lott's lessons — students discover her through word of mouth — she demonstrates rich buche de noel and fudge-filled, whiskey-soaked chocolate bundt cake recipes. A limited class size allows her to guide students through the process, from melting chocolate over simmering water to adding a good dousing of liqueur to the mixture and beating it into a fluffy batter before sliding it into the oven.

"Some of my best holiday childhood memories were baking with my family," said Lott. "I love being able to share that love with other people so that they can create their own memories."

During her lessons, students rummage through a treasure trove of cookie cutters in shapes ranging from angels and wreaths to starfish and rosebuds. After mixing flour and nutmeg with lemon zest and vanilla extract, then chilling, rolling and cutting the dough, their effort bursts forth in the form of highly spiced citrus, ginger cookies.

"I still like nibbling the cookie dough as much as I did when I was a little kid," said Claudia Yost, a recent student.

Even the youngest gourmands can add calorie-laden joy to the world this season. Diminutive cooks-in-training use seasonal bounty to create child-friendly versions of traditional Thanksgiving fare at Tiny Chefs cooking school. They use yeast, flour and sweet potatoes to create warm, fluffy doughnuts, encased in sugar that crunch slightly to the bite.

"Cooking during the holidays, and at any time, builds memories and gives them skills that they can use when they're responsible for preparing dinners later on down the road," said Katie Raguindin of Tiny Chefs. In the gingerbread house-making class, instructors support children's imaginations, encouraging the wackiest, most creative designs, propelled by a rainbow of colored icing and decorative candies. "We're giving them a nice way to participate with the holiday cooking," said Raguindin. "It's a good family activity, and they can remember for years to come that they got to cook with Mom and Dad for Christmas dinner."

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HOLIDAY ENTERTAINMENT & GIFT GUIDE

Holiday Calendar

Fairfax-based non-profit

Britepaths (formerly Our Daily Bread) is seeking community members to sponsor families in need who live throughout the Fairfax County area. Sponsors are matched with an individual or family with demonstrated need, and may opt to provide a Thanksgiving meal, December holiday meal, and/or gifts for children under 18. Cash donations and gift cards are welcome to assist those who are not sponsored. Britepaths is expecting to have 3,000 households on its assistance list. A great family, company or group holiday service project. Register and learn more at: <http://britepaths.org>. Contact 703-273-8829 or hpassist@britepaths.org.

Volunteer Alexandria is looking for volunteers to host a Thanksgiving or Christmas food drive, donate a food basket for a single adult or family and donate grocery stores gift cards. www.volunteerallexandria.org/

THURSDAY/NOV. 17

Ten Thousand Villages Sip and Shop. 7-9 p.m. at Good Shepard's Ten Thousand Villages, 915 King St. Select gifts and support the mission of Good Shepherd Housing, while supporting the artisans around the world.

NOV. 10-DEC. 31

116 King Holiday Pop-Up. At 116 King St. The shop will feature 28 upscale fashion and lifestyle brands, including 13 brands under the umbrella of The Skinny Dip, a fashion collective founded by Sara Rossi and Taylor Ivey, as well as 15 additional brands with products ranging from women's apparel and jewelry to men's clothing, children's items and other gifts. Sponsored by the Alexandria Economic Development Partnership. www.116king.com

NOV. 16-DEC. 17

Holiday Community Toy Drive. Volunteers will be needed to deliver and pick-up toy bins from various locations. Volunteers will be needed on Friday evening, Dec. 16 and Saturday, Dec. 17, to unload, sort, and inventory toys. Spanish speakers encouraged.

This year, the Alexandria Singers will present its holiday drive and pops concert, "Reflections" on Dec. 9, 7:30 - 9:30 p.m. and Dec. 10, 2-4 p.m. and 7:30-9:30 p.m. at Convergence, 1801 N. Quaker Lane. See www.alexandriasingers.com/

FILE PHOTO BY
LAURA MAE SUDDER



FILE PHOTO BY LAURA MAE SUDDER

Tree Lighting Festivities

The City of Alexandria Tree Lighting Ceremony at Market Square will kick off the holiday season on Friday, Nov. 25 at Market Square, 301 King St. The event will include a welcome by the town crier, the mayor, other city officials and a visit by Santa.

www.volunteerallexandria.org/

NOV. 21-DEC. 9

Toys for Tots. At Sheehy Honda, 2434 Richmond Highway. Collecting new, unwrapped toys as part of the company's annual Sheehy Cares Toy Collection to benefit the U.S. Marine Corps Reserve Toys for Tots Program.

THURSDAY/NOV. 24

Thanksgiving Day Service at Historic Pohick Episcopal Church. 9 a.m. at Pohick Episcopal Church, 9301 Richmond Highway. www.pohick.org or call 703-339-6572.

FRIDAY/NOV. 25

Tree Lighting Ceremony. 6-8 p.m. at Market Square, 301 King St. At this official kickoff to the holiday season, the city tree is lit on Market Square and a welcome by the town crier, the mayor and other city officials, a visit by Santa and holiday performances. 703-746-4343, www.alexandriava.gov

Black Friday. 50 boutiques kick off the holiday shopping season with deals on merchandise, including home décor, chic fashions, gourmet food, toys and gifts for dogs. The City of Alexandria is offering free parking at parking meters as an incentive for shoppers on Black Friday. Store offers vary, with some boutiques opening at 6 a.m. and offering discounts throughout the day. VisitAlexandriaVA.com/blackfriday.

NOV. 25-JAN. 6

Mount Vernon Holiday Tours. 9 a.m.-4 p.m. at 3200 Mount Vernon Highway. Tour the Mansion, watch historic chocolate-making demonstrations, and meet Aladdin the Camel. Join daily "Camel Talks" and learn more about the rare animals at George Washington's home during the holiday season. Hear from costumed friends and family of the Washingtons tell stories of Christmas traditions of the past. Mount Vernon is open every day of the year, including Christmas Day and New Year's Day. 703-799-5203 or www.mountvernon.org. Adults \$17, ages 6-11, \$9, ages 5 and under free.

Holiday Ornament Making. 9 a.m.-4 p.m. at 3200 Mount Vernon Hwy. On select weekends, make a Mount Vernon holiday wooden ornament. For children ages 5-10, accompanied by an adult. Included in admission. Supplies limited. Adults \$17, ages 6-11, \$9, ages 5 and under free.

FRIDAY-SUNDAY/DEC. 2-4

Del Ray Artisans' Holiday Market. 6-9 p.m. Friday, 11 a.m.-6 p.m. Saturday-Sunday, at Del Ray Artisans gallery, 2704 Mount Vernon Ave. Handmade fine arts and crafts from local artists. Different artists each weekend. DelRayArtisans.org/event/holiday-market-2016

SUNDAY/DEC. 4

Gardeners Holiday Open House. 12-4 p.m. at Green Spring Gardens, 4603 Green Spring Road. A holiday-themed garden featuring holiday decorations and seasonal displays, live music, holiday breads and ornaments for sale, plus free refreshments. Free admission. Sponsored by Friends of Green Spring. For children, a holiday puppet show by Bob Brown Puppets at 1 p.m. and 3 p.m. \$4/person for

puppet show, advance registration recommended. For more information, call 703-642-5173 or visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/greenspring.

SUNDAY/DEC. 4

Gardeners Holiday Puppet Show. 1-2 p.m. and 3-4 p.m. at Green Spring Gardens, 4603 Green Spring Road. Register in advance for this festive, holiday puppet show by a professional troupe. Registered children must be accompanied by a registered adult. \$4/person. Register online for the 1 p.m. show at www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/parktakes using code 2904894301 or register for the 3 p.m. show using code 2904894302. You may also call 703-642-5173. Sponsored by the Friends of Green Spring.

TUESDAY/DEC. 6

Excursion to Lewis Ginter: GardenFest of Lights in Richmond. 2-10:45 p.m. at Green Spring Gardens, 4603 Green Spring Road. The GardenFest of Lights features botanic displays and more than a half million lights arranged in botanical themes throughout the gardens, including an orchid and model train display. Comfortable shoes and appropriate weather-related clothing recommended. \$112 per person includes motor coach, driver tip, entrance fee, garden tour and semi-private buffet dinner. Trip cancellation deadline is Nov. 21. Register online at www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/parktakes using code 2904914101 or call 703-642-5173.

FRIDAY-SUNDAY/DEC. 9-11

Del Ray Artisans' Holiday Market. 6-9 p.m. Friday, 11 a.m.-6 p.m. Saturday-Sunday, at Del Ray Artisans gallery, 2704 Mount Vernon Ave. Handmade fine arts and crafts from local artists. Different artists each weekend. DelRayArtisans.org/event/holiday-market-2016

SATURDAY/DEC. 10

Natural Holiday Ornaments Workshop. 9:30-11:30 a.m. Green Spring Gardens, 4603 Green Spring Road. Class by horticulturist and Green Spring decorating veteran Nancy Olney and her team of volunteers will share crafting skills. \$38/person. Register online at www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/parktakes using code 2904831101 or call 703-642-5173. For ages 16-Adult.

Winter Solstice Workshop. 1-2 p.m. at Green Spring Gardens, 4603 Green Spring Road. Learn how people in the past celebrated the winter solstice and create an evergreen centerpiece, complete with beeswax candle. Children must be accompanied by a registered adult. \$10/person. Register online at www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/parktakes using code 2904815001 or call 703-642-5173. For ages 5-Adult.

Holiday Choral Concert. 3 p.m. at Washington Lee High School, 1301 N. Stafford St. The Encore Chorales of Langston Brown, Alexandria, Potomac Arts Academy and Goodwin House Bailey's Crossroads invite the community to a free Holiday Choral Concert. For more information, visit <http://encorecreativity.org>, call 301-261-5747 or email info@encorecreativity.org.

Civil War Christmas in Camp. noon-4 p.m. at Fort Ward Museum and Historic Site, 4301 W. Braddock

SEE HOLIDAY, PAGE 14

Thanksgiving Art & Craft Show
Spring Hill RECenter
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HOLIDAY ENTERTAINMENT & GIFT GUIDE

FROM PAGE 19

Road. Learn how Christmas was observed during the Civil War. \$2 suggested donation per person; \$5 per family. 703-746-4848 or www.alexandriava.gov/fortward

Historic Alexandria Candlelight Tours. 4-9 p.m. at Gadsby's Tavern Museum, 134 N. Royal St. Travel through centuries of local history as you learn more about Alexandria during the holiday season at Carlyle House, Gadsby's Tavern Museum and the Lee-Fendall House. \$25 adults; \$20 seniors (65 years and older) and active military; \$5 children (ages 6-17). 703-746-4242 shop.alexandriava.gov

Friendship Firehouse Ornament Decorating Workshop. 1:30-3:30 p.m. at Friendship Firehouse Museum, 107 S. Alfred St. Decorate and take home ornaments inspired by firefighting. For children ages 4-10, and their caregivers. No registration required. 703-746-4994 or www.alexandriava.gov/friendshipfirehouse

SATURDAY-SUNDAY/DEC. 10-11

Mount Vernon By Candlelight. 8 p.m. at 3200 Mount Vernon Highway. Character-guided tours of the first and second floors of the Mansion, 18th-century dancing and fireside caroling. Learn more about holiday traditions in 18th-century Virginia. Rain or shine. \$24 adult; \$16 youth (ages 2-11). 703-799-5203 or www.mountvernon.org.

SUNDAY/DEC. 11

Floral Workshop: Williamsburg Centerpiece. 2-3:30 p.m. at Green Spring Gardens, 4603 Green Spring Road. Florist Chuck Mason will teach how to make a Williamsburg-style Christmas centerpiece complete with greens, fruit, and dried material. \$38 for the program plus \$25 supply fee. Register online for the program at www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/parktakes using code 2904302901 and also register for the supply fee using code 2904302902 or call 703-642-5173. For ages 16-Adult.

Wreath-Making Classes. 10 a.m. and 2 p.m. at 3200 Mount Vernon Highway. Work with one of Mount Vernon's horticulturists to decorate a wreath with dried botanicals representative of plants grown on the estate. For ages 16 and older. \$35 (includes general admission). Cost includes supplies. 703-799-5203 or www.mountvernon.org.

Family Gift Distribution. Volunteers are needed to check-in sponsors, organize bundles of gifts, check-out families, and provide transportation for families if needed. Spanish speakers encouraged. www.volunteerallexandria.org/

Colonial Handbell Ringers Concert. 2 and 4 p.m. at 201 S. Washington St. The Colonial Handbell Ringers, 10 "ringers," in period costume, will be playing a full five-octave set of 80 handbells. Audience participation in the sing-along encouraged. 703-746-4994 or www.colonialringers.com

DEC. 12-16

Early Childhood Holiday Store at 418 S. Washington St. Volunteers are needed to help set up and staff the holiday store. www.volunteerallexandria.org/

WEDNESDAY/DEC. 14

Holiday Open House. At Alexandria Library, Duncan Branch, 2501 Commonwealth Ave. Enjoy the music of the Irish Breakfast Band at the Duncan Open House and enjoy light hor d'oeuvres, fellowship with neighbors, and children programs for

This year, the Little Theatre of Alexandria is presenting "A Christmas Carol," Dec 2-17 at 600 Wolfe St. Box office: 703-683-0496 or asklta@thelittletheatre.com.



FILE PHOTO BY LAURA MAE SUDDER

a celebration of the holiday season. 703-746-1781.

friendshipfirehouse

FRIDAY/DEC. 16

Holiday Choral Concert. 7:30 p.m. at Encore Chorale, 1801 Quaker Lane. The programs, co-conducted by Jeanne Kelly and Jeffrey Dokken, will feature holiday and seasonal pieces. encorecreativity.org or 301-261-5747

FRIDAY-SATURDAY/DEC. 16-17

Christmas Illuminations. 5:30-9 p.m. at 3200 Mount Vernon Highway. Fireworks choreographed to holiday music, with fireworks beginning around 9 p.m. Tour the estate while listening to local choirs, visit with re-enactors from the First Virginia Regiment in winter encampment, and learn 18th-century dance moves from costumed guides in the Greenhouse. "George and Martha Washington" will also be on site. Colonial artisans demonstrate the 18th-century process of creating chocolate. Warm up by a bonfire, visiting the blacksmith shop, or enjoy some hot chocolate or cider. Additional food will be available for purchase. Christmas Illuminations takes place rain or shine. \$34 adult/\$24 youth with Mansion tour. \$30 adult/\$20 youth without Mansion tour. 703-799-5203 or www.mountvernon.org.

FRIDAY-SUNDAY/DEC. 16-18

Del Ray Artisans' Holiday Market. 6-9 p.m. Friday, 11 a.m.-6 p.m. Saturday-Sunday at Del Ray Artisans gallery, 2704 Mount Vernon Ave. Handmade fine arts and crafts from local artists. Different artists each weekend. DelRayArtisans.org/event/holiday-market-2016

SATURDAY/DEC. 17

Holiday Gift Wrapping. Volunteers are needed to wrap gifts at Barnes & Noble Potomac Yard, at 3651 Jefferson Davis Hwy. and collect donations. www.volunteerallexandria.org/

Friendship Firehouse Ornament Decorating Workshop. 1:30-3:30 p.m. at Friendship Firehouse Museum, 107 S. Alfred St. Decorate and take home ornaments inspired by firefighting. For children ages 4-10, and their caregivers. No registration required. 703-746-4994 or www.alexandriava.gov/

SUNDAY/DEC. 18

Mount Vernon By Candlelight. 8 p.m. at 3200 Mount Vernon Highway. Character-guided tours of the first and second floors of the Mansion, 18th-century dancing and fireside caroling. Learn more about holiday traditions in 18th-century Virginia. Rain or shine. \$24 adult; \$16 youth (ages 2-11). 703-799-5203 or www.mountvernon.org.

FRIDAY/DEC. 23

Holiday Gift Wrapping. Volunteers are needed to wrap gifts at Barnes & Noble Potomac Yard, at 3651 Jefferson Davis Highway. and collect donations. www.volunteerallexandria.org/

SATURDAY/DEC. 24

Waterskiing Santa. 1 p.m. at the waterfront near the Torpedo Factory Art Center, 105 N. Union St. Waterskiing Santa and his wakeboarding reindeer, plus flying elves, the Grinch and his friends, Frosty the Snowman and Jack Frost. 703-746-3301 or www.waterskiingsanta.com

SUNDAY/DEC. 25

The Holiday Project – Share the Spirit of the Season. Volunteers are needed to Share the Spirit of the Season by visiting with patients in hospitals, nursing homes, and long term care facilities. Sing carols and distribute cards and gifts. www.volunteerallexandria.org/

SATURDAY/DEC. 31

First Night Alexandria. 2 p.m.-midnight at venues throughout Old Town and one at the Mount Vernon Recreation Center, 2701 Commonwealth Ave. Midnight fireworks: Potomac River at the foot of King St. More than 150 performances at 25 indoor venues, with live music, dancing, children's face painting and games. The afternoon's Eighth Annual Fun Hunt is accompanied by all-new activities for families and pets. There's a venue at the Mount Vernon Recreation Center in Del Ray filled with activities for children 10 and younger, and dancing in the street at the east end of King Street beginning at 10 p.m. 703-746-3299 or www.firstnightalexandria.org

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- Mashed sweet potatoes with marshmallow
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Station 206 Firefighter Wins Best Chef Contest

Cooking with an eye to sudden interruptions.

BY SHIRLEY RUHE
THE GAZETTE

Ever wonder what firefighters on 24-hour duty eat for dinner? It turns out that there are a number of gourmet cooks among the 10 fire stations in the City of Alexandria. The Alexandria Gazette Packet in conjunction with the city Fire Department recently held a contest for the best chef to be featured in its monthly “In the Kitchen” column. Fire stations were asked to nominate their best cook. On Oct. 26 the finalists from each station were chosen including:

IN THE KITCHEN

Arash Hematti and Kristina Holt from Station 206, Mike Lyons and Kevin Black from Station 210, Randal Parker from Station 203 and Tiffany Matthews and Francisco Castaneda from Station 204. Stations were given until Monday, Nov. 7 to complete their survey to allow all shifts to participate.

The winner is Kristina Holt who chose chicken corn chowder as her featured meal. At 5 p.m. she has prepped the white onions, the carrots and sweet red pepper and pulsed garlic with olive oil in her small food chopper. She aims for dinner at about six. Holt said, “We are a very busy station so we try to get as much ready as we can in case we get a call in the middle of dinner or when we are cooking.” As a result there are a lot of crock-pot meals or easy casseroles. But she says at holidays they cook something special like beef tenderloin, mussels, lobsters. “This recipe is my mother’s except I have changed it from the canned cream of soup and added the vegetables all fresh.”

Holt has picked apart a whole roasted chicken and will add it at the end. She sautés the vegetables in a large pot with a little butter and olive oil for about 10 minutes. “I don’t usually use butter and never when I’m cooking at home.” Then she shakes flour out of the sack, “maybe a little less than a cup, to make a roux. Next I pour in an 18-ounce box of low-sodium chicken broth. I may need more than this box. I don’t measure anything; I just eyeball it.”

She peers into the pot as she stirs to check the thickening. In go two bay leaves, a little bit of cumin (she doesn’t like too



Kristina Holt from Station 206 on Seminary Road is winner of the City of Alexandria best firefighter chef contest. She shows off a bowl of her one of the favorite meals: chicken corn chowder.

PHOTOS BY SHIRLEY RUHE/THE GAZETTE



Kristina Holt has sautéed the vegetables and added flour to make a roux. She will add a box of low-sodium chicken broth — maybe a little more — and then some heavy cream.



Battalion Chief Mark Dalton stops in early to taste the chicken corn chowder simmering on the stove.



Kristina Holt has prepped the peppers, onions and carrots and chopped the garlic with oil for a dinner at about 6 p.m.



The firefighters fill up a bowl with chicken corn chowder, grab a roll and gather around the table in the kitchen. Kristina Holt says they like to eat together. “It’s not true at all of the other stations.”

much) a little cayenne, white pepper, salt and some Old Bay Seasoning. “I started using it because a coworker loves it. At the end I will taste to see whether I need to add more because of the jalapeno pepper that I added this time that will make it a little spicy.”

The heat is turned down to low so the veggies cook until they are just a little soft. “It will be a creamy white color, but I always add too many carrots and it is an orange color now.”

The soup is thickening. She adds the carton of heavy cream and continues stirring. The chowder is almost finished so she adds the two packages of frozen white sweet corn. Tonight she has supplemented the chowder with crescent rolls which will make a hearty meal. The garlic goes in at the very end so it will retain the flavor and then finally the chicken.

Battalion Chief Mark Dalton pops through the kitchen door. “This is his favorite,” she said. “Chief, here’s a spoon. Come and taste.” She decides it needs something. “What do you think?” Holt decides to add a sprinkle more of salt. “I’ll probably add some more Old Bay. It would be really good to have this chowder with crabmeat but we can’t afford to buy it.”

The medic unit is just coming back from a call. “The West End is always busy. One day last week we had three cardiac arrests on one day.”

She says because they are located close to the interstate

there are a lot of calls and they are also at the border of Arlington and Alexandria so get a lot of requests for mutual aid. Holt adds they are up most nights 3-4 times and have to learn to sleep when they can. Currently they are also training to be a tech response company. “We have to be able to

go to car extractions, building collapses, trench response, rope rescue.”

It has been just about an hour, and the chowder is ready. Holt calls into the speaker, “Dinner — get it now. Come on.” Tonight she has set out seven bowls. Firefighters grab a bowl and head to the stove to ladle out a portion and grab a roll. Holt says everyone puts in \$10 each day to cover lunch and dinner. Dalton says that some of the stations have good cooks and good shoppers while some have bad cooks and shoppers and some have excellent cooks who blow the budget.” Holt estimates she spent about \$30 on the ingredients for the chowder.

Holt said she started cooking when she was a child and she and her brother made a lot of their meals. She started working in a restaurant when she was 14 years old and then worked in a number of different restaurants where she picked up her skills. “And I’m a picky eater but my taste buds have expanded.”

She has been a firefighter for 10 years and just recently moved from ladder trucks to engines where she rides on the left side in back. She says she grew up with firefighters; her neighbor was the chief. Holt said, “I like this job — being out in the community.”

HOLIDAY ENTERTAINMENT & GIFT GUIDE

CALENDAR

Email announcements to 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

Young at Art Exhibition. Through Nov. 17, gallery hours at Durant arts Center, 1605 Cameron St. Calling all senior artists. This annual event is cosponsored by Senior Services of Alexandria and Goodwin House Foundation. The Call for Art is Oct. 4, 10 a.m.-12 p.m. \$20 fee to submit up to three works of art. Visit www.seniorservicesalex.org or call Mary Lee Anderson at 703-836-4414, ext. 111 or Jeanne Jacobs at 703-824-1345.

School of Rock. Through Nov. 19 at West Potomac Theater, 6500 Quander Road. Presented by the Beyond the Page Theatre Company (BTPTC) at West Potomac High School. Show times vary: Nov. 4, 7 p.m.; Nov. 5, 2 p.m. and 7 p.m.; Nov. 11 - 5 p.m.; Nov. 12 - 7 p.m.; Nov. 18 - 7 p.m.; Nov. 19 - 2 p.m. and 7 p.m. WestPoTheatre@gmail.com or 703-718-2585.

Art Exhibit: "Serenity in Chaos." Through Nov. 20, gallery hours at The Associates Gallery at the Torpedo Factory, 105 N. Union St. The theme of this show reflects the artist's unique view of the photographic medium. Free. Visit www.torpedofactory.org for more.

Art Exhibit: "H2O/Waterworks." Through Nov. 27, gallery hours at Del Ray Artisans Gallery, 2704 Mount Vernon Ave. A visual exploration of humankind's relationship to water, or lack thereof, through 2D and 3D media. They express water's effect on us and our effect on water, for enjoyment, health, political, ecological and environmental outcomes. Free. Visit www.DelRayArtisans.org/exhibits.

Post-Graduate Residency Program. Through Nov. 27, gallery hours at Target Gallery, 105 N. Union St. The Torpedo Factory Post-Graduate Master's of Fine Arts Residency is a competitive program, housed in Studio 12, where four emerging artists create and sell work, interact with the public, and network with other working artists. Free. Visit www.torpedofactory.org for more.

November Artist Showcase. Through Nov. 30 at Broadway Gallery Fine Art and Custom Framing, 5641-B General Washington Drive, featuring the abstract and wildlife art of local artist, Buck Nelligan. Email bev@broadwaygalleries.net.

"Sound of Butterfly" Art Exhibit. Through Dec. 4, 3-4:30 p.m. at the Torpedo Factory Art Center, Studio 21, 105 N. Union St. Photographer and multimedia artist Soomin Ham explores grief through the "Sound of Butterfly." See www.theartleague.org or call 703-683-1780.

Thursday Mornings with Kathryn Coneway. Dec. 8, 10 a.m.-12 p.m. at St. Aidan's Episcopal Church, 8531 Riverside Road. The themes in the book, "The Artist's Rule," will be a foundation to share experiences with creative practice. Each session will begin with a quiet time and exploration of materials before transitioning to a discussion of the themes and practices outlined in the chapter. Participants should purchase a copy of "The Artist's Rule" and read the introduction and first chapter prior to the first meeting. Registration is \$50. Visit www.staidanepiscopal.com/Center-for-Spiritual-Deepening for more.

Convergence: "Various Small Fires." Through Dec. 17, gallery

hours at Convergence Gallery, 1801 N. Quaker Lane. the Convergence Arts Initiative presents: 'Various Small Fires,' a site-specific installation and exhibit by Isabel Cureux. Various Small Fires explores how each small event in our lives creates who we are. Mental illness, divorce, "biraciality," and religion will be presented in innovative ways to garner a feeling of solidarity with others who have experienced these things, and present a new way to understand them for those who have not. Free to attend. Visit www.ourconvergence.org for more.

"Raising: Motherhood in Modernity." Through Dec. 18, gallery hours at The Margaret W. and Joseph L. Fisher Art Gallery at the Rachel M. Schlesinger Concert Hall and Arts Center, 4915 E. Campus Drive. Elements of motherhood and the good and bad of being a parent can be found in the ceramic pieces Jessica Gardner created for the exhibit "Raising: Motherhood in Modernity." Free. Visit www.nvcc.edu for more.

116 King Holiday Pop-Up. Through Dec. 31, at 116 King St. The shop will feature 28 upscale fashion and lifestyle brands, including 13 brands under the umbrella of The Skinny Dip, a fashion collective founded by Sara Rossi and Taylor Ivey, as well as 15 additional brands with products ranging from women's apparel and jewelry to men's clothing, children's items and other gifts. Sponsored by the Alexandria Economic Development Partnership. www.116king.com

Art Exhibit: Color Disorder.

Through Jan. 8 at Athenaeum Gallery, 201 Prince St. Katie Baines and Amy Chan's acrylic, gouache, airbrush and screen print work on display. Sat., Nov. 13, 4-6 p.m. is opening reception. 703-548-0035, nvfaa.org.

Art Making as Meditation with Kathryn Coneway. Second Wednesday of each month, 7-8:30 p.m. at St. Aidan's Episcopal Church, 8531 Riverside Road. Each session begins with a short reading and a brief introduction to materials. Silence for making and meditation lasts an hour followed by sharing images or insights gained through the process, if desired. Children able to participate in silence are welcome to come with a parent's quiet supervision. RSVP not necessary for attendance, but helpful for planning purposes. Email info@centerforspiritualdeepening.org.

Mercy in Alexandria Walking Tour. Sundays at 1:30 p.m. at Alexandria Visitors Center, 221 King St. Experience an inside access tour of 19th century Alexandria. Inspired by the PBS mini-series "Mercy Street," accompany a trained military historian through Civil War-era Alexandria and learn the actual history behind the TV show. Short tours are \$15, private tours for five are \$149. Visit www.dcmilitarytour.com for more.

The Lyceum: 175 Years of Local History. Ongoing, Monday-Saturday 10 a.m.-5 p.m. and Sunday 1-5 p.m. at The Lyceum, 201 S. Washington St. On view in the museum's Coldsmith Gallery, the historical objects and images featured represent The Lyceum, the community at work, and commemorations and celebrations.

SEE HOLIDAY, PAGE 18

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HOLIDAY ENTERTAINMENT & GIFT GUIDE

FROM PAGE 17

Throughout the exhibition, visitors are invited to "be the curator" and think about why the various artifacts are in the museum's collection, and about how tangible representatives of the past help tell the story of Alexandria's history. Free. Visit www.alexandriahistory.org for more.

Medical Care for the Civil War Soldier Exhibit. Ongoing at the Fort Ward museum, 4301 W. Braddock Road. ongoing exhibit which features original medical instruments and equipment from the Civil War period and information on Union Army hospital sites in Alexandria. Free. Visit www.alexandriava.gov/fortward 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.

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 or call 703-746-4848.

Dishing up Wares for a Holiday Harvest Spread through Nov. 30 at 105 N. Union St., ground floor Studio 19. Artists riff on an abundance of raw material, creatively cooking up a table fully dressed for the holidays from the centerpiece down to the dishes. For more information, call Scope Gallery at 703-548-6288, visit scopegallery.org, or torpedofactory.org/galleries/scope

National Inventors Hall of Fame Exhibit. Through November 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.

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 for more.

The Monday Morning Birdwalk takes place weekly, rain or shine (except during electrical storms, strong winds, or icy trails), at 7 a.m. (8 a.m. November through March), is free, requires no reservation and is open to all. Birders meet in the parking lot at the park's entrance at 3701 Lockheed Blvd. Direct questions to park staff during normal business hours at 703-768-2525.

Civil War Sundays. 1-5 p.m. at



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

The Potomack Company, 1120 N. Fairfax St., offers a special auction, Alexander Calder Works, from a Friend's Collection, on Nov. 17 at 11 a.m. Includes four works of art in different media by Calder never before on the market. The art has belonged to the family of Calder's friend and neighbor, Andi Schiltz, since being gifted by the artist.

Alexandria Archaeology Museum, 105 North Union St., #327. Learn more about the Civil War as it occurred in Alexandria. Find

dioramas, newspaper articles and more. Free. Visit www.alexandriaarchaeology.org.

THURSDAY/NOV. 17

Historic Pohick Church Christmas Mart. 10 a.m.-2 p.m. at the Pohick Episcopal Church is located at 9301 Richmond Highway. For more information see www.pohick.org or call 703-339-6572.

Preschool Scholarship Gala. 7-10 p.m. at Westin Alexandria, 400 Courthouse Square. The inaugural Chairman's Hopkins House Preschool Scholarship Gala is an event to raise critical funds to provide preschool scholarships to deserving low-resourced, working and military families. Tickets are \$250. Visit www.hopkinshouse.org for more.

Living Legends of Alexandria Host Beaujolais Nouveau Party. 7 p.m. at 901 Pitt St. The event features a wine tasting, holiday shopping, music, food and an opportunity to view the 2016 Living Legends Exhibit and meet Living Legends. Tickets are available for purchase at <https://llawine.eventbrite.com>. Proceeds from the event will support Living Legends of Alexandria and the Family Legends Project. For information, to volunteer, become a sponsor or nominate a future Legend, visit www.AlexandriaLegends.org or contact AlexandriaLegends@outlook.com

Simply Three. 7:30 p.m. at the Birchmere Music Hall, 3701 Mount Vernon Ave. Tickets are \$25. Call 703-549-7500 or visit www.birchmere.com for more.

Community Dance with the Mount Vernon Swing Band. 7:30-9:30 p.m. at Hollin Hall Senior Center, 1500 Shenandoah Road. \$4. Call 703-765-4573 or email

SEE HOLIDAY, PAGE 19

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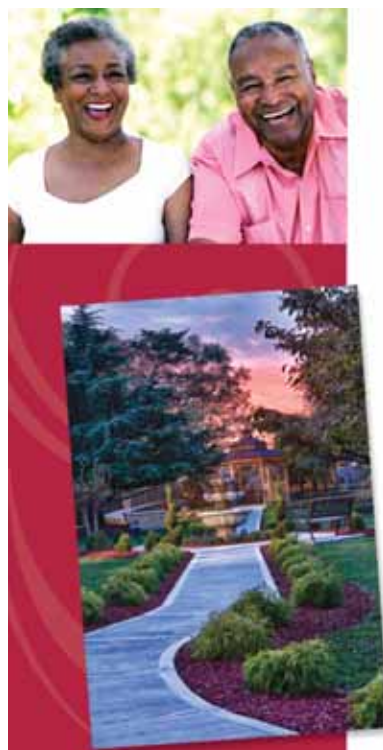
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HOLIDAY ENTERTAINMENT & GIFT GUIDE

FROM PAGE 18

Mary.bilowus@fairfaxcounty.gov.
Art Auction. 11 a.m. at The Potomack Co., 1120 N. Fairfax St. A special auction, Alexander Calder Works, from a Friend's Collection. Highlighting the sale is Calder's dynamic and colorful oil painting, Cornucopia, 1955, from the year of Calder's three-month voyage to India with his wife. This work is registered in the archives. Lucie@potomackco.com or 703-684-4550.

THURSDAY-FRIDAY/NOV. 17-18

A Thousand Cranes. 7-8 p.m. at George Washington Masonic National Memorial, 101 Callahan Drive. Burgundy Farm Country Day School's 7th grade students, present the true story of Sadako Sasaki a Hiroshima survivor who developed leukemia as a result of the radiation. Amid the legend that 1,000 folded paper cranes grant sick persons their health. dennisandelizabeth@cox.net or 703-660-8515.

FRIDAY/NOV. 18

Various Small Fires artist reception. 7-9 p.m. Torpedo Factory, at 105 N. Union St. Convergence Arts Initiative is working with the Torpedo Factory to highlight Isabel Cureux's "Various Small Fires," an artwork exhibit that explores how each small event in our life creates who we are.

FRIDAY-SATURDAY/NOV. 18-19

The Little Mermaid. 7:30 p.m., at Bryant Alternative High School, 2709 Popkins Lane. Mount Vernon Community Children's Theatre presents Disney's The Little Mermaid. \$12 admission, for more information contact Pam Peckar at 703.360.0686 or email admin@mvcct.org.

SATURDAY/NOV. 19

Benefit 5K Race. 8:30 a.m. at Mount Vernon High School, 8515 Old Mount Vernon Road. Community benefit for the neediest children. \$25 pre-race, \$30 day of the race. Pre-race Packet Pick Up Friday, Nov. 18 3-7 p.m. Contact Lee M. Britton, NCSSW 703-660-2000.

Family Volunteer Day 9 a.m.-12 p.m. Address and directions will be sent by e-mail after you signing up. To sign up your family, please choose the 'Sign up as a team' option and list all of your family members with their ages. For more information, go to Volunteer Alexandria <http://www.VolunteerAlexandria.org>.

Community Holiday Shop. 9:30 a.m.-4 p.m. at Mount Vernon Unitarian Church, 1909 Windmill Lane in Mount Vernon. A local tradition that includes 50 artisans, orchids, chutneys, cakes, and pies, upscale resale, handmade quilt raffle, and a homemade lunch shop. For more information, go to mvuc.org.

Quilt Raffle. 9:30 a.m.-4 p.m., at Mount Vernon Unitarian Church, 1909 Windmill Lane. The quilt "It's a beautiful day in the neighborhood" will be raffled (\$1/ticket) at the Holiday Shop in Mount Vernon. The Holiday Shop includes 50 artisans, a room of orchids, chutneys, cakes, and pies, upscale resale, and a homemade lunch shop spread out over two building and manicured grounds. Mvuc.org.

Beyond the Battlefield Walking Tour. 10 a.m. at The Lyceum, 201 S. Washington St. A guided walking tour of Civil War sites in Historic Old Town. The tour will last approximately 2.5 hours and cover a route of 1.75 miles. Advance tickets are \$15 through the museum's website, or \$20 the day of the

APPETITE

Three Beverages for a Wintertime Brunch

BY HOPE NELSON
 THE GAZETTE

Amid the Thanksgiving prep work and holiday shopping sprees, sometimes it's best to stop for brunch and order a beverage to treat yourself. Here are three great spots to visit.

Shooter McGee's, 5239 Duke St.

A mainstay in the Foxchase area for more than three decades, Shooter McGee's brunch is the perfect way to kick off a weekend or prep for a full afternoon of football. Shooter's brunch stretches from late morning through mid-afternoon each Saturday and Sunday, offering plenty of time to pop in for a meal as schedules permit.

While the food itself isn't to be missed — try the fried egg sandwich or the French toast slam — another interesting facet of Shooter McGee's brunch lies in the bloody Mary bar, a create-your-own concoction. Your server brings you a glass with meted-out vodka and then the world is your oyster. A veritable

buffet of bloody Mary offerings stands before you. Choose from various tomato juice blends and then add in any blend of a plethora of spices and hot sauces. Top everything off with some olives — or celery, or what-have-you — and you're ready for brunch.

Taqueria Poblano, 2400-B Mount Vernon Ave.

The Sunday brunch at Del Ray's Taqueria Poblano is legendary — from the huevos divorciados to the breakfast burrito. But before diving into the food, consider the beverage options to get your Sunday started.

You could try the sangria or a margarita — both fine options — but the tequila sunrise is where Taqueria Poblano really shines. A blend of tequila and orange juice, it's a simple cocktail on its surface, but one that this taqueria's bar has perfected into a perfectly mixed beverage that will launch your meal on the right foot. Don't care much for tequila? Don't worry. This sunrise manages to cut the tangy tequila taste while maintaining its punch, the end result being a great pairing

to nearly any brunch food order.

Chadwicks, 203 Strand St.

Chadwicks' champagne brunch is one of the worst-kept dining secrets in Alexandria. What used to be 95 cents a glass has now evolved into a several-dollar affair, but a glass of champagne is still cheap enough for frugal sensibilities, and a bottle won't run you much more. Want to get fancy? The mimosas are heavy on the bubbly while also donning a veneer of orange juice. But the champagne is the star of Chadwicks' weekend brunch show.

Once you've ordered a round of bubbly, it's time to scope out your dining choices. Huevos rancheros are always a winner — with tortillas topped with eggs, cheese, salsa, guacamole, and more, you can't go wrong — or try the eggs Idaho, which are scrambled with potato skins and bacon. Then lift a glass and toast to a successful holiday season.

Hope Nelson owns and operates the Kitchen Recessionista blog, located at www.kitchenrecessionista.com. Email her any time at hope@kitchenrecessionista.com.

program. www.leefendallhouse.org, 703-548-1789.

CaAsia Lane Booksigning. 11 a.m.-2 p.m. at Misha's Coffee Shop, 102 S. Patrick St. Come out and meet CaAsia Lane, veteran and local author of two new books that share her story of survival after personal tragedy along with her leadership nuggets through dance ministry. Free, cost of book. cskim@serenities.com or 202-498-5218

Photography Workshops. 11 a.m.-1:30 p.m. at The Alexandria Black History Museum, 902 Wythe St. Discuss photography with Sharon Farmer, the first African-American Director of White House Photography, and George Tolbert, the first African American official U.S. Senate photographer, to provide tips and techniques. Participants are encouraged to bring images on a thumb drive or CD to garner tips on how to improve those images. The Exposure Group African American Photographers Association, Inc. is co-sponsoring this event. \$5.

Cider Tasting Festival. 7-9:30 p.m. at The Lyceum, Alexandria's History Museum, 201 S. Washington St. The cider tasting highlights Celebrate Virginia Cider Week, Nov. 11-20. All week participating restaurants and retail stores to taste and purchase Virginia Cider. A passport can be picked up at the Alexandria Visitor Center, The Lyceum, and participating businesses. For list of participating sites and details about the passport and contest, visit alexandriava.gov/Historic.

Country-Western Dance. 7-9:30 p.m. at the Lincolnia Senior Center, 4710 N. Chambliss St. The dance is sponsored by the The Northern Virginia Country-Western Dance Association. Admission for NVCWDA members \$10; non-members \$12; children under 18 accompanied by a paying adult \$5. Smoke-free, alcohol-free. BYO refreshments. For more information go to www.nvcwda.org or call 703-860-4941.

Choreographers Collaboration

Project. 7 p.m. at the Athenaeum, 201 Prince St. Modern dance performance. Admission at door, \$15 adults, \$10 seniors and youth, 12-17; free for under 12. 703-683-2070; ccpdance@gmail.com; or ccpdance.org

The Migration Project: Performance and Art. 7:30 p.m. at Torpedo Factory Art Center, 105 N Union St. The Migration Project explores stories of relocation. Featuring Jane Franklin Dance-Emily Crews, Carrie Monger, Matthew Rock, Amy Scaringe, Brynna Shank, Rebecca Weiss, and Visual art by Rosemary Feit Covey and Dawn Whitmore.

Prowl for Owls after Dark. 4:30-6:30 p.m. at Huntley Meadows Park, 3701 Lockheed Blvd. Listen for and learn about local owls and perhaps see a barred owl. Meet at the Visitor Center and dress for the weather. Wear shoes or boots suitable for standing off-trail. \$8. 703-768-2525.

SUNDAY/NOV. 20

Carpenter's Run for Shelter. 8 a.m. at USPTO Building, 600 Dulany St. Run for Shelter, featuring a 5K, 10K and Fun Run is a great way to get your entire family involved and giving back to the community this fall. Race to end homelessness.

Spirituality in Nature. 1:30-4:30 p.m. at United Methodist Church, 109 S. Washington St. Meet along the Potomac watershed to walk and do guided spiritual exercises together. Meet at the Dyke Marsh trailhead which is close to the Belle Haven Marina. office@fairlingtonumc.org or 804-837-9850.

The Little Mermaid. 3 p.m., at Bryant Alternative High School, 2709 Popkins Lane. Mount Vernon Community Children's Theatre presents Disney's The Little Mermaid. \$12 admission, for more information contact Pam Peckar at 703-360-0686 or email admin@mvcct.org.

James Madison at Gadsby's Tavern Restaurant. 3-4:30 p.m. at

Gadsby's Tavern Restaurant, 134 N. Royal St. John Douglas Hall takes on the persona of James Madison in appearance, in content, and syntax. Check-in is at Gadsby's Tavern Museum. For more information, visit www.gadsbystavern.org.

TUESDAY/NOV. 22

Black History Museum Exhibition. Opening at the Alexandria Black History Museum, 902 Wythe St. Before the Spirits are Swept Away: African American Historic Site paintings by Sherry Zvares Sanabria. 703-746-4356

WEDNESDAY/NOV. 23

Boney James Jazz Concert. 7:30 p.m. at The Birchmere, 3701 Mount Vernon Ave. Jazz with the tenor sax, Billboard named him their No. 3 Contemporary Jazz Artist of the Decade. www.Birchmere.com

THURSDAY/NOV. 24

Turkey Trot. 9 a.m. at George Washington Middle School, 1005 Mount Vernon Ave. A Thanksgiving morning tradition, this fast, flat, USATF-certified 5-mile course through the heart of Del Ray. Registration is \$5-25. Visit www.alexandriaturkeytrot.com for more.

Thanksgiving Day Service at Historic Pohick Episcopal Church. 9 a.m. at Pohick Episcopal Church, 9301 Richmond Highway. www.pohick.org or call 703-339-6572.

FRIDAY/NOV. 25

Tree Lighting Ceremony. 6-8 p.m. at Market Square, 301 King St. At this official kickoff to the holiday season, the city tree is lit on Market Square and a welcome by the town crier, the mayor and other city officials, a visit by Santa and holiday performances. 703-746-4343, www.alexandriava.gov

Black Friday. 50 boutiques kick off the holiday shopping season with deals on merchandise, including home décor, chic fashions, gourmet food, toys and gifts for dogs. The City of Alexandria is offering free parking at parking meters as an incentive for shoppers on Black Friday. Store offers vary, with some boutiques opening at 6 a.m. and offering discounts throughout the day. Visit AlexandriaVA.com/blackfriday.

NOV. 25-JAN. 6

Mount Vernon Holiday Tours. 9 a.m.-4 p.m. at 3200 Mount Vernon Highway. Tour the Mansion, watch historic chocolate-making demonstrations, and meet Aladdin the Camel. Join daily "Camel Talks" and learn more about the rare animals at George Washington's home during the holiday season. Hear from costumed friends and family of the Washingtons tell stories of Christmas traditions of the past. Mount Vernon is open every day of the year, including Christmas Day and New Year's Day. 703-799-5203 or www.mountvernon.org. Adults \$17, ages 6-11, \$9, ages 5 and under free.

Holiday Ornament Making. 9 a.m.-4 p.m. at 3200 Mount Vernon Highway. On select weekends, make a Mount Vernon holiday wooden ornament. For children ages 5-10, accompanied by an adult. Included in admission. Supplies limited. Adults \$17, ages 6-11, \$9, ages 5 and under free.

Holiday Teddy Bear Teas. 9 a.m.-4 p.m. at 3200 Mount Vernon Highway. On select weekends, bring a favorite stuffed animal friend to have "tea" with "Lady Washington." This special experience will also include a hands-on seasonal activity. For ages 4-11, accompanied by an adult. Refreshments provided. \$5 in addition to general admission. Adults \$17, ages 6-11, \$9, ages 5 and under free. 703-799-5203 or www.mountvernon.org.

Additional Factors Impede Efforts To Quit Smoking

Public encouraged to learn about challenges faced by smokers with mental illness who want to quit.

BY MARILYN CAMPBELL
THE GAZETTE

For More Information

GREAT AMERICAN SMOKEOUT—NOV 17

<http://www.nami.org/>
<http://www.cancer.org/healthy/stayawayfromtobacco/>

Cushions flew about the living room as Deneice Valentine combed the cracks of her sofa, hoping that among the crumbs and lint she would find her inhaler. Gasping for air and facing the onset of an asthma attack, she began to bargain with God.

"I was praying and saying, 'If you help me find my inhaler, I will quit smoking,'" she said, her voice worn rough from 38 years of smoking and despite multiple warnings from doctors about the hazards smoking had on her already compromised health. "Quitting was hard, but I threw away the cigarettes and I never brought another pack."

That was four years ago. For Valentine, now 62, the road to cessation felt steep and fraught with barriers like her diagnosis of post-

traumatic stress disorder and depression.

While the rate of smokers among the U.S. population has dropped to about 18 percent over the last 50 years, the rate of smoking among those living with serious mental illness has risen. At 53 percent, it's higher than it was 50 years ago, according to the Centers for Disease Control. In observance of the Great American Smokeout on Nov. 17, cessation advocates are underscoring the plight of smokers with mental health challenges.

For those dealing with the manifestations of a mental illness, smoking can appear to offer relief.

"The biggest thing is the self-medicating effect ... nicotine helps them with the symptoms of their illnesses, in particular anxiety, depression and schizophrenia," said Amy E. Coren, Ph.D., assistant professor of psychology at Northern Virginia Community College, Alexandria. "But smoking is not actually helping mental illness, it's just a Band-Aid."

According to Valentine, smoking soothed her symptoms. "Cigarettes helped calm me down," she said. "When I was smoking, I was less anxious and my thoughts were less jumbled."

Part of the problem is that the culture of mental health service traditionally treats cigarettes as a reward or an outlet, says Jerome Short, Ph.D., licensed clinical psychologist and associate professor of psychology at George Mason University. "In the past, psychiatric hospitals rewarded patients with cigarettes and outdoor smoke

breaks for good behavior," he said. "Some outpatient sites still allow smoke breaks and that increases people's cravings and smoking behavior more than if they were in a smoke-free environment."

For the caretakers and loved ones of those with significant mental illnesses cigarettes can appear as a welcome distraction. "I have a relative who has schizophrenia and when she calls me, she asks for cigarettes and soda, the few things that she has to look forward to in her life," said Kate Farinholt, executive director of NAMI Maryland, National Alliance on Mental Illness. "When I'm sitting on the other end of the phone having a much easier time of it, it's hard for me to tell her to give up cigarettes."

Her personal experience and conflicted feelings give Farinholt special insight as she works to educate smokers with mental health challenges. "Quitting is especially hard for people with mental illness, but they die earlier from treatable illnesses like heart attack, stroke and cancer," she said. "A large part of quitting is safeguarding physical health."

While smoking cessation techniques offered to those with mental illness don't differ significantly from tactics used with their mainstream counterparts, the way in which they are administered might, says Coren. "We have to look at the mental illness and the medications that they are on first," she said. "There might be other issues that are more important for them to address first, so you have to ask if this is the best time to quit, and then develop a plan together to get them to quit."

Other considerations are the limited social and financial supports of those with mental illness.

"When we decide to stop smoking, we can go out to dinner with friends or buy a new dress as a distraction," said Farinholt. "People with mental illness often don't have those options."

Effective cessation techniques focus on expectations of success and self-control, says Short. He



PHOTO COURTESY OF NAMI

Despite her mental health challenges, Deneice Valentine quit smoking in part by learning to meditate.

advises establishing a variety of behaviors to improve daily health, such as adequate sleep, exercise, and nutrition. "Consider obstacles to success and develop problem-solving skills and backup plans," he said. "Develop relaxation skills, such as meditation, prayer, or walking in nature areas."

In fact, meditating allowed Valentine to experience the same calm that she once found in cigarettes. "I transposed the quiet time

I got from cigarettes to mindfulness meditation," she said. "In a peer group I learned to use the

exercises to give my mind a break when it needed it."

Mental illness affects a person's capacity for dealing with stress, loneliness or sadness, and treatment therapies should include components that take those factors into consideration. Learning new coping skills before quitting can make cessation less of a blow and more likely to stick. "I highly recommend that you have tools in place before you quit," said Valentine. One gift that supporters and loved ones can give to smokers with mental illness who are trying to quit is empathy, says Farinholt. "Think about how hard it is for them; don't give them statistics, tell them to stop and think that it's over," she said. "You have to recognize that it's hard, people may slip, but we'll do it step by step."

"I highly recommend that you have tools in place before you quit."

— Deneice Valentine, former smoker

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21 Announcements

ABC LICENSE
Danvic, LLC trading as Calabash African Cuisine, 514C South Van Dorn St., Alexandria, VA 22304. The above establishment is applying to the VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGE CONTROL (ABC) for a Wine & Beer On Premises; Mixed Beverage license to sell or manufacture alcoholic beverages.
Obad Attakpah, 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 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
Olio LLC trading as Olio Tasting Room, 1223 King St., Alexandria, VA 22314. The above establishment is applying to the VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGE CONTROL (ABC) for a Wine & Beer Off Premises license to sell or manufacture alcoholic beverages.
Penny Willmann, owner
NOTE: Objections to the issuance of this license must be submitted to ABC no later than 30 days from the publishing date of the first of two required newspaper legal notices. Objections should be registered at
www.abc.virginia.gov or 800-552-3200.

An expert is someone who knows some of the worst mistakes that can be made in his subject and how to avoid them.
-Werner Heisenberg

21 Announcements

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21 Announcements

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21 Announcements

LEGAL NOTICE
Sealed proposals for the City of Alexandria per specifications will be received in the Office of the Purchasing Division until the date and time designated as follows:

RFP No. 00000647, Interpretive Plan for the Fort Ward Park and Museum Area

Non-mandatory Pre-Proposal Conference: December 2, 2016; 10:00 a.m., prevailing local time, Fort Ward Museum, 4301 West Braddock Road, Alexandria, VA 22304.

RFP Closing Date and Time: December 30, 2016, 4 p.m., prevailing local time

For general inquiries contact Kaylin Gaal, Contract Specialist at 703.746.4286.

The City of Alexandria reserves the right to reject any and all proposals, cancel this solicitation, and to waive any informalities or irregularities in procedure. THE CITY REQUIRES ITS CONTRACTORS TO BE EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYERS. Randy Burns, Purchasing Agent

21 Announcements

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SPORTS

Wolverines Avenge Regular Season Loss to TC

West Potomac set the tone early in last week's game against T.C. Williams as they took the opening kickoff and drove down field for a touchdown catch and run by Zack Monson to put the home team up 7-0. From there it was all West Potomac as the host team shut out the Titans 26-0.

West Potomac travels to Madison for a second round matchup this Friday.

Tanner Jones took over for injured QB Mark Ellis and threw two touchdown passes.



Zach Munson set the tone early in the game with a touchdown run through several TC defenders.



Khalil Williams-Diggins and Brandon Lisenby celebrate a touchdown catch.

PHOTOS BY RICHARD MAPLE

BULLETIN BOARD

FROM PAGE 6

Country Day School, 3700 Burgundy Road, Alexandria. School serves pre-kindergarten to 8th grade. Call 703-329-6968 to RSVP or schedule a personal tour. Visit www.burgundyfarm.org for more.

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information, obtain directions or other information about the group. A complete list of all groups in the National Capital Area region can be viewed at www.alz.org/nca.

WEDNESDAY/DEC. 7

Facing the Empty Chair. 7:30-9 p.m., St. Aidan's Episcopal Church, 8531 Riverside Road. Carey Gauzens, LCSW, from the Center for Pastoral Counseling of Virginia will facilitate an opportunity to share feelings, thoughts, and coping strategies for dealing with grief and the holidays. 703-360-4220 or www.staidansepiscopal.com/Center-for-Spiritual-Deepening

SATURDAY/DEC. 10

Supervisor Dan Storck holds open office hours at the Lorton Library (9-11:30 a.m.) and at the Mount Vernon Governmental Center office (12:30-3 p.m.) on the second Saturday of each month (except August). Call 703-780-7518 for a 15-20 minute appointment, which could result in a longer subsequent meeting during the work week, if needed. He may meet with walk-ins as time permits between appointments.

SUNDAY/JAN. 8

School Open House. 2-4 p.m. at Burgundy Farm

SUPPORT GROUPS

Family Support Group. 7 p.m. on the second and fourth Wednesdays of the month at Gartlan Center, 8119 Holland Road. Opportunity for discussion, information and support for families with members experiencing symptoms of mental illness. Professionally facilitated. Program varies, may include guest speakers, movies. Pre-registration is appreciated, but not required. Free. For more information contact Nga Nguyen at 703-799-2726, TTY 711.

Telephone Support Group. 7-8 p.m. on the 2nd Tuesday of the month. For family caregivers of older adults. Discuss "Keeping Organized as a Caregiver: What Works?" Share experiences, gain support and get information without having to travel. Free. www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dfs/olderadultservices.

Alzheimer's Association support groups provide a place for people with Alzheimer's, their caregivers, family members, and/or friends to share information, caregiving tips and concerns. Groups are facilitated by trained group leaders and are ongoing, free and open to the community. Call the Alzheimer's Association 24/7 Helpline at 800-272-3900 before attending a group for the first time to verify meeting

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

Volunteer Fairfax makes it easy for individuals and families, youth and seniors, corporate groups and civic clubs to volunteer. Fulfill hours, give back, or pay it forward through a variety service options. Visit www.volunteerfairfax.org or call 703-246-3460.

STEM VOLUNTEERS. The American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS) needs scientists, engineers, mathematicians, and physicians to assist K-12 STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics) teachers in the Northern Virginia Area, during the 2016-17 school year. In the 2015-16 school year, the numbers of STEM volunteers in Northern Virginia were: Fairfax County - 40, Arlington - 20, and Alexandria - one. Details of the collaboration are worked out between the teacher and the volunteer, and may involve giving demonstrations, assisting in lab experiments, lecturing on special topics, assisting with homework, etc. The hours are flexible, and volunteers attend a one-day training in September before being assigned to schools. To see how volunteers are assisting their teachers, view the video clips at www.seniorscientist.org. To volunteer, contact donaaldea@aol.com.

11

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8717 Plymouth Rd.
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Best new home price in Fort Hunt's "Plymouth Haven"



New Nelson II model on half acre lot in Plymouth Haven. 3525 square feet on two main levels plus fully finished basement and 2 or 3 car garage. Open floor plan, high ceilings, upgrades throughout. Finished recreation room & bathroom in Basement. Pre-construction contract offers maximum opportunity to customize! \$10,000 towards closing costs! (Using approved lender)



9433 Forest Haven Dr.
\$745,000
New Orleans

Style Appeal!
Unique New Orleans Colonial on gorgeous large lot in prime location near Potomac River. Features include:

Updated custom kitchen, 3 finished levels, 4 BR's including spacious Master suite w/ balcony, 3 full baths, recently installed Andersen windows, oversized 2 car garage, expansive rear deck overlooks magnificent grounds which includes detached studio/office. Walk to nearby MV Yacht Club



9314 Craig Ave.
\$635,000
Pristine Condition!

Truly exquisite property! Spacious 5 Bedroom home on gorgeous, fenced level lot in premier location. Numerous features include: Bright open floor plan, Hardwood floors, gas cooking/heat/hot water, thermal windows, and garage. Large deck overlooks spacious grounds. Property is in pristine "move in" condition!



4220 Scotland Rd.
\$598,500
Unusual Opportunity

Spacious 3 level Five Bedroom Colonial at remarkably reasonable price! Features include: Large room sizes, Hardwood Floors, Five Bedrooms, Including Master Suite with private bath and sitting room. Prime location on large corner lot in the heart of Mt. Vernon. A ton of potential!



8400 Riverside Rd.
\$795,000
Stunning renovation!

Spacious 3 level Colonial with 4 Bedrooms, 3.5 Baths & 2 car garage. Totally renovated with truly amazing

results! Virtually all major components are brand new. Includes: Roof, siding, windows, flooring, chef's kitchen, luxurious baths, trim detail, & interior decorating. Large deck & private level lot. Walk to Stratford E.S. & Sandburg M.S. If you've been dreaming of a new home in Ft. Hunt without the \$1,000,000 price tag, this is it!



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