



From left: Mayor Allison Silberberg with 2017 Excellence in Aging Awards recipients Carol Siegel, Arthur Thomas, Katherine Dixon, executive director of Rebuilding Together Alexandria, Debbie Ludington, and Mary Lee Anderson.

PHOTO BY
VERNON MILES
GAZETTE PACKET

Easing Aging

BY VERNON MILES
GAZETTE PACKET

By 2020, the Virginia Employment Commission Population Projections indicates there will be 28,564 seniors (over 60) living in Alexandria. A lot of them are going to need assistance. Fortunately, throughout Alexandria, several

2017 Excellence in Aging Awards

groups and individuals are working to make the city more livable for them. For their contributions to the city's elderly population, on May 9 in City Hall, the Commission on Aging awarded six individuals special honors.

SEE HONORING, PAGE 9

Under Pressure

6-1 budget vote highlights tensions on City Council.

BY VERNON MILES
GAZETTE PACKET

The budget process is over for the year, but the tense and often bitter disagreements on the dais have revealed some deep cracks in the city's leadership.

In a 6-1 vote on May 4, the City Council approved the FY 2018 budget. The vote pushed Alexandria's tax rate up 5.7 cents, from \$1.073 to \$1.13 per \$100 of assessed value. The original budget proposed by City Manager Mark Jinks included a 2.7 cent increase to fund the rising cost of Metro and schools, but during the add/delete process the budget grew by 3 cents primarily to fund Alexandria Public Schools projects and affordable housing projects. With the increased sewage fees, the total cost tax increase for local residents will be closer to 8.9 cents. For the majority on the council, the new tax rate increase is essential to fund long-delayed infrastructure needs. But the final weeks of the budget process were mainly defined by a standoff between the council and Mayor Allison Silberberg, who said the tax rate increase was too much to put onto local citizens.

Silberberg proposed deferring/cutting three projects from the budget that didn't have an immediate need to keep the tax rate at the city manager's original proposal. The exact terminology of whether these were cuts or deferrals largely depended on who was being asked. Silberberg said the projects would be cut from the FY 2018 budget, but Vice Mayor Jus-



PHOTO BY VERNON MILES

Mayor Allison Silberberg and Vice Mayor Justin Wilson

tin Wilson argued that pushing those projects into FY 2019 would only delay the tax rate increase and potentially increase the cost of those projects. Silberberg also argued that the original proposed budget had already included ample funding for schools and affordable housing, but the other members of the council said they believed the need to invest in city infrastructure justified the increase.

The battle over the budget is just the latest front in a long running conflict that has emerged between Silberberg and Wilson. Since the very first item Silberberg proposed, an ethics commission in January of 2016, Silberberg faced pushback from the other members of council. One of the main voices of opposition was Wilson, who said he found the proposed commission redundant. Eventually the commission passed at a City Council meeting in May 2016, but with significant revisions from the other council members objected to by Silberberg.

SEE COUNCIL, PAGE 23

Murray Nominated to UN Post

Former congressional candidate to serve in Trump administration.

J. Patrick Murray, the two-time Republican candidate for Virginia's 8th Congressional District, has been nominated by President Donald Trump to an administrative post at the United Nations.

The White House released a statement May 8 announcing that the Alexandria resident has been tapped by the Trump administration to be the alternate representative of the United States of America for Special Political Affairs in the United Nations.

Murray will hold the rank of Ambassador.

A retired Army colonel, Murray served with distinction in Iraq, the Balkans, the U.S. Embassy Moscow, as an adviser in the Bureau of Political Military Affairs at the Department of State and as the U.S. Military Representative at the United Nations.

He earned advanced degrees from Oklahoma State University and The Ohio State University, and is a graduate of the George C. Marshall European Center for Security Studies in Germany, the United States Army Command and General Staff College and the



PHOTO BY JEANNE THEISMANN/GAZETTE PACKET

Alexandria resident J. Patrick Murray has been nominated to serve as an alternate representative to the United Nations by President Donald Trump.

Sorenson Institute for Political Leadership at the University of Virginia.

Murray, who challenged former U.S. Rep. Jim Moran in 2010 and 2012, is a published author and political-military commentator and served on the board of directors for the Animal Welfare League of Alexandria.

— JEANNE THEISMANN

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Finding Security in a New Country

Couple adjusts as refugees from Afghanistan.

BY SHIRLEY RUHE
GAZETTE PACKET

Sughra Bakhtiari pours the hot water for tea and sets out a colorfully arranged platter of dried fruits and nuts. “I already arranged it,” she says to her guest. “I didn’t want to waste your time. I know Americans are always in a hurry.”

At seven months pregnant, Sughra and her husband Mohammad Zia Amiri boarded a plane from Kabul for the 17-hour flight to America with their 1-year-old son Yoshay. They had packed only their clothes. No one on their block knew they were leaving. Sughra says when they arrived seven months ago, representatives from Catholic Charities resettlement agency met them at the airport. They had found the family a place to live and they paid the rent for four months. “They also got us furnitures and some kitchen appliances.”

She says Mohammed had a temporary job at Macy’s and has been working as a Lyft driver. “But to pay the rent — it’s tough. He is only able to pay the rent and nothing else no matter how hard he works.” Sughra adds that Mohammed had a number of interviews but when they asked him on the phone if he was a citizen and he said “no,” they would disconnect.

Sughra says she applied for some jobs here and “the same thing happened to me.”

They decided if she gets a better job than he does, he will stay home and take care of the kids or if he gets a better job, she will stay home. “He is a good husband. People like him; there aren’t many like him in Afghanistan.” Mohammed is at an interview this afternoon hoping to get a job similar to the one he had in Afghanistan as a finance manager.

She says that when she had finished a certain phase her mother told her now it was time to stay at home and learn house-keeping. “But I ignored her and continued to go to school. I had my dad’s support. Then later she was always finding a boyfriend for me; she would point out their qualities.” Sughra says she didn’t get married until later but in Afghanistan in the rural areas some girls are married at 13 or 14.

Sughra and Mohammad left Afghanistan because they both worked for the U.S. forces. “We had to hide our job. We never told our relatives because the Taliban target you. They thought if you were working for the Americans you were not helping Afghanistan; you were ruining the country.”

Sughra says it is better in America but it can be lonely here. “In Afghanistan there are big families and all of our relatives are with us. We meet in each other’s houses. Here there are small families, and we came ourselves, not with our siblings.” She adds, “I worry about them. I wish I could do some-



PHOTO BY SHIRLEY RUHE/GAZETTE PACKET
Sughra Bakhtiari shares chocolate from a guest platter with son Yoshay.

thing for them. Day by day it is getting worse there after 2014. There are more Taliban. “

Sughra explains that America assistance to her country in the form of some projects has improved areas like roads, protection walls for rivers and that USAID is helping the people. “It was really skillful for them. Women were working. And since America invested now there are a lot of engineers and doctors; we didn’t have any gynecologists and engineers.

“But I am feeling secure in America. After 7 or 8 at night in Afghanistan women don’t walk on the roads.” And she says you have to walk with a man. “It is more harder

for women. And you can’t travel from state to state or you are a bad woman.”

Sughra says she stills cooks Afghan food like the specialty dish “aash” with noodles, kidney beans, spinach and yogurt. Except pizza. “I made it at home with vegetables and chicken.”

Yoshay has been enrolled in pre-school at William Ramsay Elementary just across the street. She says Yoshay is on the waiting list. In the meantime Sughra has downloaded programs and is teaching him rhymes, colors and numbers.

She explains in Afghanistan the Taliban don’t like people who get education. “Girls cannot go to schools.” Sughra got her education because her father was a refugee to

Pakistan at the time of the war and she was educated there. Now she hopes to start college when one year of residence in Virginia has been completed. “I want to have a job like I had in Afghanistan as a staff compliance officer.” She points to her daughter Asne, who is bouncing in a baby seat. “It is even better in America where she will be able to go to school.”

She says the culture in America is different and they are facing a few problems. But after five years she feels “we will make ourselves competent from education and will succeed here.

This is the third article in a series focusing on refugees.

Hotel Indigo Opens

Official grand opening set for summer.

Seven years after it was first proposed, and after a long tug of war with local residents over every part of the building design, Hotel Indigo has finally opened. At an open house on May 7, the hotel opened its doors to the neighborhood.

The hotel is open for business, though some work is still being done in different parts of the building. President of Carr Hospitality Austin Flajser said the hotel will have its official grand opening this summer.

Reaction from the local residents was mixed.

“It’s a bad idea,” said Don Santarelli, a



PHOTOS BY VERNON MILES/GAZETTE PACKET

Hotel Indigo from the corner of Duke St. and S Union St.

50-year resident of Old Town. Santarelli said he was most concerned about the impact hotel operations would have on the local streets. “The size is bulky. And I’m all for development as long as it doesn’t include 1,000 trucks a day [coming to the site].”

Bert Ely, co-chair of Friends of the Alexandria Waterfront and one of the leading opposition voices, said he still thinks the building is ugly and had concerns about parking at the site.

But other residents were a more positive towards the new hotel.

“It looks better than I thought,” said Hal Hardaway, who had been one of the residents speaking out with concerns about the new hotel. “It’s not a boutique hotel, but I think it looks better than I thought that it would. People in this neighborhood are all over the spectrum [on how they feel about it].”

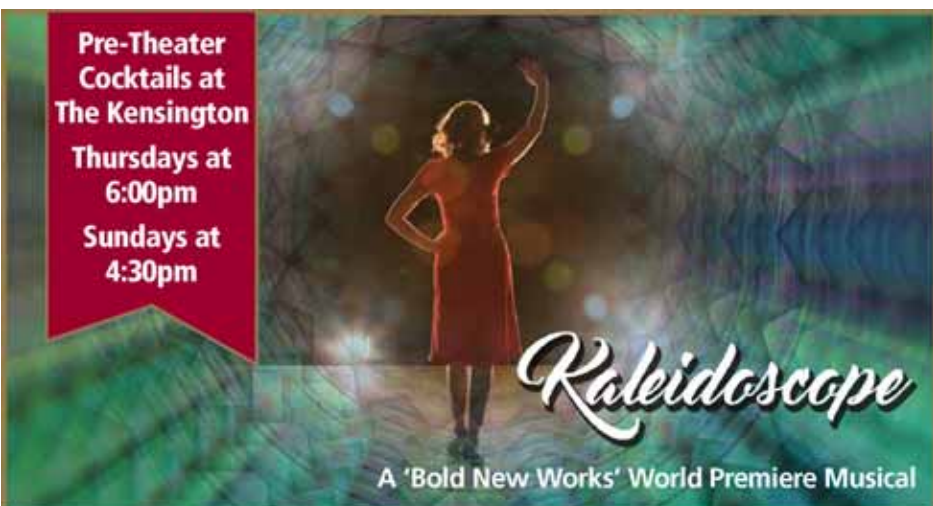
“I think it’s a lovely addition to the area,”



Austin Flajser, president of Carr Hospitality, in front of a mural depicting the revolutionary war era boat found during the construction of the site.

said Susan Polland. “I have friends come to visit my place and they want somewhere local to stay. I think this hotel works nice for the area. I think it blends in pretty well with the surrounding neighborhood.”

Looking back at the process, Flajser recognized there were some difficulties, but “once we got things going, it went smoothly. Things went well. We couldn’t be more proud of the hotel.”



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PEOPLE

Spirit of America

An immigrant's story.

BY DAN BRENDL
 GAZETTE PACKET



Eby Jean Baptiste Aka

Eby Jean Baptiste Aka is an Alexandrian and an African immigrant. He brims with faith and passion to serve the community he now calls home and to build bridges across the Atlantic. He says this "spirit of service" is the "spirit of America."

Aka came to the U.S. in 2000 as an educator from Côte d'Ivoire in West Africa. Having taught in Ivory Coast at a Christian school full of expats, missionaries and diplomats, he wanted to take his multicultural experience abroad. He has taught various grade levels in Minnesota, Virginia, and Washington, D.C. In 2002, he decided to stay. Now 46, he has called Alexandria home for 13 years. He and his wife, both immigrant citizens, have two young children.

Aka's commitment to youth stems from his own experience growing up in the hardship of a small Ivory Coast village, and in particular from his mother. "Mom told me early to live useful, to make sure...[to] touch...other people's lives" he said. He

learned from her example. "She [would] be taking care of people's children. She [would] be sharing food. She [would] be involved in resolving conflict. ... She was everywhere." When Aka was a teenager, his father left. Aka stayed in school to support his mother, who suffered from an eye sickness that ultimately blinded her. He has been taking care of her ever since, now by sending money.

Aka is a man of strong faith. "I have served a lot. I have been sharing the gospel [with] young people. I have ... a strong bond with

SEE SPIRIT, PAGE 25

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ME & MY MOM



Susan D. Dawson of Alexandria, with brother Tom Dawson of Winston-Salem, N.C., and Mom Dorothy Dawson on Easter, 1948.



Amy and Ford Ward playing kickball with little Summer at left.



Bilquess Giwa teaching son Messiahs to ride his bike.



Sharon Thompson, Alexandria resident for 40-plus years, and her first grandchild, my son, Duke Jeffry. The photo was taken in October, when Duke was approximately six months old. My best friend, who also happens to be a photographer, was here visiting from Chicago and took the photo. It is one of my favorites. My mom proudly gazing at Duke ... they are the best of friends.

— JULIA BYRNES

Silvia Mendez with son Harold, daughter Belky and niece Jiana (top) relaxing after dinner and watching a movie at home.



Evan Hulehan and his mom, Dr. Jennifer Sade, taken at the river house on Northern Neck in June 2003. Rest in peace, Jenny.

— WAYNE HULEHAN



Sophie Hattery with her mom, Maude Lee, enjoying frozen treats near our house on May 30, 2015.

— BRIAN HATTERY



Four generations: Maggie Harris, Pat Broyles, Mae Collins and Mary Cay Harris.

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ME & MY MOM

'A Heavenly Mother's Day Poem ... For My Mother'

May 4, 2016 was one year ago
As if it was yesterday
And yesterday has been many days
That I've not forgotten you are my
mother ...

I think of you often
And that's a lot I must say
And often little smiles of yours
At times I can see...

I think of you,
Music I play I hope for you to hear
For sure I know like a lamp in the sky
that you see
In time we be ...

But for now I am here and you are there
in Heaven
An angel of beauty, you are still my
mother,
I miss the little notes you would send
Of few lines of just a "Hi" and ask for me
to call,
Get in touch and now no phone is
needed
'Cause you can see
Like a star in the sky bright as a lamp ...

I love you Mom
Your daughter

Geri Baldwin
Alexandria

**The layers of
clouds are like an
angel watching
over me.**

— GERI BALDWIN



This picture was probably taken in 1962. I was born in 1961 in France, where my father was stationed. I treasure this photo — being the last of six children there are very few pictures of just me and my mom, Fumiko Skovran. She died Feb. 19 of this year, and I still miss her every day.

— SUZY MARTIN



Marie Sharpes of Alexandria with mom Fumiko Skovran enjoying their time together in September 2015.

— SUZY MARTIN

To Moms and Motherhood ... Whatever It Looks Like for You

While in office, I only felt compelled to write with purpose. Since ending in 2012, I've worked to reclaim and enjoy a private, non-political life. I've been silent but feel moved to write from an unguarded perspective on motherhood today ... my own. I celebrate the most incredible woman I know, Alice Hughes, and others who have impacted life remarkably. But ironically, I simultaneously join so many silent women who desire motherhood, yet mourn being childless in the land of the living.

As I reflect on what is in Heaven that I must die to see, in openness, and with profound vulnerability I admit that being childless hurts every year this time. Sometime ago, I read some great advice: don't ask women why they don't have children, because you don't know their story ... and we all have one. I agree, because so many of us hurt and the question adds to the pain.

No one sympathizes with the plight of those who have carried and lost or not been privileged to carry at all. What's worse, we



Former Alexandria City Councilwoman Alicia Hughes and Mom Alice Hughes.

live in a culture oblivious to the need to understand. I ask we all be mindful amidst celebration that many among us have an invisible struggle and profound sadness. I raise my hand as part of that chorus while still celebrating the mom who fascinates me every day.

She raised three unique daughters, discovered and developed our individual talents, and in a way that we felt special enough to exist as though we were each only children.

She's my greatest, but was diagnosed with lung cancer recently. We learned that due to medical oversight, she's had it for six years.

I live for family so my world has stopped for mom. Given God's grace we are witnessing a miracle. Even minus half a lung and with massive surgery, she's still here encouraging all of us and epitomizing grace and strength amidst incomprehensible pain.

As I reflect on my life, I'm saddened by many things I've endured publicly. I've hurt

a lot. In a manner apparent and painful to my family, I don't have the privilege of private shortcomings or mistakes, even outside a public life. Witnessing my mother love, fight through and endure overwhelming pain given a desire to see her grandchildren grow up and be resilient through unfair circumstance is nothing less than inspiring, to me and all she encounters. I find myself overcome with joy even amidst sadness because she exists to love and has been an exemplar of how we are all called to love others, even when they bring us pain.

Regardless of your own circumstance, as Mother's Day approaches, I hope you'll join me in being grateful for the moms we've been blessed with while simultaneously praying peace for those who are sad given unrealized heart's desires. We aren't called to do much, but we are expected to walk in love with one another.

Alicia Hughes
Former Alexandria City Councillor

Honoring Those Serving Seniors

FROM PAGE 1

Two members of city staff won the Public Service Award, recognizing a city employee who contributed to making Alexandria more livable for all ages.

Arthur Thomas was honored for his over 30 years of service to the city's Office of Housing. The Home Rehabilitation Loan Program helps lower income homeowners rehabilitate their homes with accessibility improvements and basic maintenance. For 10 years, Thomas managed the office and coordinated with architects and contractors to do work on the homes.

Debbie Ludington was honored for her 30 years of service in the city's Division of Aging and Adult Services. She co-directed the adult day services for years before becoming the long term care coordinator. Ludington oversees the agency's contracts with private organizations for work with senior centers, home delivered meals, homemaker and personal services, and legal assistance.

The commission also recognized Rebuilding Together Alexandria with an Excellence in Aging Award. Rebuilding Together Alexandria is part of a national network of organizations that rehabilitate homes for lower income homeowners, many of them elderly. Last year, Rebuilding Together worked on 115 homes and helped 200 Alexandria residents of an average age of 71 years. On April 29,

the organization participated in National Rebuilding Day, sending more than 1,000 volunteers to homes across the city to help work on repairs and home maintenance.

The Lois Van Valkenburgh Excellence in Aging Award, an award given to an individual who has made outstanding contributions to elevating the quality of life for elderly residents, was awarded to Mary Lee Anderson, executive director of Senior Services of Alexandria. As executive director, Anderson expanded the meals on wheels and friendly visitor programs, helping to provide meals on weekends and holidays in addition to the regular weekday meals of other programs. Anderson also established the Groceries to Go program and a monthly Speaker Series that brings free educational programs to older Alexandrians.

The Annie B. Rose Award recognizes lifetime achievements in public service. This year, the awards were given to William "Bill" Clayton and Carol Siegel. Clayton was recognized for his volunteer work with At Home in Alexandria (AHA), ranging from editing the monthly newsletter to helping with home repairs and snow shoveling. Siegel was recognized for her 17 years of service providing art instruction and therapy at the city's Adult Day Care Services Center, where she instructs participants twice a month to use art to help express themselves.

T.C. Williams High School Varsity Debate team co-captains Jay Falk, right, and Victoria Peace, second from left, will be featured in the May 22 Agenda:Alexandria discussion on gun control.



Debating Gun Control

Agenda:Alexandria program scheduled for May 22.

T.C. Williams High School Varsity Debate team co-captains Jay Falk and Victoria Peace will be featured in the May 22 Agenda:Alexandria discussion on gun control.

Under the direction of their coach Laurel Taylor, the award-winning team of Falk and Peace will lead the program titled "A Formal Debate on Gun Control" at The Hermitage.

A cash bar reception will begin at

6:30 p.m. followed by dinner at 6:45 p.m. With reservations and cancellations by May 19: members \$32 (non-members \$37); after May 19, members \$37 (non-members \$42). Program only with dessert at 7:15 p.m. is free to members; \$5 for non-members. The Hermitage is located at 5000 Fairbanks Ave. For more information, visit www.agendaalexandria.com.

— JEANNE THEISMANN

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OPINION

Accountable Citizenship A personal reflection on the city budget.

BY DAN BRENDL

As a freelance reporter with the Gazette Packet, I've been covering this year's city budget process. Someone asked recently why I have taken such an interest in such a phenomenally boring subject. I've thought of three good, inter-related reasons — at least in hindsight. These also reflect areas of significant and ongoing awakening for me personally, as a citizen.

First is the increasing role of Christianity in my life and how I understand the importance of religion's moral voice in human society.

COMMENTARY

I used to think that politics is inherently corrupt because it involves exercising power over other people. Best to steer clear of it. Jesus meek and mild. But I've come to see the imprudence of that view. The Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr. wrote: "One of the greatest problems of history is that the concepts of love and power are usually contrasted as polar opposites. Love is identified with a resignation of power and power with a denial of love. ... What is needed is a realization that power without love is reckless and abusive, and love without power is sentimental and anemic. Power at its best is

love implementing the demands of justice ... Love at its best is justice concretized."

The budget is pretty boring, no two ways about it. But, along with planning and zoning, the public schools, and elections, it's among the most powerful instruments in this city. And precisely for that reason, the Christian church — and I personally — must seek to embed the transformative love of the gospel in it. So I've taken an interest, not because it's interesting per se, but because it's vital.

The point about what is "interesting" segues to my second reason: I worry about our cultural commitment to the hard work of authentic human community.

I'm less and less concerned about a Twitter-shaped president than I am about a Twitter-shaped public. We're not entitled to have our interest captured in 140 characters. We're not entitled to pare down complex social issues into easily digestible snippets. Such entitlement leads to, and reveals itself in, a cheap politics of trending sound bites and bumper stickers.

Take racial discrimination and disparity, for example. Richard Spencer leases space on King Street and Alexandrians go nuts. Not that anyone should like it. Yet our fair town has home-grown race-biased structures, too, which are far more pernicious because they're harder to

comprehend and point at: Such as a feeble posture toward affordable housing and a lucrative real estate-industrial complex. These interlocking structures drive the intergenerational arc of gentrification, and therefore of systemic racial bias in our own city, much more than one extremist ideologue flitting through the media spotlight. And in certain ways perhaps even more than one president passing through the Oval Office — or a least independently from him.

Consider the Braddock Metro Neighborhood in Old Town, where I moved last year. This area used to be among the city's largest and most vibrant black communities. But it's become steadily richer and whiter, largely thanks to ongoing redevelopment. Slated projects include overhauling several public housing developments, resulting in the displacement of residents and a reduction of public housing units; new retail districts; and building out the land adjacent to the Metro station with rider-ship-generating (i.e., not low-income) offices, mixed residential/retail, and/or a hotel. These measures seem a lot more likely to bolster a posh, upper-middle class enclave than to constrain skyrocketing property values and the

SEE ACCOUNTABLE, PAGE 17

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Keep the Future in Mind

To the Editor:

As the City Council has struggled with issues of budgeting and taxation and spending in re-

cent weeks, I have tried to think about the issues in broader terms than those on the table.

For the last couple of years, the City of Alexandria has been at a crossroads, trying to figure out which way to go. Should it stick with the values and practices of the past, as it tries to deal with current pressures for change? Or

should it plan for the future and set goals to work toward, even though those goals may be hard to reach? Which way to go: the comfortable embrace of the status quo, with an occasional minor adjustment? Or the less comfortable job of grappling with the demands of a future whose challenges are cause for anxiety?

During the current budget season we've seen this struggle play out in many ways. Public funds to stem the tide of raw sewage and build yet another Metro station have captured most of the headlines; the first issue as a continuing threat to public health, the second as a support for further development. Also on the agenda has been the level of support for the Alexandria City Public School System. In an odd sort of way, these disparate issues reflect a similar problem: Alexandria's inability over decades of urban expansion to put the city in gear, drive through that crossroads, and move toward the future.

The issue that concerns me the most is that of support for public schools. For reasons and pressures of the past and present, school buildings in Alexandria have been allowed to deteriorate. Herculean efforts were required to replace T.C. Williams High School a decade ago and, more recently, the crumbling disgrace that was Jefferson-Houston Elementary School.

Both efforts were essential, and the results of new construction brought a boost to civic pride and student achievement. But those efforts still generate controversy in the city's meeting rooms, as some quietly question whether the schools cost too much, or should have been built at all. Similar doubts have been openly expressed about the nature and size of the ACPS 10-year Capital Improvement Program, designed to address the deterioration of city schools.

SEE LETTERS, PAGE 12



Heading to World Finals

A team of fifth graders from Douglas MacArthur Elementary School and a team of seventh graders from George Washington Middle School will compete in the World Finals of the Odyssey of the Mind competition at Michigan State, May 24-27. There were approximately 825 teams from more than 20 countries competing this year. The following two teams included some siblings. MacArthur Team: Henry Anderson, Keira Bosland, Tate Fagan, Miriam Gortner, Walker Kopp, and Anna Moulthrop. G.W. Team: Savannah Anderson, Cooper Bosland, Zach Bosland, Cassie Gortner, Ethan Gotsch, Ava Moulthrop, and Cade Stinson.

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NEWS DEPARTMENT:
gazette@connectionnewspapers.com

Steven Mauren

Editor, 703-778-9415

smauren@connectionnewspapers.com

Mike Salmon

Assistant Editor

msalmon@connectionnewspapers.com

Vernon Miles

Reporter, 757-472-3435

vmiles@connectionnewspapers.com

Jeanne Theismann

jtheismann@connectionnewspapers.com

@TheismannMedia

Steve Artley

Cartoonist

artley@connectionnewspapers.com

John Bordner

Contributing Photographer

gazette@connectionnewspapers.com

Eden Brown, Rikki George,

Shirley Ruhe

Contributing Writers

gazette@connectionnewspapers.com

ADVERTISING:

For advertising information

sales@connectionnewspapers.com

703-778-9431

Debbie Funk

Display Advertising/National Sales

703-778-9444

debfunk@connectionnewspapers.com

Julie Ferrill

Display Advertising, 703-927-1364

jferrill@connectionnewspapers.com

Tara Lloyd

Display Advertising, 703-740-7128

tlloyd@connectionnewspapers.com

Andrea Smith

Classified Advertising, 703-778-9411

asmith@connectionnewspapers.com

David Griffin

Marketing Assistant

703-778-9431

dgriffin@connectionnewspapers.com

Publisher

Jerry Vernon

703-549-0004

jvernon@connectionnewspapers.com

Editor & Publisher

Mary Kimm

mkimm@connectionnewspapers.com

@MaryKimm

Editor in Chief

Steven Mauren

Art/Design:

Laurence Foong, John Heinly,

Ali Khaligh

Production Manager:

Geovani Flores

Editor Emeritus:

Mary Anne Weber

CIRCULATION: 703-778-9427

Circulation Manager:

Ann Oliver

circulation@connectionnewspapers.com

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ALEXANDRIA GAZETTE PACKET ❖ MAY 11-17, 2017 ❖ 11

LETTERS

FROM PAGE 10

Justification for every part of the CIP, and for all of the funding that's required for ACPS, can be found on the school system's website. On a larger scale, I believe the city owes its children — every single one of them — the best education it can provide. It also owes that same result to us — Alexandria's citizens, present and future — as students graduate and move into society.

Think of it as an investment: graduates of our schools will represent us one day, no matter what they become, or how well they do. Do we want their future achievements to represent the wisdom of a generation that gave them the education and skills to build a future for our community? Or do we want them simply to replace us as drivers of that city, idling at the crossroads? As a generation of voters and taxpayers do we want to be remembered only for making decades-late repairs to open sewers? Or also for investing in our children as future citizens of Alexandria?

I grumble every time I pay taxes, especially when they go up. But I will vote every time for candidates who make sure my taxes are spent with the challenges of the future — and not just the easier comforts of the past — in mind.

John E. Lennon
Alexandria

John Lennon is outgoing president of the T.C. Williams PTSA, and co-chaired the ACPS 2020 Strategic Planning Stakeholders Committee. He and his wife are parents of a T.C. Williams sophomore, and a 2014 TC graduate.

Overwhelming Overbuilding

To the Editor:

On the evening of May 3 the Planning Commission met to consider Docket 14 which included the building of a Hyatt Hotel on the 1600 block of King Street. The proposed new hotel building is six and a half stories tall with 124 rooms and an attached restaurant. A dozen local residents came out and spoke against the hotel. No local resident came out and supported the hotel.

The citizens who spoke expressed concerns with the height and density of the development, inadequate parking provided in the design, the conversion of part of Harvard Street to a two-way street and eliminating several on-street parking spaces on Harvard Street, removing at least six mature trees, destruction of an almost historic building, and removal of at least four no parking signs at the alley entrance to the hotel so that entrance bumps can be built to slow and narrow down traffic entering the alley for the underground parking garage.

The citizens were also concerned about the proximity of the hotel to areas where children play and the amount of traffic that the hotel would produce. Others were concerned about the impact on the serenity and beauty of the street. Many of the citizens have lived on the block for many, many years. They chose the neighborhood for its peacefulness and beauty, so obviously they are extremely concerned. The developers

indicated the development would bring vitality to the neighborhood. There is already vitality to the neighborhood with five restaurants and the Durant Center on Cameron Street.

Some residents feel it is insane for the Planning Commission and forthcoming City Council to recommend more and more excessive growth, claiming it is needed for increased tax growth.

The proposed hotel plans on excavating the existing parking lot at the corner of Harvard Street at one level providing 85 parking spaces two of which will be reserved for the management.

No spaces are provided for three or four shifts of employees.

Massive destruction for this hotel will take place within two years. The developers' proposal to make it a two-way entrance street will cause unheard of traffic congestion. Water, gas and electric utilities will have to be placed underground causing further destruction. Town houses on the odd side now 110 years old with half basements and porches could be damaged by pile placement.

What will residents get out of this hotel when it is finally built? Practically nothing accept for the loss of six or more parking spaces on the street and the death of at least six mature, beautiful trees.

Alexandria is overbuilding and destroying old buildings for the tax money, not for the people living in areas where big hotels are being built. Taxpaying citizens need more respect from City Hall instead of continual overbuilding.

Jim Melton
Alexandria

'Piling on' Of Taxes

To the Editor:

Mayor Allison Silberberg's vote against the city's 2018 budget on May 4 was a badge of courage that all Alexandria should appreciate.

She stood by the innovative budget proposal put forward by the city manager. That budget increased property taxes by 2.7 cents per hundred and added a stormwater fee that together would jump the average homeowner's tax burden in 2018 about \$370, a substantial increase. To that must be added an increased sewer fee, paid on the water bill and expected to grow 500 percent over this decade. The manager's budget more than adequately would have met current and future needs.

Seemingly without regard for the taxpayer impact, Vice Mayor Wilson then proposed to add additional 3 cents per hundred — increasing the tax burden significantly for the average homeowner. And what would that money be used for? A \$12 million "contingency fund," with no specified purpose. Nonetheless, the majority of the council went along with Mr. Wilson — and Alexandria taxpayers all will be getting the hefty bill early in 2018.

As a retiree I am very sensitive to this "piling on" of taxes. For people on fixed incomes, small business owners and families



PHOTO BY GERI BALDWIN

'One'

We grow, we smile
We laugh and sometimes little tears
Fall like rain drops. Yet, through it all
We care as one

The beauty of love lives and shines within

Through life and our environment
For Earth Day is everyday.

— Geri Baldwin
Alexandria

with modest incomes whose biggest investment is in their homes, a 3 cent per hundred add-on has a real impact. Mayor Silberberg understands this and stood strong — a lone voice on council for fiscal restraint.

Jack Sullivan
Alexandria

Make Changes In SOL Testing

To the Editor:

Recently, there was controversy surrounding the decision of Principal Brandon Davis of the Cora Kelly School for Math, Science, and Technology to call parents of low performing students on the SOLs and inform them of their right to opt out of the test. While Mr. Davis has been somewhat vilified for this decision I think it should be a call for us as a community and as a state to push for testing reform. Principal Davis is a decorated administrator who has had a successful career in education in the City of Alexandria.

The fact that our testing system put him in a position where calling a specific group of students' parents, with the aim of reducing the number of those students who took the SOLs not only made logical sense for both the students and the school, but even seemed like the right thing to do. While it has been shown that Principal Davis' decision likely had little effect on the reported scores for the school, as a student and a

person I can understand why he made the decision he did.

Our system is a positive feedback loop where a school earning accreditation ultimately puts them in a better position to serve all of its students, and failing to do so, even as a result of students who genuinely need more attention and help, puts the school at a disadvantage of doing so.

It's time to give teachers and administrators in Virginia more input on standardized testing, so teachers are teaching to the students and not to the tests, and more importantly, calling for change in a system that is failing the students it's aiming to help.

Jason Filios
Alexandria

Justify Tax and Fees Increase

To the Editor:

I have lived or worked in the City of Alexandria most of my life. I have observed in excess of 50 budget cycles. This budget cycle was by far the most unusual.

A group of long-term City Council members who have been through seven or more budget cycles just discovered that they had approved budgets that did not allow Alexandria to maintain its physical buildings, schools, and sewer system.

The past seven budgets deferred replacement of the failing sewer system (parts of which are 100 years old) and ignored the fact that raw sewage was running into the Potomac River.

The citizens of this city have noticed this and have been asking questions about this for 15 years or more. How can long-serving members of the City Council have not noticed this and allowed it to continue this long?

The city manager presented a very reasonable budget with a 2.7 cent increase in the real estate tax rate. That was a reasonable start on solving problems caused by low budgeting. The vice mayor proposed a 5.7 cent increase without any intention of compromise.

The council had an "add and delete" meeting in which they supported the 5.7 cent increase with the only proposed deletions being offered by the mayor.

It was apparent that some of the council members came to that meeting with no intent of compromising with the mayor. They demonstrated arrogant thinking. This council cannot fix years of low budgeting with an increase of taxes and fees in one year.

This current budget has set aside millions of dollars in something like a slush fund. The use of which will be determined later. Three hundred thousand dollars is for potential use of consultants to study what the newly created task force will recommend to council. This city has a staff to perform this service.

This nearly 10 cent increase in taxes and fees imposes a hardship on a lot of our long-term low- and moderate-income residents and seniors.

Charles Edwin Simpson, Jr. C.P.A.
Alexandria

OBITUARIES

Margaruitte V. Foisie

Margaruitte van Tschurin Foisie, a long time Alexandria resident and the wife of former Washington Post assistant managing editor, Philip Foisie, died on May 9, 2017 at age 90. Mrs. Foisie came to the U.S. in 1948 from Shanghai, China. Both her parents had left Russia following that country's revolution and emigrated to Shanghai, where they met and where Mrs. Foisie was born. Her family moved for a few years to Dairen [now Dalian] and Hankow [now Hankou], but returned to Shanghai, where she attended the Convent of the Sacred Heart school and where they lived through the Japanese occupation. She met her husband briefly at the end of the war after which he returned to the United States to finish college but the couple stayed in touch by letters and he came back to Shanghai where they were married in 1948.

After traveling to the U.S. on a Norwegian freighter, the couple first lived in Sausalito, Calif. Her husband's journalism career then took them to Santa Rosa, Calif.; Louisville, Ky. and, in 1955, to Alexandria. Mrs. Foisie's involvement in her husband's career included hosting and attending numerous gatherings for diplomats, journalists and others, which on occasion



included her brother-in-law and Secretary of State, Dean Rusk and his wife, Virginia Foisie Rusk.

While in the Washington area, Mrs. Foisie's activities included volunteering at Alive!; supporting various local cultural institutions, such as WETA, The Washington Ballet and Arena Stage, and membership in the League of Women Voters, the Asian-American Forum and her church, the Unitarian Universalist Church of Arlington. In 1981 she went to Paris, France, where her husband was executive editor of the International Herald Tribune, and where she was a founding member of the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Paris. They returned to Alexandria in 1987, where she lived until her death.

Although Mrs. Foisie held office jobs several times during her married life, including at Living Stage in Washington, D.C., she said she would be proud to be remembered as a housewife/homemaker, a role she thought was undervalued by society.

Mrs. Foisie is survived by her sister, Nona Mari, of Vancouver, Canada; three sons: Greg, of Lancaster, Calif.; Geoff, of Alexandria, and Tim, of Westport, Conn.; a daughter, Christina, of Akron, Ohio, 11 grandchildren and four great-grandchildren. In lieu of flowers, donations in her name may be sent to: Alive! (ALEXANDRIANS INVOLVED Ecumenically), The Washington Ballet, or the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee.

Vera 'Casey' Gonzalez

Vera "Casey" Gonzalez also known as Vera Moeller, died as a result of complications from liver and lung cancer in Arlington on Saturday, May 6, 2017, surrounded by her daughters and ex-husband. She was 67-years-old. Vera was born in Ansbach, Germany on Dec. 18, 1949 to Margit Moeller and James Casey. She was a Department of the Army civilian, writer, mother, and community volunteer.



She earned a Cold War certificate and other military civilian accolades.

She made many sacrifices that came with being a military dependent and spouse. Her father James Casey, a sergeant major, U.S. Army, was a WWII veteran. After living in Germany and Turkey when she was young, her family settled in New Jersey, where she attended Oceanport Grammar School and Shore Regional High school, Class of '67. She loved horses and worked at Monmouth's Park Racetrack.

Amongst her many moves she wrote short stories for her family and later developed her writing talents while working in media, research, and newspapers including the Alexandria Gazette in Northern Virginia and military base newspapers such as the Tempelhof Air Base Tabulator during the

Cold War. She was in Berlin when the Wall came down in November 1989. Previous to that she was directly involved in facilitating the visit by President Ronald Reagan on June 12, 1987 where he gave his famous speech "chairman, tear down this wall" in West Berlin.

She cared deeply for her community through service to others and volunteering in many settings. She was one to often volunteer on military installations lending support to our service-people and their families.

She also remained an active member of Alexandria Free Methodist Church and the MD1 chapter of Rolling Thunder. One of her last contributions was volunteering for the Alexandria INOVA hospital.

She is survived by her mom, Margit, sister Ingrid, and daughters Isabel and Olivia, niece Anna, and loving pup Max.

She was an organ donor. Through her generosity and caring, she will help restore vision to two people.

A memorial service will be held at the Alexandria Free Methodist Church, 4901 Polk Ave, Alexandria, on Saturday, May 13, 2017 at 10:30 a.m.

The family is asking donations in lieu of flowers be made to the Vera Casey Memorial Fund at the National Foundation for Cancer Research (NFCR) at <https://www.crowdrise.com/vera-casey-memorial-fund1>



HOME OF THE WEEK

Edinburg

A true one of a kind chalet style private estate with spectacular mountain views. The impeccably maintained main house has over 7500 sq ft of the absolute finest construction details. Main floor master suite has a private sitting room w/fireplace. The 28 foot ceilings and walls of glass in the expansive sun filled living room lead to the Viking gourmet kitchen, large family sunroom and dining room that leads to an upper-level porch w/ endless mountain views. The property has five additional bedrooms, 4 full and 2 half baths. Four custom stone fireplaces and over 3000 sq ft of patios and porches. Lower level has a large rec room, custom seated wet bar, game room plus additional bedrooms & baths, all walking out to massive stone patio and outdoor cooking area. The interior woodwork is beyond compare, post & beams are Douglas Fir from Oregon, peeled and scraped by artisans in Missoula, Montana and shipped directly to the home site during construction. Collar ties are reclaimed hardwoods collected from old barns throughout the Shenandoah Valley. Hardwood floors are Black Walnut from North Carolina and all stairways & railings are Black Walnut from Virginia. Custom doors throughout the home are Knotty Alder from West Virginia. Ceilings and stairwells are tongue and groove Western White Cedar. All the windows are custom Pella w/transoms, made to property specifications. Separate utility, storage rooms and huge upper level office space. Attached 3 bay garage, 7 zone HVAC, 2 wells. Offered on 20 acres for \$1,995,000, or on 60 acres for \$2,595,000 including 7 fully approved 4-7 acre building lots.

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**BIKE TO
WORK
DAY 2017
FRIDAY MAY 19**

Celebrate Bike to Work Day in Alexandria!

On Friday, May 19, Alexandria residents will be among the thousands of area commuters who will celebrate Bike to Work Day by cycling to work and participating in special events around the region.

The Market Square pit stop, sponsored by GO Alex, will be open from 6:30 a.m. until 8:30 a.m.

Visit www.biketoworkmetrodc.org and register today to visit Market Square or one of three other Alexandria pit stops on May 19.

- Old Town/Market Square: (301 King St.)
- Carlyle (300 John Carlyle St.)
- Del Ray: (2704 Mount Vernon Ave.)
- Mark Center: (Directly across from 4825 Mark Center Dr.)

Register by May 12 to receive a free t-shirt, water bottle, and be entered into a raffle!



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OPINION

May Is Older Americans Month

“Age Out Loud” at the Senior Health and Fitness Fair.

BY MARYANNE BEATTY

SENIOR SERVICES OF ALEXANDRIA



Since 1963, the Older Americans Month has been a time to celebrate older Americans, their stories and their contributions. This year's theme, “Age Out Loud,” gives aging a new voice that reflects what today's older adults have to say. More than ever before, seniors are working longer, trying new things and engaging in their communities. They are taking charge of their health and fitness so they can stay independent and advocate for themselves and other.

Getting older doesn't mean what it used to. For many aging Americans, it is a phase of life where interests, goals, and dreams can get a new or second start. Today aging is about eliminating outdated perceptions and living the way that suits you best.

Take Barbara Hillary, for example. A nurse for 55

years who dreamed of travel, at age 75 Hillary became the first African American woman to set foot on the North Pole. Former president George H.W. Bush celebrated his 90th birthday by skydiving.

Alexandria's Successful Aging Committee is using Older Americans Month to focus on how older adults in our community are redefining aging by taking charge of their health at its Annual Senior Health and Fitness Fair on Wednesday, May 24 from 9:30 a.m. – noon at the Lee Center, 1108 Jefferson St. in Alexandria. It will be an informative and interactive event free for all Alexandria seniors. Dr. Basim Khan from Alexandria Neighborhood Health will talk about what all seniors need to know to stay healthy and fit. There will also be healthy cooking and exercise demonstrations including Line Dancing, and “Parkour” — an exercise program that blends creative movement and mindfulness to help with balance. Health screenings will be available for hearing, blood pressure and mental health.

To register for the event go to Senior Services of Alexandria's website at seniorservicesalex.org or call 703-836-4414, ext. 110. A light breakfast is served and there is free parking.

Take time to celebrate the older Americans in your community by acknowledging all the contributions they continue to make as valuable members of our society. To learn more about the Older Americans Month go to <https://oam.acl.gov>.

Democrats: Use Your Words

BY KERRY CARTER

Old Dominion Boulevard is one of the most beautiful streets in all of Alexandria. Every spring, thousands of dogwoods and azaleas in that neighborhood, known as Beverley Hills (yes, with an “e”) put on a spectacular display of bloom and color. But an even more impressive miracle happens year after year down the boulevard at the venerable Beverley Hills Church Preschool, founded in 1939. There, teachers and parents have worked together for decades to mold toddlers from

ages 2 through 5 into creative, happy and thoughtful children ready to take on the challenges of elementary school and the real world. As a parent I found many aspects of BHCP's child-rearing philosophy useful, but one particular phrase helped enormously, especially in the heat of a full-blown kiddie meltdown: “Use your words.”

Given the present state of our politics and an increasing number of meltdowns emanating from various Democratic leaders, I'd say it's time to go back to preschool.

First, I'll acknowledge that every American politician needs to take a refresher in the basics of civil speech. Let's start with President Trump. We have watched him numerous times make a variety of shockingly profane and sexist statements. We know that lots of past presidents frequently used profanity, but most with the exception of Richard Nixon had the good sense to evade recording.

Our recent national election seems to have changed everything, ushering in a brand new era where public profanity by Famous Persons is suddenly “in.” Apparently well-educated Democratic politicians are using swear words routinely to convey their sense of loss, outrage and frustration as the faithful applaud. Anti-Trump demonstrators wield ugly signs at their

marches that probably confirm each other's thoughts but must be bleeped out on TV. DNC Chair Tom Perez has let loose several times at union rallies. Rep. Kirsten Gillibrand dropped the ever-present f-bomb the other day during a newspaper interview. Several of her Democratic colleagues have followed suit with their versions of mouthy malfeasance.

I can understand the profanity of former Clinton operatives, who are still agonizing and scratching their heads as to why their candidate lost. Famous personalities like Ashley Judd, Amy Schumer and Stephen Colbert can also get away with lewdness and cursing because, after all, they're paid to get good ratings. The same cannot be said of the several Democratic leaders and spokesmen (and women) whom we've observed helplessly flailing and repeatedly failing the English language. They know better and should hold themselves to a higher standard. They remind me of the loser kid who went home with a stupid participation trophy: after a huge tantrum and being sent to your room, the only option left is to chuck that lousy plastic trinket into the trash.

Democrats, please grow up and symbolically graduate from preschool. You are presumably well-educated and smart enough to know that English grammar affords hundreds of colorful ways to express one's pain, anger or disappointment. Now's the time to use all those other great words.

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Submit civic/community announcements at ConnectionNewspapers.com/Calendar.

FRIDAY/MAY 12

Community Service Day. 12:30-4:30 p.m. at at Volunteer Alexandria, 123 N. Alfred St., 1st Floor. Community service day as part of the 10th Annual Spring for Alexandria for employees of the City, businesses and nonprofits. \$25. 2017springforalexandria.kintera.org.

SEE BULLETIN BOARD, PAGE 26

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Walk-In Closet Design Ideas

From chandeliers to luxury seating, the options are plentiful.

BY MARILYN CAMPBELL

When an Old Town Alexandria couple decided to remodel their master bedroom suite, they wanted to pay particular attention to the room's two walk-in closets. Designer Gene Delgado of Hopkins & Porter Construction, Inc., in Potomac, Md. was tasked with overhauling the spaces to give the couple the maximum amount of storage for their clothing and accessories.

"We ordered a storage system from Poliform, an Italian luxury modern furniture brand, that does exquisite closet systems," said Delgado. "The closet spaces are very modern with lots of built-in lighting. Because of the angled ceilings ... we are designing a cabinet for shoe storage and some shelving for purses and luggage. I'm doing a chandelier for the wife's closet to make it warmer and more feminine."

With available accessories ranging from elaborate lighting to luxury seating areas, there's no need to settle for a closet that

looks like a cross between a laundry room and a landfill. When it comes to walk-in closets, the options for creating a dream space are plentiful say designers.

"Closets are no longer utilitarian spaces for your clothes. People want their closets to be beautiful," said Delgado. "The trend is that they are bigger, more beautiful and more luxurious. Those with large spaces can have everything from coffee makers to seating areas."

When beginning the design of a closet space, Julia Walter, showroom manager at Italian design firm Boffi, advises clients to make an inventory list of items that will go inside such as long-hanging clothing foldable clothing and shoes.

"What plays into the inventory list is how the client prefers to use their closets," she said. "For example, do they mostly hang or do they fold clothes. It's helpful to see what the client's closet looks like currently [and] works and what doesn't."

A combination of small and large drawers is important for the different items to store, says Walter. For example, small drawers can hold items like jewelry, underwear and socks while larger drawers can hold items like scarves or exercise clothes."

"I like to use the upper most shelves in closets for bulky storage like luggage, hat

cases [and] for items that are either not used too much or are seasonal," said Walter. "Open shelves are great for display of shoes and handbags."

Invest in a full-length mirror and install it behind the door or on an open space that won't take away from storage, advises Allie Mann, designer, senior interiors specialist with Case Design/Remodeling, Inc.

"Use every inch of a closet space for storage. There may be small niches that are perfect for scarves, handbags [and] belts," she said. "Build in shoe shelving if possible. Keeping shoes off the floor gives a more organized look to the space. If you want to keep shoe boxes, be sure to label them with photos of the shoes inside so you don't have to open every box to find the pair you're looking for."

For those with a generous budget, Interior Designer Todd Martz, co-owner of Home on Cameron in Old Town Alexandria advises investing in a lighting system for viewing clothing and distinguishing colors.

"Add pullout shelves and rods to organize outfits. [Add] drawers with glass inserts to see contents," he said. "Group accessories [like] belts and purses by color for easy access."

Accessories that Walter recommends adding to a walk-in closet include belt hang-



PHOTO ANGIE SECKINGER/BOFFI GEORGETOWN

Open shelving for storing shoes and handbags are among the features that designer Julia Walter recommends for walk-in closets.

ers, tie hangers, jewelry drawers and safes. "If space allows, a center island is a great feature for getting dressed and showcasing certain items," she said. "Before a night out, [for example] a gown and shoes can be displayed."

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THE CONNECTION
NEWSPAPERS

OPINION

Accountable Citizenship

FROM PAGE 10

outflow of minorities. And these measures, underway long ago, have little or nothing directly to do with Trump or Spencer.

So if we really want to serve the cause of racial equity, we need to stop confusing “progressive” sloganeering and hashtag avalanches for a genuine politics of inclusion. Such confusion is a civic sickness that I’ve perceived in several quarters of this city. We need instead to undertake the hard and tedious work of scouring the city’s budgets and master plans; lobbying for consistent funding for affordable housing; organizing turnout at Planning Commission and Development Special Use Permit hearings, as well as small area advisory group and ARHA Board of Commissioner meetings; etc. We need to cultivate a greater political commitment to the instrumental and efficacious, not the conveniently symbolic and instantly gratifying.

A final reason is my growing conviction about the imperative of jurisdictional politics.

It’s said that politics is local — but I think mostly only in the sense of the hyper-local, or what’s in our immediate orbit of self-interest. After that politics seems largely national. We give comparatively short shrift to a great deal of what happens in between.

We need to engage politics integral to the city-as-a-whole more vigorously and with

wider-angle lenses. It’s the first level at which otherwise narrow interests really connect with the bigger picture of systemic social-political-economic-ecological health, not only of the city, but also of the metropolitan. The seemingly utter one-track-mindedness of many interests I observed during the budget process surprised me. There’s nothing inherently wrong with having interests. Yet at some point this year’s epic deferred maintenance calamities should make us look in the mirror. It’s easy, though only partially valid, to blame past city councils, school boards, etc. But did an effectually organized constituency years ago ever demand speedier sewer overhauls, because flushing millions of gallons of human feces to our neighbors downriver is clearly not OK? Or demand joint city-schools capital planning, because looking ahead together clearly makes more sense than perpetually warring fiefdoms? Or demand regional dedicated funding for WMATA, because identifying sources would clearly improve the conditions for capital planning and borrowing? Evidently not.

Democracy being what it is, I suspect we got the budget process this year that our own myopia deserved. Engagement beyond our interests is surely part of the remedy. And that requires dedicated engagement of processes, like the budget, that reach across and beyond the city.

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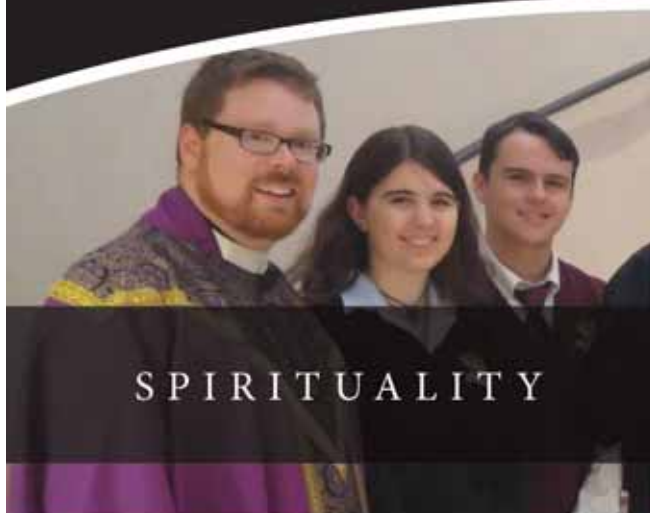


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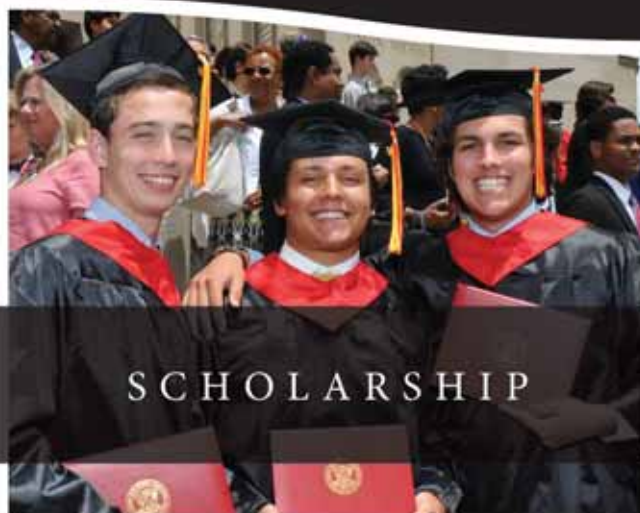
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PEOPLE



PHOTOS BY JOHN BORDNER/GAZETTE PACKET

Scholarship winners gather at the Scholarship Fund of Alexandria Gala April 29 at the Mark Center Hilton.

Titanic Success

SFA raises \$300k for students in need.

To the chant of “We Are the Titans,” students from the T.C. Williams class of 2017 entered the ballroom of the Mark Center Hilton April 29 for the 31st annual Scholarship Fund of Alexandria Gala.

The event, with more than 460 attendees, raised \$300,000 to send students in need to college. Among the recipients was T.C. Williams Student Government President Peter Laboy Jr., son of veteran police officer Peter Laboy Sr., who was wounded in the line of duty in 2013.

“I am very proud of Peter,” said Laboy Sr., who was decked out in the colors of Duke University, where Laboy Jr. will attend school in the fall. “This is an exciting night for us.”

On March 31, SFA executive director Beth Lovain surprised Laboy Jr. with the Loti Dunn Scholarship of \$24,000, which will be awarded over four years. In addition to serving as the student government president, Laboy Jr. rows for T.C. Titans Crew and is a member of the National Honor Society.



Peter Laboy Jr., Student Government president at T.C. Williams High School, is recognized at the Scholarship Fund of Alexandria Gala April 29 at the Mark Center Hilton. Laboy was awarded the \$24,000 Loti Dunn Scholarship and will attend Duke University in the fall.

This year’s Scholarship Fund will send 154 students from the class of 2017 to college. Since its inception in 1986, the Fund has provided more than \$13 million in scholarships and sent more than 4,500 Alexandria students in need to college.

For more information, visit www.alexscholarshipfund.org.

— JEANNE THEISMANN

Edwards to Keynote ASC Gala

High school athletes to be honored May 30.

Former Washington Redskins co-captain and Super Bowl XXVI MVP runner-up Brad Edwards will be the keynote speaker May 30 at the 62nd annual Alexandria Sportsman’s Club Athlete of the Year gala.

Edwards, a second round draft pick and nine-year veteran of the NFL, is currently the assistant vice president and director of athletics at George Mason University.

The ASC dinner will recognize the 2017 outstanding Alexandria high school Athletes of the Year. Additionally, Jon Peterson, chairman of the Executive Committee of The Peterson Companies, will be inducted into the ASC Hall of Fame.



Brad Edwards



Jon Peterson

Peterson, whose family’s real estate company developed National Harbor, is a longtime volunteer, past president and member of the board of directors of the Joe Gibbs nonprofit Youth for Tomorrow.

The ASC gala will be held May 30 at the Westin Hotel, 400 Court-house Square. A reception will begin at 6 p.m. followed by dinner and award presentations at 7 p.m.

The event is open to the public. For tickets or more information, visit www.alexandriavassports.org.

— JEANNE THEISMANN



PHOTO BY EDEN BROWN/GAZETTE PACKET

Alexandria residents Ellen Bowman and her daughter Lola took a moment from the march to make more posters under a tree on Pennsylvania Avenue outside the Newseum.

Marching in the Heat

The Climate March in Washington, D.C. on Saturday, April 29 was attended by many holding signs about the need to protect the

climate for children and grandchildren. Crowds, estimated to be about 200,000, braved 95 degree heat index temperatures to walk about four miles.



PHOTO BY VERONICA SZALUS

The Choral Arts Society of Washington performed at the Athenaeum on Sunday, May 7.

Choral Arts Society Performs at Athenaeum

The Northern Virginia Fine Arts Association hosted the Choral Arts Society of Washington’s Chamber Singers group at the Athenaeum on Sunday, May 7. The NVFAA’s mission is to preserve the historic Athenaeum and to showcase the fine arts of Virginia, Maryland and Washington, D.C.

May 7 was the first time the Choral Arts Society had performed

at the Athenaeum, and Artistic Director Scott Tucker selected some of his favorite secular and non-secular music to include in the program, called “Sing We and Chant It: Music for Chamber Voices.” Approximately 60 people attended the concert.

For more information, see <https://choralarts.org/> and <http://nvfaa.org/>.

ENTERTAINMENT



Only open a few weeks, Del Ray's Dolce and Bean is already settling in nicely to the neighborhood.

PHOTOS BY
MICHAEL LEE POPE

There's a pastry for everyone at Dolce and Bean.



Sweets Reign Supreme at Dolce and Bean

BY HOPE NELSON
GAZETTE PACKET

Mount Vernon Avenue just got a whole lot sweeter: Dolce and Bean has come to town. The high-end treat shop brings with it a plethora of options to tempt the sweet tooth, ranging from macarons to gelato to one of the store's anchoring goodies, Neuhaus chocolates.

Even before the confectionery's grand opening last weekend, neighbors had begun to find their way into the shop to join what co-owner Cookie Seifu calls Dolce and Bean's "Del Ray family circle."

"Del Ray's a very welcoming community. The residents and the businesses are very kind and very warm so far," she said.

The storefront was a long time coming – first a lengthy location hunt, then a year and two months of preparing the space. But what has emerged was just what Seifu and her co-owner, Peter Ge, were waiting for, she says.

"We've pretty much made it a one-stop European sweet shop. So we have our French pastries, we have our macarons, we have our gelato, which is Italian. We also have local suppliers of honey ... organic, pure, raw honey," said Seifu. "... Our flagship product is Neuhaus premium Belgian chocolate that gets flown in from Brussels weekly. We're the only ones in the Northern Virginia area that carry this brand."

Dolce and Bean will soon roll out other eats and sweets, such as crepes, Seifu said.

In the face of so many temptations, it can be difficult to maintain control; but Seifu stresses the individual portion sizes of her wares to keep waistlines trim while still giving in to a bag of sin from time to time.

"From my personal experience, health is an important aspect, and when you're dealing with sweets, you've got to be careful," she said. "Our pastries are individual sizes. ... Our macarons are about an inch and a half in diameter; there are macarons out there that are 2 to 3 inches."

The storefront is only a portion of Dolce and Bean's business. Its catering business is also beginning to take off, Seifu says. From weddings to corporate events, the confectionary has customers covered.

Also, look for more family-friendly daytime events to emerge in the coming months; Seifu envisions child-centric baking classes and other teachable events to keep the community engaged and always learning. And as the

If You Go

Dolce and Bean, 2003-A Mount Vernon Ave.
Current hours: Noon-9 p.m. Monday-Thursday; 9 a.m.-10 p.m. Friday-Saturday; 8 a.m.-8 p.m. Sunday

Personal favorite: "My personal favorite is my pastry. I love the cheesecake caramel, the carrot cake ... I would love for someone to come and tell me they did not like the carrot cake," said co-owner Cookie Seifu.

store continues to settle in, Dolce and Bean wants to hear from neighbors, no matter the special request.

"So far, we've been happy; we've been asking for feedback, we really want to hear from the community — what they like, what they would like to see, what they don't like, the good and the bad. Because at the end of the day we're here to serve the community," she said.

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



Dolce and Bean's pistachio gelato is a perfect sweet treat for any occasion.

CALENDAR

Submit entertainment announcements at ConnectionNewspapers.com/Calendar. Photos and artwork welcome. Deadline is Thursday at noon, at least two weeks before event.

ONGOING

Singing the Blues exhibit. Various hours through May 21 at the Potomac Fiber Arts Gallery, Torpedo Factory Art Center, Studio 29, 105 North Union St. Highlights the work of three featured artists Beverly Baker, Joanne Bast, and Laura Savage. Visit www.Potomacfiberartsgallery.com or call 703-548-0935 for more.

Kiln Club Show. 7:30-10 p.m. through May 29 at the Scope Gallery, 105 N. Union Street, ground floor Studio 19. The "Better than Brunch: Mother's Day Originals" Kiln Club show. Call 703-548-6288, or visit scopegallery.org for more.

"Master Class" on Stage. Through June 11, 7 p.m. at Metrostage, 1201

N. Royal St. Music direction by Joseph Walsh, featuring Ilona Dulaski as Maria Callas in Terrence McNally's valentine to "La Divina." Call 703-548-9044 or visit www.metrostage.org.

Native Plants, Herbs, and Heirloom Tomatoes. Various times through mid June at Mount Vernon Unitarian Church Greenhouse, 1909 Windmill Lane. Visit www.mvuc.org for more.

Costumes of Mercy Street. Through Sept. 1, at The Lyceum: Alexandria's History Museum, 201 S. Washington St. To learn more about The Lyceum, visit alexandriava.gov/Lyceum or call 703-746-4994.

Mount Vernon Farmers Market. 8 a.m.-12 p.m., Wednesdays, through Dec. 14. Fresh local food, artisan crafts. Sherwood Library, 2501 Sherwood Hall Lane. Visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/farmersmarkets/mtvernonmkt.htm for more.

All the President's Pups. Saturdays 10 a.m. at George Washington's

Mount Vernon, 3200 Mount Vernon Highway, Mount Vernon. All the President's Pups Walking Tour, along the way, learn about George Washington's love for dogs, his dogs' unusual names, and his efforts to improve the quality of his hunting dogs through breeding. \$7. Visit www.mountvernon.org for more.

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. 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.

Pick-Up Hockey. Ongoing, Wednesdays and Fridays 11:30 a.m.-1 p.m. at Mount Vernon Ice Skating, 2017 Belle View Blvd. Play hockey with other hockey buffs, hitting slap shots and learning puck handling skills that the pros use. Players must have full equipment. 16 and older. Visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/rec/mtvernon/ or call 703-768-3224 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

Alexandria's Nurses and Hospitals During the Civil War. Ongoing at The Lyceum, 201 S. Washington St. An exhibit on the life of Clarissa Jones, a nurse at The Lyceum hospital during the Civil War. The true story of a nurse in Alexandria during the war, drawing parallels with characters portrayed in the PBS drama "Mercy Street," with references to the experiences of other nurses, such as Anne Reading, who worked in the Mansion House hospital, and Jane Woolsey, who served at the Fairfax Seminary hospital. Admission is \$2. Visit www.alexandriava.gov/lyceum for more.

Shield of Earth: Defending the Heart of the Union exhibit. Ongoing, museum hours Tuesday through Saturday, 10 a.m. -5 p.m.,

ENTERTAINMENT

Sundays, noon-5 p.m. at Fort Ward Museum, 4301 West Braddock Road. Highlights of the exhibition include military passes issued by Provost Marshal's Office, construction tools, and original photographs of some of Washington's defenders. 703-746-4848 or www.fortward.org.

Who These Wounded Are: The Extraordinary Stories of the Mansion House Hospital exhibit. Ongoing, Tuesday through Saturday, 10 a.m.-4 p.m., Sundays, noon-4 p.m. at the Carlyle House Historic Park, 121 N. Fairfax St. Come see the site that inspired "Mercy Street," the new PBS' series inspired by real events that took place at Carlyle House. www.carlylehouse.org or call 703-549-2997

Color Disorder Exhibit. Ongoing, Thursday through Sunday, noon-4 p.m., Sundays, noon-4 p.m. at the The Athenaeum, 201 Prince St. A joint exhibition of artists Katie Baines and Amy Chan who use diverse painting materials such as acrylic, gouache, airbrush and screen print to build energized abstract paintings. www.nfaa.org or 703-548-0035.

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

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

Their Fates Intertwined: The Lees of Alexandria in the War of 1812. Wednesday- Saturday, 10 a.m.-4 p.m. Sunday, 1-4 p.m. Lee-Fendall House and Gardens, 614 Oronoco St. A new exhibit on the experiences of the

Lee family in Alexandria during the War of 1812 examines the contributions of Alexandria's citizens during the conflict that led to the writing of our national anthem through the lives of this iconic Virginia family. Visit www.leefendallhouse.org or call 703-548-1789.

Alexandria Cars and Coffee invites car enthusiasts to meet for coffee at Hollin Hall Shopping Center in front of Roseina's, 1307 Shenandoah Road. Owners of classic cars, hot rods, exotic cars, motorcycles and more meet to share car stories and drink coffee. Group meets the first Sunday of every month. 8:30-11 a.m.

Fifty Years of Collecting. Tuesday-Saturday 10 a.m.-5 p.m., Sundays 12-5 p.m. Fort Ward Museum, 4301 W. Braddock Road. An anniversary exhibit of objects from the Fort Ward collection. Free. Visit www.fortward.org or call 703-746-4848.

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.

Second Thursday Music. Athenaeum, 201 Prince St. 7 p.m. Second Thursday of every month. Visit nvfaa.org to view concert calendar and listen to upcoming Second Thursday Music artists.

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 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.alexandriarchaeology.org.

Doggy Happy Hour. Starting April 5, Tuesdays through October 5-8 p.m. at Jackson 20 and Hotel Monaco Alexandria, 480 King St. Doggy

Happy Hour at Jackson 20 and the Hotel Monaco Alexandria offers specials on cocktails and beers plus treats and water for canine companions. Free, but drinks sold separately. Visit www.monaco-alexandria.com for more

Wake Up Wednesdays featuring The Pop Up Cafe. 7-9:30 a.m. on Wednesday's near the King Street Tunnel - Carlyle Entrance located near 2000 Duke Street near Motley Fool. The cafe will feature coffee, live music to help commuters start the day off right and donuts from Sugar Shack. maurispapotts@gmail.com

MAY 10-JUNE 4

Gods, Heroes, and Fools. Various times at the Torpedo Factory Art Center, Studio 21, 105 North Union St. Artist Lesa Cook sets the Greek and Roman gods into a contemporary context in "Gods, Heroes, and Fools." Visit www.theartleague.org or call 703-683-1780.

THURSDAY/MAY 11

Tory Cowles Sculptures. 5-8 p.m. in the Torpedo Factory Art Center, Studio 7, 105 North Union St. Cowles turns old roofing, electrical wires,

Rockfest

On Saturday, May 13 from 9 a.m.-1 p.m., the children take the stage at Rockfest in Del Ray.

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ENTERTAINMENT

ASO Closes out Season with Americana-themed Concert

BY MELINDA KERNC
ALEXANDRIA SYMPHONY

Alexandria Symphony Orchestra will present its season finale on Saturday, May 20, 8 p.m., at the Rachel M. Schlesinger Concert Hall and Arts Center, led by guest conductor Emil de Cou. The 73rd season has focused on masterworks, led by five renowned guest conductors, each concert anchored by a classical “popular” favorite loved by audiences from the symphonic canon.

Anchoring the Americana-themed finale is Dvořák’s Symphony No. 9 (From the New World). Considered a symphonic favorite by many for its lyrical second movement and written as both a tribute to his immigrant roots and his adopted homeland, this work borrows from Native American song, African American spirituals, Scottish melodies and Dvořák’s own Czech folk traditions.

Composed while music director for the National Conservatory of Music in New York and during his trips visiting immigrant settlements in the Midwest, he incorporated the diverse musical elements he observed as uniquely American. The added inscription “from the new world” was suggested by the conservatory’s founder Jeannette Thurber as a testament to the students he taught at the school, which came from diverse backgrounds (as immigrants and with multiple ethnicities) throughout New York City.

“The title of this symphony could just as easily been: ‘To the New World,’” observes Maestro de Cou. “Dvořák’s Symphony ‘From the New World’ remains not only a musical summation of his three year stay in the United States, but also a love letter to that still infant nation trying to find its way. This symphony becomes a musical mirror that Dvořák lifts for us to see the unending original sounds he treasured during his stay with us.”

De Cou serves as the National Symphony Orchestra at Wolf Trap conductor during the summer season and leads the Pacific Northwest Ballet as music director. He has led the Labor Day Weekend Capitol Concerts on the West Lawn of the U.S. Capitol annually since 2002 and works with NASA as musical consultant for special projects.

Opening the program is Barber’s only Violin Concerto (Op. 14), featuring ASO’s own Marlisa del Cid Woods. Woods is music director of the famed U.S. Army Strolling Strings and has performed as principal and soloist with many military ensembles and prominent symphonies. Hailed as one of the most technically difficult violin concertos ever written, Barber’s masterpiece will sparkle with Ms. Woods as soloist.

Subscriptions for the ASO’s 2017-2018 Season featuring the four finalists for music director are now on sale. Senior and military subscription pricing is available. To purchase tickets and for more information, visit www.alexsym.org or call 703-548-0885.

CALENDAR

and found objects into something unpredictable. Visit ToryCOWles.com or call 240 793-5425 for more.

Gardening Lecture. 7:30-9 p.m. at Green Spring Gardens, 4603 Green Spring Road. Nancy Lawson gives a talk on “The Humane Gardener: Nurturing a Backyard Habitat for Wildlife.” Call 703-642-5173.

Meet the Author. 6:30 p.m. at Lloyd House, 220 N. Washington St. Join Alexandria historian Jay Roberts as he shares research from his newest publication, *Lost Alexandria*. Visit www.alexandriava.gov/historic/lloyd/ or call 703-746-4554 for more.

The Cat Jam of Bluegrass music. 7:30-10 p.m. at the Franconia Moose Lodge, 7701 Beulah Street. The Mount Vernon Evening Lions Club hosting local musicians donate their time and talent for charity. Proceeds will go to support a lunch program for local homeless people. Free, donations accepted. Call 703-339-7099 or email rebamorse@aol.com.

FRIDAY/MAY 12

“Honoring Our Mothers with Poetry.” 6-8 p.m. at Durant Arts Center, 1605 Cameron St. Local poets will read poetry that celebrates and honors mothers. The reading is hosted by Wendi R. Kaplan, Poet Laureate, and the Office of the Arts, City of Alexandria. Call 703-746-5560 for more.

Symphony Orchestra of Northern Virginia. 7:30 p.m. at the Durant Arts Center, 1605 Cameron St. Friday Evening Chamber Concert with the Northern Virginia Woodwind Quartet. Call 703-746-5560 for more.

Blessed Sacrament Piano Performance. 8 p.m. at Blessed Sacrament Catholic Church, 1427 W. Braddock Road. John McCrary, director of music at Blessed

Sacrament, will perform a program including the Sonata, Op. 101 by Beethoven and the Ballad in A Minor, Op. 28 by Chopin. Free, donations accepted. Email mcushmac@comcast.net or call 703-548-1176.

SATURDAY/MAY 13

Street Painting Festival. 9 a.m.-3 p.m. on the sidewalks of Mount Vernon Avenue between Bellefonte and Hume avenues. The Del Ray Montessori School will hold the second annual “La Bella Strada: An Italian Street Painting Festival” where more than 20 local artists will create large chalk paintings along the sidewalk. Visit www.labellastradadelray.com or email info@labellastradadelray.com.

Tot Rock Fest. 9 a.m.-1 p.m. at the Mt. Vernon Recreation Center, 2701 Commonwealth Ave. A day of music, movement, and making a difference for children in and around Del Ray. Visit www.totrockfest.com for more.

Quander Brook Cleanup. 10 a.m.-noon, meet in the Kings Crossing Shopping Center, 6303 Richmond Highway. Community residents and volunteers are needed to volunteer an hour or more of their time to help clear the stream of accumulated trash, primarily plastic bottles and bags, paper cups and cans. Email mwtilllett@verizon.net for more.

Heroes for Moms Blood Drive. 10:30 a.m.-3 p.m. at the Alexandria Beatley Library, 5005 Duke St. Mother’s Day weekend for a blood drive and maternal health awareness event dedicated to saving the lives of mothers. Visit www.heroesformoms.com for more.

Celtic Spring Fling. 3-7 p.m. at St. Aidan’s Episcopal Church, 8531 Riverside Road. Games, crafts, food and drink, plenty of music and

dance, face painting, and corn hole tournament. Email MBartel@bartelassociates.com or call 703-548-4250 for more.

Beethoven’s Monumental Piano Concerto. 7 p.m. at the Rachel M. Schlesinger Concert Hall and Arts Center, 4915 E. Campus Drive. Featuring keyboard artist Todd Fickley, and Mozart’s Coronation Mass (Krönungsmesse), with orchestra. Soloists for the Mozart will be the winners of the 2016 Choralis Young Artists Competition: Abby Middleton, soprano; Elizabeth Sarian, alto; Patrick Kilbride, tenor; and Benjamin Curtis, baritone. \$40-50; ages 23-29, \$20; 13-22, \$5; 12 and younger, free. Visit www.choralis.org for more.

SUNDAY/MAY 14

American Indian Heritage Day. noon-6 p.m. at Fort Hunt Park, 8999 Fort Hunt Road. The National Indigenous Circle in cooperation with the National Park Service will host an American Indian Heritage Day. Call 703-289-2500 or email aaron_larocca@nps.gov for more.

MAY 15 THROUGH LABOR DAY

Gadsby’s Tavern Museum Relics. Various times at Gadsby’s Tavern Museum, 134 N. Royal St. Learn the history of the museum, the purchase and see the original woodwork. Call 703-746-4242 or visit www.gadsbystavern.org for more.

TUESDAY/MAY 16

DNA Genealogy Talk. 1-3 p.m. at the Hollin Hall Senior Center, 1500 Shenandoah Road. Learn the basics of genetic genealogy and how to use it as a tool in a research from

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ENTERTAINMENT

Shannon Combs-Bennett's talk on "Let Me Tell You About Your Genes." Call 703-768-4101 or visit www.mvgenology.org for more.

Beer Yoga. 7 p.m. at Port City World Headquarters, 3950 Wheeler Ave. Suitable for beginners and experienced students, this yoga class will challenge balance, strength and flexibility. Learn breathing techniques to help alleviate physical tension and mental stress. All levels welcome, and a post-yoga pint is part of the class, 21 and older for the beer. Visit www.portcitybrewing.com/ for more.

WEDNESDAY/MAY 17

Chamber Golf Classic. 1 p.m. at Laurel Hill Golf Club, 8701 Laurel Crest Drive, Lorton. Event is the main fundraiser for the Mount Vernon Lee Chamber of Commerce Scholarship Fund and will be capped at 120 golfers. Email Info@MtVernon-LeeChamber.org for more.

FRIDAY/MAY 19

Bike to Work Day 2017. Registration — now open — is free and open to anyone who commutes in the region, from first timers to daily cyclists. All registrants will be entered in a regional bicycle raffle, and the first 16,000 to register and attend will receive a free t-shirt at one of more than 85 pit-stops throughout Northern Virginia. Participants can register online at www.biketoworkmetrodc.org. Email Megan Goodman at mgoodman@mwccog.org, or call 202-962-3209 for more.

Golf Tournament Fundraiser. At Lansdowne Resort. Alexandria-based Christian Relief Services is hosting a

golf tournament to support its Safe Places program providing safe housing for women and children fleeing domestic violence. Registration includes greens fees, lunch, dinner, prizes and gifts. Visit safe-places.org/golf-classic or call 703-317-9086.

Capitol Steps. 7 p.m. at First Baptist Church of Alexandria, 2932 King St. A fundraiser to benefit the local Salvation Army. Visit give.salvationarmyusa.org for more.

Wax Museum Reunion. 7:30 p.m. at The Birchmere, 3701 Mt. Vernon Ave. 1980's reunion of all that was Desperado's and The Wax Museum including Billy Price. The Original Keystone Rhythm band, The Bob Margolin Blues Band, The Good Humor Band and the Skip Castro Band. Visit www.birchmere.com.

SATURDAY/MAY 20

2017 Little Hunting Creek

Cleanup. 9 a.m.-5 p.m. at Little Hunting Creek, at three locations: Janna Lee Avenue Bridge, Creekside Village Apartments, Mount Vernon Shopping Plaza Near Duron Paints. Part of the Alice Ferguson Foundation's Annual Potomac Cleanup. Visit www.scottsurowell.org for more.

Armed Forces Day Tour and Concert. 11 a.m.-1 p.m. Tour of Fort Ward, the best preserved of the Union forts that defended Washington during the Civil War, followed by a concert of Civil War music by the Federal City Brass Band on the Museum lawn. Call 703-746-4848 or visit www.fortward.org.

Contemporary African Immigration Lecture. 11 a.m.-1 p.m. at the Alexandria Black History Museum, 902 Wythe St. Dr. Nemata



Roman Art

From May 10- June 4 Artist Lesa Cook sets the Greek and Roman gods into a contemporary context at the Torpedo Factory, 101 N. Union St. Visit torpedofactory.org.

Blyden, a George Washington University professor talks about the Africans who arrived in the United States after slavery ended in 1863. Call 703-746-4356 for more.

Civil War Firefighting Walking

Tour. 1-3 p.m. at the Fire Station, 107 South Alfred St. Explore Alexandria's Civil War firefighting history on the "We've Been Burned: Alexandria Firefighters During the Civil War" tour. Visit www.shop.alexandriava.gov or by calling 703-746-4994 or 707-746-3891.

Architectural Walking Tour. 2-4:30 p.m. Details about start location and reception address will be provided to all registrants. Architectural Walking Tour of Rosemont followed by a garden reception at a private home \$20. Visit www.visitalexandriava.com/ or call 703-746-4554 for more.

Taste of Mount Vernon. 5:30-7:30

p.m. at the Mount Vernon Governmental Center, 2511 Parkers Lane. Restaurants are featured. Visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/mountvernon/ or call 703-780-7518.

Country-Western Dance. 6-9:30 p.m. at Lincolnia Senior Center, 4710 N. Chambliss St. Lessons at 6 p.m. and dancing at 7. The Northern Virginia Country-Western Dance Association members \$10; non-members \$12; children under 18 accompanied by a paying adult \$5. Visit www.nvcwda.org or call 703-860-4941.

Alexandria Symphony Orchestra. 8 p.m. at the Rachel M. Schlesinger Concert Hall and Arts Center at the Alexandria Campus, 4915 East Campus Drive. Free. Visit www.nvcc.edu/schlesingercenter.

SUNDAY/MAY 21

Alexandria Children's Concert. 2-4

p.m. at The George Washington Masonic National Memorial, 101 Callahan Drive. Performances by the John Adams Orff Ensemble; Rocknuceros and The Great Zucchini. \$10. Visit KiwanisConcert.com or email alexandria.kiwanis@earthlink.net for more.

Nitty Gritty Dirt Band. 7:30 p.m. at The Birchmere, 3701 Mt. Vernon Ave. \$45. Visit www.birchmere.com.

MAY 23-JUNE 25

Flora and Fauna Artshow. Various times at Potomac Fiber Arts Gallery, Torpedo Factory Art Center, Studio 29, 105 N. Union St. This show will highlight the work of artists Jeanne Bohlen and Floris Flam. Visit www.Potomacfiberartsgallery.com or call 703-548-0935 for more.

WEDNESDAY/MAY 24

Meet the Civil War Author. 1-3 p.m. at The Lyceum, 201 South Washington St. Writer and Civil War buff Mark Tooley speaks on the topic: Could the Civil War be Avoided? Visit www.alexandriava.gov/Lyceum or call 703-746-4994.

THURSDAY/MAY 25

Taste of Mount Vernon . 5:30-7:30 p.m. at Mount Vernon Governmental Center, 2511 Parkers Lane. Call 703-360-8400 for more.

Tour the Murray-Dick-Fawcett House. 5:30-7:30 p.m. at 517 Prince St. Enjoy an advance look at this 18th-century house, recently purchased and now owned and operated by the City of Alexandria as the final event of Alexandria's Preservation Month. \$10 donation suggested. Visit Shop.Alexandriava.gov for more.

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6-1 Budget Vote Highlights Tensions on City Council

FROM PAGE 1

"I did want more ethics and transparency," said Silberberg. "But it was a great start given the pushback. It was hostile."

Over the next few months, the divisions between Silberberg and her fellow council members started to become more and more apparent. In February 2016, ARHA sought a rezoning and master plan amendment for their Ramsey Homes project, but asked for a deferral on the project's special use permit. The vote required a supermajority, but both Silberberg and Councilman Paul Smedberg voted against it. However, three days later at a City Council meeting, Smedberg reversed his decision. The amendments had their supermajority, with Silberberg being the lone opposition. When Silberberg criticized City Attorney James Banks for not sharing that Smedberg was going to make a motion to rescind, Wilson questioned Silberberg's leadership and "decency" for attacking a member of city staff in public.

In January 2017, Wilson put forward a proposal to limit the number of public speakers at the start of a public hearing to 12. All others would be pushed to the end of the meeting. Wilson said the shift was intended to benefit speakers on docketed items, but Silberberg attacked the proposal as draconian and arbitrary. In another 6-1 vote, the council supported Wilson.

The disagreements have ranged in nature from differences in general policy to sharp



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

Truck seen driving around Old Town before the City Council's vote on the budget.

outbursts and insults. Most recently, Wilson scoffed at a comment made by Silberberg, drawing a quick back-and-forth between the two parties.

"It's an interesting dynamic on the council. Watching the conversations gives a good insight on where the tension is," said Wilson. "There is a tension there. That's what makes this all interesting."

And yet, Wilson said the while there is substantial conflict on the dais, it's not as much as was predicted after Silberberg was elected. During Mayor William Euille's term, Silberberg had often expressed similar disagreements over development issues.

"Certainly on some development issues, [we've] had a divide," said Wilson. "I don't think it's as much as people predicted. Remember talking to [people] back in November that it would be constantly 6-1 votes. But when there's a different viewpoint, it reflects that. That is not a new thing. There are two different visions. The six of us feel that we need to feel a chart a path forward."



PHOTO BY VERNON MILES/GAZETTE PACKET

Alexandria budget staff, from left: Morgan Routh, director of management and budget; Matthew Evans; Nicole Evans; Whitney Harris; Alex Braden; Alyssa Ha (observed); Martina Alexander; and Arthur Wicks. La'Tangela Bellamy (not pictured) was seated in a row behind them.

But Silberberg sees her election by the citizens as a mandate to protect Alexandria's citizens and its historic character. Much of her campaign two years ago had centered around protecting residents from onerous development — along the waterfront in particular. For Silberberg, the battle over the budget has been another manifestation of this ongoing mission to protect the citizens of Alexandria.

"The people elected me for my judgment," said Silberberg. "I believe strongly in the budget that Jinks put forward. This is too much."

Without naming specific members of the council, Silberberg also said there had been outbursts from other members of the council

but said that, in council discussions, she would follow Senatorial procedure and would try to take the "high road."

Frank Shafroth, director of the Center for State and Local Leadership at George Mason University, said the conflict is between addressing long-term challenges vs the desires of local citizens.

"What is going on here is the contrast between members with longer experience in the complexities of fashioning a budget process which attempts to address the city's short and long-term challenges versus the perception that voters want the best of everything—but do not want to pay higher fees

or taxes," said Shafroth. "So, in some sense, I believe the mayor is reflecting her perception of what our fellow citizens and taxpayers would wish for: the council is accepting the very hard choices of governance. I think the mayor, in some sense, believes she is representing the taxpayers ... Any mayor would say citizens do not want to pay more taxes. Nor do they want to have cavities. Or potholes. Or traffic, etc. But, of course, they want good schools that are not overcrowded; they want safe neighborhoods; they want those roads plowed right away after it snows, etc. I think every taxpayer in Alexandria recognizes the taxes are a price one pays — it's just that they would like it if someone else paid."

BULLETIN BOARD

Submit civic/community announcements at ConnectionNewspapers.com/Calendar. Photos and artwork welcome. Deadline is Thursday at noon, at least two weeks before event.

REUNION PLANNING

Saint Mary's Academy class of 1967 is holding its 50th reunion Sept. 22-24 in Alexandria. Organizers haven't located all classmates and hope to

have them present in September. Contacts are Patty Hagan, 703-742-8137 or pattyhagan13@gmail.com, and Sue Adamson Mairena, 817-903-3528 or mairena2@att.net.

TUESDAY/MAY 16

Waterfront Commission Meeting 7:30 a.m. at City Hall, Sister Cities Room 1101, 301 King St. Contact Jack Browand, jack.browand@alexandriava.gov or

703-746-5504.

THURSDAY/MAY 18

Orientation for Adult Learners. 5-6:30 p.m. at Northern Virginia Community College's Alexandria Campus, in the Bisdorf Building, Room 158. NOVA-Alexandria is located at 5000 Dawes Ave. The Summer 2017 New Student Orientation for Adult Learners was organized by the Alexandria Campus

Student Services Department as part of the campus and college GPS initiatives to provide opportunities, information and resources for the Alexandria Campus' adult learners population and to encourage student success at NOVA. Visit www.nvcc.edu/alexandria/index.html.

Networking at the Spa. 5:30-7 p.m. at Salon Amarti & Spa, 1010 King St. Relax while networking with other

businesses and non-profit professionals. Members \$10, non-members \$25, members at the door \$25. Visit www.alexchamber.com. **Public Hearing.** 7 p.m. at the Charles Houston Recreation Center, 901 Wythe St. The Park & Recreation Commission will hold a public hearing. Contact Dana Wedeles, Acting Principal Planner, RPCA at Dana.Wedeles@alexandriava.gov or 703-746-5491.

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SPORTS



2017 State Champs - TC Women's Junior 8.



2017 State Champs - TC Men's Junior 8 .

TC Crew Powers Through Day One of States

3 TC boats capture state championships.

On Day One of the 2017 Virginia Scholastic Rowing Association Championship Series at Occoquan, the T.C. Williams High School Crew Team swept three consecutive races to capture gold medals and State Championships.

The Men's and Women's Junior 8 boats (comprised of only high school juniors and underclassmen) and the Women's Frosh 8 won their races by wide margins for state finals, where a couple seconds or less often separates the top two boats.

On a rainy, cool, breezy Saturday, May 6 that challenged rowers from T.C. Williams and 32 other schools, more than 130 boats competed in 14 race categories, from Novice 4s to Junior 8s. Following morning heat

races to winnow as many as 16 boats in a single category down to no more than 6 for the final, TC advanced boats to finals in all nine categories they entered.

Finals began with the Men's Varsity Third 4 category, in which TC oarsmen rowed for a silver medal with a time of 7:36.5. The TC Novice 8 Girls boat, comprised entirely of eighth graders and rowing against other novice boats with freshmen and sophomores, also scored a silver medal with a time of 6:24.6, only 3.9 seconds behind first place Yorktown.

TC's gold run began with the Varsity Women's Junior 8, a boat that often "raced up" in more senior race categories in regattas earlier in the season, including their

SEE CHAMPIONS, PAGE 26



2017 State Champs - TC Women's Frosh 8



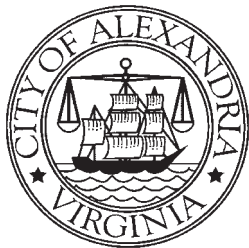
Regional Champions

The Alexandria Titans Volleyball Club's Titans 12 and Titans 15 teams earned Gold Medals in the recent Club Regional Championships sponsored by the Chesapeake Region of USA Volleyball. The competitions were held in Maryland during April and represented the final competition of the season. The Titans 12 include, bottom row, Aida Rhilinger, Mason Mantey, Ellery Reinholtz, Corinne Solsby, and Erin Munson. Top row: Megan Mutscheller (Head Coach), Olivia McCarthy, Lucy Voelker, Gabby Guest, Stella Kathman, Bridie Wendling, and Caroline Roda (Assistant Coach). Back row: A.J. DeSain (Assistant Coach).



The Titans 15 include, back row, A.J. DeSain (Head Coach), Shannon Murphy, Maddie Harvey, Majlis Walker, and Julia Hart. Front row: Eva Joia, Abi Ayala, Alexandra Berman, Olivia Ernst, and Sadie Finn. Not pictured is Megan Munson.

Legals



Public Hearing will be held by the City Council of the City of Alexandria, Virginia, in the Council Chambers, City Hall, City of Alexandria, Virginia, on Saturday, May 13, 2017, at 9:30 a.m., or as soon as may be heard on the hereinafter described items.

AN ORDINANCE to amend and reordain Section 10-4-8 (PARKING FOR MORE THAN 72 CONTINUOUS HOURS) of Chapter 4 (STOPPING, STANDING AND PARKING) of Title 10 (MOTOR VEHICLES AND TRAFFIC) of the Code of the City of Alexandria, Virginia, 1981, as amended.

The proposed ordinance updates City Code Section 10-4-8 to add language to enable a pilot program that would, upon, application, grant temporary exemptions from the "72-hour parking rule," permitting residents to park on a city street for a period of up to two weeks per exemption.

AN ORDINANCE of the City Council of the City of Alexandria, Virginia authorizing the Issuance of General Obligation Bonds in the estimated maximum amount of \$105,300,000; and providing for reimbursement to the City of Alexandria from bond proceeds.

The proposed ordinance authorizes the issuance of general obligation bonds for various city and school capital projects in the estimated maximum amount of \$105,300,000.

PUBLIC HEARING and Consideration of a License Agreement to Authorize Level 3 Communications, Inc. for the Installation of Fiber Optic Cable in the Public Rights-of-Way along Reinkers Lane from Prince Street to Duke Street.

PUBLIC HEARING and Consideration of a Five (5) Year Lease With Verizon Wireless for Antenna on the City-Owned Building Located at 4480 King Street.

THE PUBLIC IS ADVISED THAT AMENDMENTS OR ADDITIONS MAY BE MADE TO PROPOSED ORDINANCES WITHOUT FURTHER PUBLICATION. IT IS RECOMMENDED THAT PERSONS INTERESTED IN ANY OF THESE ORDINANCES OBTAIN FREE FULL-TEXT COPIES FROM THE CITY CLERK AT CITY HALL. If the mayor finds and declares that weather or other conditions are such that it is hazardous for members to attend the meeting, this meeting will be continued to the following Saturday. JACKIE M. HENDERSON, MMC, CITY CLERK

Legals

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PEOPLE

Spirit of America

FROM PAGE 4

people. Not only mentoring students, but I have been mentoring young adults, even adults. So ... my spirituality is very strong. I'm Christian and I love God. And ... the love [of] God is a very big part ... of my life," he said.

Rich Hurst, who used to be a pastor at McLean Bible Church in Vienna, where Aka both worked and worshiped, concurs. Aka "is a devout believer" and "a great lover of people," he said.

"I have never met a person with as much heart to serve teenagers and young adults," he wrote in the foreword to Aka's 2010 book "The Walk to the Stage of Honor." Aka wrote the book as a guide to moral development for youth.

Aka hopes that his example and mentorship will help young people rise above their challenges. "I think if I can give a little bit to another young person ... maybe some will rise beyond their circumstances ... to be where I am today," he said.

To that end, he serves on the board of directors for the Campagna Center, a local nonprofit, which runs programs for youth and families. And in 2009 he founded Global Caravan for Education and Cultural Exchange, an Alexandria-based charity that, among other things, has incrementally outfitted an elementary school in Ivory Coast with books and computers. Also in connection with this work, Aka participated in an education roundtable in 2015 with then Secretary of Education Arne Duncan.

Joan Vistica, Global Caravan's senior operations coordinator, feels inspired by Aka's optimism and energy "about how things could be."

Aka has since left career teaching. He's been paying the bills by driving for Uber and selling his book. With his children growing up, he said it's time to pursue his "stock of [business] ideas."

Last year he launched Eburnie Partners Corporation, which aims at developing mixed use and mixed income real estate in Africa. Aka says "Africa is going to grow for a very long time," so he expects a very good return on investment.

But it's not only about the money. Aka wants some of the profit to fund charity work. And he envisions the business itself as a service. Unlike other commercial enterprises that just "take re-

sources out," Aka says builders can "transform" communities in a lasting way.

"[We will] not only build our building and just make [a] profit and get out," said Cherif Memene, Eburnie Partners' director of finances and Aka's longtime personal friend. "We will look at the area. OK, what can we give back to that area? Do they have a school? If they don't have a school, the social part ... [is] that we build

a school for them." Or perhaps a hospital or a clinic.

Construction would also provide jobs to low-skilled local workers,

said Memene. And upscale properties would attract foreign owners, who would in turn buy from local businesses. With this boon to surrounding commerce, locals "can go home and put the kids through school, they can take the sick parents to the hospital, and they can put food on the table for their family," he said.

All in all, Aka believes his endeavors captures the American spirit.

"The political climate ... [is such that] some people look down [on] immigrants — people like me — not even knowing what I am doing for this country." He experienced a confrontation with two people who "were not talking nicely. ... I first said, 'What a privilege to be born here ...' ... I asked them, 'Can you ... show me the list of what you do to serve America, besides your paycheck?' They didn't have a list. And I said, 'Well, being American is more than filling your tummy and going to sleep. I'm not from here, I wasn't born here. [But] I'm a proud citizen, and I can show you a list of what I've been every day doing.'

"This is a great country and I believe each one of us from somewhere else, who comes here, we should be not just people who live to take from this country, but a people who will live here also to build. ... American is about more than our own selves. And I want to make sure I teach my children that. ... [I am] proud to be a citizen of this nation that has accepted me. And I'm part of it, and I will make sure ... I take every opportunity I get [to] do something that can be useful for this country and contribute its growth and its wellbeing. Because American wellbeing means so much good for the rest of the world too."

"I'm a proud citizen."

— Eby Jean Baptiste Aka

"Bulky Boy"

By KENNETH B. LOURIE



Is the nickname I gave Andrew, one of our male cats. It's because he's a bit portly, like his father, yours truly. However, Andrew's nickname is not the impetus for this particular column. The impetus for this column is my tendency, as the primary (almost exclusive) buyer of miscellaneous household goods and to a lesser extent, services, to buy in bulk/quantity, not necessarily quality; although that's a subject of a long-ago column and perhaps a future one as well — dare I cross that Rubicon again, and one that has earned me this identical nickname to Andrew.

As a cancer patient originally diagnosed as "terminal" — at age 54 and a half, eight-plus years ago, time becomes an integral/essential part of your life; what there is of it presently, what you have been told you have left of it and what you — in your wildest dreams, every day and every night, hope you actually get to do: live a relatively "normal" life expectancy.

Even though life has gone on years past my original "13-month to two-year" prognosis, I still struggle with the emotional yin and yang of whether I'm closer to the end or further from the beginning (date of diagnosis). And is so struggling, everyday decisions that might have a time element/time-sensitivity to them are complicated. Is it necessary to do it/buy it/obligate myself to it now when the benefit might be later? A later I might never see? If I'm trying to enjoy life in the present as much as possible to fend off the inevitable and relentless stress that a "terminal" cancer diagnosis imposes, then how does a future benefit help me now?

As a few examples and finally to the point of this column: buying in bulk. 240 dryer sheets — for two adults, one of whom works at home and doesn't exactly get dressed for it; 90 tall kitchen trash bags — we use one bag a week, and that includes bagging the cat litter for five indoor cats; paper towels — enough quantity that we could likely wrap them around our entire house if we had to; toilet paper — is sacrosanct, one can never have enough in stock; and tissues/Kleenex — given how frequently my eight-years-of-post-chemotherapy nose runs — constantly, is also sacrosanct (although I can always use toilet paper, paper napkins or paper towels in the pinch; not exactly the same pinch as if the toilet paper inventory runs out, however). Naturally, these items are all non-perishable so their life expectancy is not a consideration. But since mine is, sometimes I think I need to buy them or else, because when I do need them it will be too late.

As for perishables, obviously it makes little sense to overbuy (expiration dates notwithstanding, except mine). I can't eat all the food quickly enough anyway (another point of contention from a previous column), although I may try. But even I know, in my cancer-induced haze, that spending money now on an unpredictable future though penny-wise and beneficial in some emotional ways, might be pound-foolish. I need to feel good today - period, not feel good today about something I might benefit from tomorrow. I mean, how else am I even going to get to tomorrow? Don't I need to filter out potentially harmful/debilitating mental and physical images/impacts and try to live as unencumbered as possible (to invoke one of my deceased father's favorite words)? Cancer is already an uphill battle. If I don't want to live the legendary life of Sisyphus, pushing a figurative rock up a hill, only to have it fall back down time and again, I need to find a way/strategy to both manage my budget and control my mind. Obviously, I want to live like I have a future, but not at the expense of my present. You can call me "Bulky Boy" all you want, but "crazy-kookie" not so much.

Kenny Lourie is an Advertising Representative for The Potomac Almanac & The Connection Newspapers.

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News

Champions

FROM PAGE 24

third place finish in the Varsity Second 8 category at the Charlie Butt Regatta at Georgetown two weekends ago.

After a victory in their qualifying heat with a 10 second cushion over second place Langley, the Junior 8s posted a winning time of 6:01.1 in the final, 9.9 seconds ahead of second place Lake Braddock. Rowing for the Titan Women's Junior 8 are Rachel Sedehi, Cleo Lewis, Chloe Marsh, Marley Osborne, Elspeth Collard, Piper Bucholz, Charlotte Milone, and Anna Jane Guynn, along with coxswain Paula Filios.

"I was so thrilled with our results on Saturday," said TC Women's Junior 8 Coach Kelly Kim. "The past few weeks we have been focusing on a different aspect of our race — our strongest point has been the body/middle of our piece, though the girls came together as a boat and discussed what they wanted to improve. We practice with TC's Freshmen boat, racing alongside each other every day, which has paid off for both boats. I think the girls felt very satisfied with their race, though we are eager to compete at the next level to really test ourselves."

Next, the Varsity Men's Junior 8, TC's slightly reconfigured (exchanging a senior rower for a junior) Lightweight 8 that also raced up in early season regattas, came to their final following a 25.5 second victory over Forest Park and other boats in their morning heat.

In the final, the J8s once again bested second place Forest Park with a time of 5:18.0, a 10.8 second margin. Members of the TC Men's Junior 8 include Stefanos Psaltis-Ivanis, Wogan Snyder, Ian Willmore, Connor Rex, Kenneth Warren, Griff Austin, Adam Elnahas, and Cameron Luther, and coxswain Claire Williams.

Capping the Titan gold rush was the Women's Frosh 8, including rowers Ava Elkins, Lydia Greenwood, Madeline Toaso, Madeleine Allen, Julia Clements, Felicity Brock, Lila Arnold, and Alaina Browand, and coxswain Sara Rider. Coming off their victory at the Charlie Butt, the Frosh 8 posted a 14.5 second win over Oakton in their qualifying heat.

In the final, the Frosh Women staged a 12.5 second win over second place National Cathedral School with a time of 6:18.2. Their win brings the Women's Frosh 8 State Championship trophy back to TC's Dee Campbell Rowing Center for the second year in a row.

BULLETIN BOARD

FROM PAGE 15

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