



Inside



25 CENTS

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NOVEMBER 23, 2017



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

Rebuilding Together Alexandria executive director Katharine Dixon, fourth from left, is joined Nov. 17 by Mayor Allison Silberberg, to her right, Vice Mayor Justin Wilson, to her left, and other local dignitaries and volunteers to officially open the newly renovated Teen Center at the Charles Houston Recreation Center.

Teen Center Reopens

Rebuilding Together volunteers complete renovations.

A ribbon-cutting ceremony was held Nov. 17 to officially open the newly renovated Teen Center at the Charles Houston Recreation Center.

"The Teen Center is 98 percent complete and open to Alexandria teens," said Katharine Dixon, executive director of Rebuilding Together Alexandria, one of the partners in the renovation. "Teens used the center that night and Saturday night, so it's already doing what it was meant to

— provide a place for teens to be safe, have fun, learn and grow."

Beginning in September, Rebuilding Together Alexandria volunteers joined forces with Fannie Mae to renovate the center in the Parker Gray neighborhood. The center's renovation was spearheaded by the Charles Houston Recreation Center Advisory Council and the Department of Recreation, Parks and Cultural Activities.

— JEANNE THEISMANN

Austerity Ahead?

Council to see if city can afford no real estate tax rate hike next year.

BY DAN BRENDEN
GAZETTE PACKET

In its FY19 budget guidance, adopted Tuesday, Nov. 14, City Council signaled its intention to maintain the real estate tax rate, while acknowledging the austerity that may result.

Each fall, council gives the city manager parameters for building the proposed budget, which council then tweaks in the springtime. In recent years, council has typically enabled the manager to introduce changes to the city's tax-and-fee structure, of which the real estate tax generates some two-thirds of General Fund revenues. Over the past 10 years, council revised the manager's proposal up 8 times, down once (2013), and once (2015) made no change. For nearly three decades since 1979, the property tax rate fell on average, reaching an all-time low of \$0.815 in 2006, according to the FY18 budget document. Since then the rates crept up, reaching \$1.13 presently. Though this level hasn't been surpassed since 1988, neither has the rate crested the 39-year average of \$1.115 since 1988. And \$1.13 is still low relative to jurisdictions regionally.

After debate Tuesday about leaving flexibility for another increase, council decided unanimously to direct the manager to maintain the current rate of \$1.13 when crafting his FY19 proposal. That's not a promise. Council could opt to raise the rate, and households may pay more with rising assessments in any case. But it's a relatively uncommon restriction. In the past five budget cycles, council mandated a similar restriction only once, in FY15 (though in the end raised the rate anyway).

City Manager Mark Jinks redirected a couple questions about his opinion of the ramifications back to council. Asked if he feels that not raising the rate is "doable" and if he can "live with" it, he said that he and his staff would build a budget around whatever parameters council gives him.

"It's just a matter of what's included and what's not," he said. "If council has considered it is a high priority not to increase the real estate tax rate, sending that message early has value. If in fact you want to leave it as — ... an open question until you see what the consequences of that [are] — you may not want to include it. It's really what your preference is.

SEE COUNCIL, PAGE 24

Focused on Improving Health of the Community



PHOTO BY VERNON MILES/GAZETTE PACKET

Dr. Basim Khan (left) and Susan Abramson.

Neighborhood Health celebrates 20 years.

BY VERNON MILES
GAZETTE PACKET

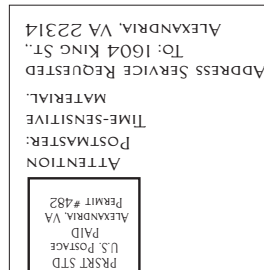
The Neighborhood Health Clinic started with an idea; that all people deserve access to healthcare. Now, 20 years later after it was founded, that idea has become an organization stretched across Northern Virginia and taking care of 17,000 patients every year.

In preparation for an upcoming 20th anniversary gala, current and past directors of Neighborhood Health reflected on how the organization has grown and evolved, and the challenges it faces today.

According to Dr. Basim Khan, executive director of Neighborhood Health, the goal of the organization is to improve health and advance health equity. Neighborhood Health isn't urgent care; its focus is comprehensive and integrated primary care. That means

someone who comes in for a vaccine also could go down the hall to see their dentist. More than half of the patients treated by Neighborhood Health do not have insurance.

Neighborhood Health started
SEE NEIGHBORHOOD, PAGE 24



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Trouble Down the Tracks

Regional Metro leadership outlines upcoming crisis

BY VERNON MILES

The good news is there's no planned fare increases or service reductions in the upcoming Metro budget.

The bad news is that without an adequate funding source the Metro system will continue to disintegrate.

At a Northern Virginia Transit Commission public forum on Nov. 16 in its Courthouse area headquarters, representatives of Arlington, Alexandria and Fairfax updated residents on the precarious situation of the region's rail system.

It's been one year since the Safe Track, a project that implemented systemwide delays to allow for greater maintenance on the aging rail lines. Combined with a fare increase and service reductions, Safe Track had a major impact on the system's ridership. With rising capital costs and dwindling revenue, the Metro system faces a \$7.5 billion funding gap.

"In FY 2017, capital spending was \$1.2 billion," said Paul Smedberg, a City Council member from Alexandria and the city's representative to NVTC. "It was the largest investment in the Metro since its completion. But by FY 2022, the budget will grow to \$1.5 billion."

For the FY2019 budget, Smedberg said the focus of the capital budget is on rehabilitation and maintenance of existing services, with 85 percent of the investments going into existing lines. Arlington County Board member and NVTC representative Christian Dorsey said the \$1.8 billion operating budget includes no service cuts or fare increases, but that the budget still has its share of challenges. The majority of the operating budget, 71 percent, is budgeted for Metro personnel, which meant the new budget reduced Metro staff by 800 employees. Some of those were vacant positions that weren't filled, but Dorsey said that also included employees who were laid off. There could be further Metro employee trouble looming as well. Metro employees are not permitted to strike, but that was adopted as part of a bargain that expired over a year ago. According to James Corcoran, CEO of the Northern Virginia Chamber of Commerce, Metro is in nego-



PHOTO BY VERNON MILES

NVTC leadership, from left: Executive Director Kate Mattice, Fairfax County Supervisor Cathy Hudgins, Alexandria City Councilor Paul Smedberg, Arlington County Board Member Christian Dorsey, and James Corcoran, CEO of the Northern Virginia Chamber of Commerce.

tiations with workers over the next few months to reach a new settlement, but Corcoran said that could change the negotiating power or add costs to the budget.

Corcoran also said there are challenges coming up that the FY 2019 budget does not address. The budget makes no contribution to the Metro's rainy day fund and makes no wage increases for Metro employees. The Phase 2 plan for the Silver Line includes increased bus and rail service, neither of which are covered in the FY 2019 budget. Even beyond what's already noted as unfunded plans coming up for Metro, Smedberg noted that there are costly projects like expanding the Rosslyn tunnel that are looming on the horizon that are vital to the system's long-term survival.

"Our expenses are growing essentially at twice the rate of our income," said Corcoran. "[Without outside funding] that's going to come from higher rider costs or reduced service."

But Corcoran noted those possibilities could also lead to what other regional leadership has called a death spiral, where driving up costs begins to reduce ridership, which continues to force costs for riders higher and higher. Corcoran also noted that revenue from ridership also accounts for a higher percentage than nearly any other Metro system in the country except New

York, whose density puts their subway system on a different economic scale.

The NVTC leadership argues that the Metro needs direct funding, but so far even maintaining existing levels of funding from the federal and state level is proving to be a challenge.

Smedberg emphasized the importance of the reauthorization of the Passenger Rail Investment and Improvement Act (PRIIA). PRIIA was first enacted in 2008 and has designated \$1.5 billion in funding to the Metro over 10 years. Maryland, Virginia and D.C. matched that funding with \$50 million each year for capital improvements. However, the transportation spending bill in the House Appropriations Committee would only allocate \$75 million to the Metro each year, a decrease from the \$150 million standard.

In Maryland, the state covers the cost of Metro usage, but in Virginia much of the funding is left to localities. In terms of state funding, Corcoran described 2019 as a fiscal cliff for the Metro system. Funding from Virginia bonds issued in 2009 will run out. In the proposed FY 2019 budget, Virginia and Maryland are hit with pretty heavy contribution increases. Alexandria's contribution to the operating budget, under the proposed FY 2019 budget, would increase from \$40.3 million to \$42.1 million, a 4.5 per-

cent increase. Fairfax County's contribution goes up from \$135.3 million to \$139.4 million, a 3 percent increase. Arlington's increase is slightly less, from \$70.9 million to \$72.8 million, a 2.7 percent increase. Smedberg said the jurisdictional contribution has been capped at three percent growth per year moving forward, but Corcoran noted that without funding from the state, more and more of those costs will begin to shift down to localities. As the bonds expire, the state's funding to the Metro system could start to steadily decline.

Many in the audience were confused by why the state would not put more funding into the Metro system.

"Virginia receives a 250 percent return on investment," said Griffin Smith, referencing an NVTC study. "I don't understand how the state could not fund this."

Dorsey said the main challenge in convincing the state is breaking through the regionalism rife in Richmond.

"To them, it's a [Northern Virginia] thing," said Dorsey. "We have to break through the idea that this just benefits the People's Republic of Fairfax, Arlington and Alexandria. We have to make it patently obvious that this is a benefit by focusing on the dollars."

This can be difficult, Corcoran said, when Metro is competing for funding against education, prisons, and healthcare.

"Every official is looking for what's best for their locality," said Corcoran.

Alternatives have been proposed, but each of those have their own challenges. The idea of a regional sales tax was put forward, but was rejected at a state level. State Sen. George Barker, representing Alexandria, Fairfax and Prince William County, expressed concerns at the time that a sales tax across the region would put the financial burden unfairly onto Virginia. Without state approval, Dorsey said the localities also have varying levels of restrictions on whether or not they could implement a sales tax on their own. While Alexandria, as a city, has the autonomy to put a sales tax into place, Fairfax would be required to hold a referendum, which Arlington can't even initiate.

"There's a question of equity," said Smedberg. "One jurisdiction might be putting in more while having less stations. That's something that gives people heartburn."

Currently, much of the jurisdiction funding in Virginia is derived from a regional gas tax. However, no floor was ever set on this gas tax, so as prices on gas have continued to decline over the last few years, so has the revenue.

Al Francis, a Centreville resident, asked about the potential for expanding the Orange Line further into Northern Virginia, but NVTC leadership said that was unlikely in the near future.

"We can figure out how to expand," said Cathy Hudgins, a member of the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors, "but the focus right now is on maintaining. It's hard to argue for expansion in our current state."



FILE PHOTOS BY VERNON MILES

Commuters push their way through a crowd to depart train.



West-bound Orange Line train.



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News



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

Great Waves Waterpark at Cameron Run Regional Park at 4001 Eisenhower Ave.

Draining Great Waves

The death and rebirth of Cameron Run.

By VERNON MILES
GAZETTE PACKET

In 2028, the water will turn off at Cameron Run, the end of a deal that started in 1981 between Alexandria and the Northern Virginia Park Authority (Nova Parks) that created the Great Waves Waterpark.

The lease was set to expire in 2021 with Nova Parks hoping to extend for 40 years, but at the Nov. 14 City Council meeting, the lease was extended until 2028. According to City Manager Mark Jinks, the suggestion to close the city's agreement with Nova Parks was born from concerns that a warm weather park only in use half of the year was not the best use of such a large piece of park land along the increasingly developed Eisenhower Avenue.

"This park holds the same importance for Eisenhower Avenue as Ben Brenman Park has for Duke Street," said James Spengler, director of Recreation, Parks and Cultural Activities. "We're concerned with how fast this corridor will develop ... and that [Nova Parks] hasn't shown any interest in features other than a water park. They haven't indicated an interest in any other type of investment."

Councilman Paul Smedberg said he personally would have gone for less than 10 years, but that like the rest of the council he was comfortable with the proposal put forward by Jinks.

Jinks said that a 10-year timeframe gives Nova Parks 10 years to work the loss of Great Waves Waterpark revenue into their future plans, but is primarily due to the city's CIP structure.

"The [10-year] CIP is fully subsidised," said Jinks. "Conversion for Cameron Run would cost an estimated \$30 to \$34 million. The city is not in a position to take on something like that immediately. This gives everyone advance notice to make the transition in 2028."

But while most of the council was in agreement about the time frame, Vice Mayor Justin Wilson expressed concerns that the proposal doesn't go far enough to detail the city's plans for what comes next.

"I'm concerned that even with a decade we're going to come back and not be in a better place [financially]," said Wilson. "The question is basic; do we want a water park here or other uses? We need to first decide what we want to see on that site and then we can have a discussion about how we get there."

Wilson said the focus of the discussion at this point should be what the city sees as the vision for this park more than who runs it, but Smedberg said the two are tied together.

"I do not see a decision like this as stopping the process," said Smedberg, "this could kick-start a great conversation about what goes there."

"Just what we have here today is a pretty bold change," said Mayor Allison Silberberg. "I think we can discuss what our options are in the months ahead."

This is a pretty big step in and of itself. People need time to absorb this."

Silberberg noted that more of the discussion about the park's future could take place after the first public hearing, scheduled for Dec. 16.

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PEOPLE

'Celebrating Centenarians' Sharing their wit and wisdom.

BY JEANNE THEISMANN
GAZETTE PACKET

Want to know the secret to a long life? If 107-year-old Laura Mallory is to be believed, it is not having a husband and children to worry about.

"I never married or had kids," said Mallory with a laugh when asked the secret to her longevity.

Mallory's comment was just one of the many bits of wit and wisdom shared as 25 centenarians from across Northern Virginia gathered for the second Celebrating Centenarians reception Nov. 7 at The Fairfax at Fort Belvoir.

"I call this 'saging not aging,'" said Kate Caldwell of Elder Tree Care Management Services and organizer of the event. "Our centenarians are sage wise and this is an opportunity to bring everyone together to celebrate life."

Mallory was one of two 107-year-olds in attendance. At 100, RubINETTE Dunaway was the youngest.

"I just turned 100," said Dunaway. "I never imagined there would be so many people here older than me."

World War II Army Colonel Joseph Lucchi, just a few days shy of his 103rd birthday on Nov. 17, attended the luncheon with his wife Rosa, who he married 48 years ago following the death of his first wife.

"She is only 90 years old so I guess I was robbing the cradle," joked Lucchi. "She is also a great cook but unfortunately when I retired, she informed me that she was retiring too — from the kitchen."

When 102-year-old Vera Punke was complimented on her youthful skin, she quipped, "If you think I look good now, you should have seen me last year."



Centenarians from across Northern Virginia gather for a group photo Nov. 7 at the Celebrating Centenarians luncheon at The Fairfax at Fort Belvoir.

Interspersed with the laughter were more serious observations on life as a centenarian.

"I think it's important to maintain a sense of curiosity no matter how old you are," said 103-year-old Doris Kessler.

For Lucchi, having a fulfilling life as a centenarian is about the attitude he developed growing up as the son of poor Italian immigrants.

"The secret in life is to work hard and treat others with respect," said Lucchi, who attended law school at night and retired as the Chief Clerk of the Appellate Court in New York. "If you are good to people you often find later in life that they are good to you."

When Mallory wasn't joking about the benefits of being single, she simply said, "There is no secret. God has been so good to me in allowing me to live so long."



Just days shy of his 103rd birthday, World War II veteran Joseph Lucchi, right, enjoys the Celebrating Centenarians luncheon Nov. 7 at The Fairfax at Fort Belvoir. With him are his wife Rosa and granddaughter Amy Joseph.



At 107, Laura Mallory, right, remembers the end of World War I.



Synergy HomeCare Janet Barnett, left, talks with 102-year-old Vera Punke.



Mitch Opalski and Janet Barnett of Synergy HomeCare, one of the sponsors of the Celebrating Centenarians event Nov. 7 at The Fairfax at Fort Belvoir.



Purple Heart

Alexandria resident Lt. Col. Alexis N. Stackhouse was awarded the Purple Heart on Nov.

14 by Air Force Lt. Gen. Jeffrey L. Harrigan for wounds received in action during Operation Iraqi Freedom. Stackhouse is active in her community and the Alexandria Bar Association where she serves as the chair of the Criminal Justice Practice Group. She is also the Virginia State Bar Chair of the Military Law Practice Group. She is married to Ramon D. McMillan, and the mother of 9-year-old son, Alex Zhi McMillan.



Financial Well-Being Summit

Mary Sellers (third from left), U.S. president, United Way Worldwide, based in Alexandria, joined by (from left) Jack E. Kosakowski, president and CEO, Junior Achievement USA; Jim Clark, president and CEO, Boys & Girls Club of America; and Jeff Faulkner, acting president and CEO, National Foundation for Credit Counseling, speaks on a panel of 11 national nonprofit leaders during the SunTrust Foundation National Financial Well-Being Summit. The SunTrust Foundation convened the second annual Summit in Atlanta to discuss how nonprofit organizations and foundations can work together to support the tenets of financial well-being, including financial education and counseling, career readiness and entrepreneurship, in communities nationwide.

Schools' New Director Of Transportation

Charles Stone has been named director of transportation for Alexandria City Public Schools. He brings more than 25 years of experience in school transportation management and 20 years of experience in providing logistical support for U.S. Army activities worldwide.



Stone comes to ACPS from Denver Public Schools in Colorado following an assignment in Weatherford, Texas. Before that, he served for 14 years as the director of transportation in Mansfield, Texas where he led transportation and related alternative fueling initiatives for one of the fastest-growing school districts in Texas.

Stone holds a master's in business administration from LeTourneau University in Longview, Texas and is a Certified Texas Pupil Transportation Official. He is also a decorated Army veteran and past president of the Texas Association for Pupil Transportation.

Stone will start in his new role on January 2, 2018.

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Floor & Décor Celebrates Grand Opening

Design center located on Eisenhower Avenue.

By JEANNE THEISMANN
GAZETTE PACKET

Floor & Décor, a specialty hard surface flooring retailer, celebrated the grand opening of its Alexandria design center Nov. 4, marking the third Virginia location for the Georgia-based company.

The 94,226-square-foot retail store and design center is located at 4607 Eisenhower Ave. and led by Jonathan Bickley, the new store's chief executive merchant.

"Floor & Décor is excited to open our Alexandria location," said Bickley. "We plan to change the way customers shop for hard-surface flooring by offering the largest in-stock selection at unbeatable pricing with superior customer service."

Floor & Décor is open to the public and



Floor & Décor, located at 4607 Eisenhower Ave., celebrated its Alexandria grand opening Nov. 4.

serves both homeowners and professional contractors. The warehouse-size showroom carries more than one million square feet of in-stock flooring and offers free design services and how-to clinics.

The grand opening celebration featured Washington Redskins cheerleaders, 94.7 FreshFM radio personality Darik Kristofer and free food from the Rocklands BBQ food truck.

Established in 2000 and headquartered in Atlanta, Floor & Décor offers a broad in-stock selection of ceramic, stone, tile, wood and laminate flooring. In addition, the store stocks tools, decorative materials and accessories related to hard-surface flooring projects.

For more information, visit www.flooranddecor.com.

PHOTOS CONTRIBUTED



Free how-to clinics are offered at the Floor & Décor showroom and design center.



Floor & Décor Employees enjoy some games as part of the Nov. 4 grand opening.



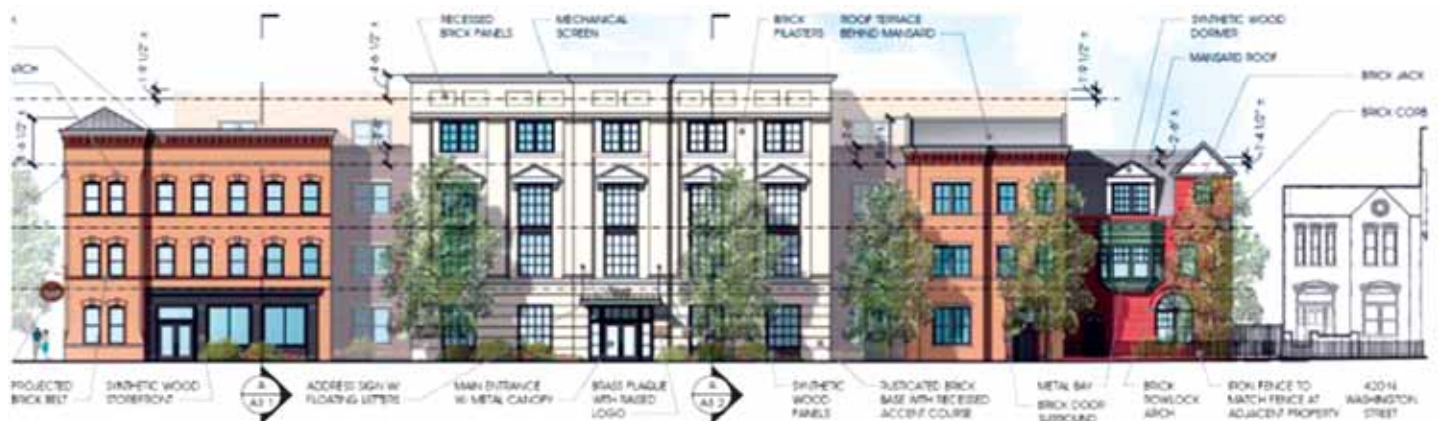
Radio personality Darik Kristopher with Washington Redskins cheerleaders at the Nov. 4 grand opening of Floor & Décor on Eisenhower Ave.

Aging Town New senior care facility coming to Old Town.

By VERNON MILES
GAZETTE PACKET

Despite its name, Old Town can be a challenge for elderly residents. Older Alexandrians looking for permanent care facilities might be able to find a slot in the limited spaces of facilities in the west end, but many are forced to turn to more rural parts of Northern Virginia. The new Sunrise Senior Living in the Braddock Road neighborhood will start to change that.

The development was unanimously approved at a Nov. 18 City Council, though not without a little last minute City Hall drama. In exchange for an increased floor area ratio, the developer baited their hook with one auxiliary grant-funded



Plans for the Sunrise Senior Living Facility.

PHOTO BY VERNON MILES /GAZETTE PACKET

unit or deeply-affordable unit of equivalent value for 20 years.

In a city with limited access to elderly care, committed affordable is even more of

a scarcity. Helen McIlvaine, director of the Office of Housing, emphasized the city's critical need for affordable elderly care.

During the development's Planning Com-

mission approval, the length the unit would remain affordable was doubled to 40 years. But as the project approached

SEE NEW SENIOR CARE, PAGE 9

News

New Senior Care Facility

FROM PAGE 8

City Council, there was more behind the scenes haggling. The night before the City Council meeting, plans for the development changed and included a second affordable care unit.

Many on the council were pleased, with Mayor Allison Silberberg saying the offer was generous, but Councilman Paul Smedberg saw the move as a little unnerving.

"I'm really concerned about all of this," said Smedberg. "This is not the only occasion [where there's been] last minute requests,

discussions are happening with certain members of council, others are excluded. I'm really concerned about it. We've talked about this before. Conversations happening at night others aren't privy to... I'm not saying it's not a worthy cause, but the process of how we get here and last minute requests... it's just not right.

Smedberg wasn't alone. Robert Eiffert, representing the Commission on Aging, urged the council to push for the duration of the affordable units to be pushed to the life of the project rather than 40 years.

"This is a major contribution, we appreciate that, but Sunrise isn't in the business of losing money," said Eiffert. "They didn't get where they are today by giving away massive amounts of services. This is getting paid for by being spread over the rest of the units. That's a compromise everyone can live with ... Don't be bedazzled by huge cost

sums. Put on your sunglasses if you have to. Recognize that they are going to recoup this cost. It's not going to just subtract from what they're able to do. I do think adding a unit is wonderful solution, but would still like it for the

"I'm not saying it's not a worthy cause, but the process of how we get here and last minute requests... it's just not right."

— Councilman Paul Smedberg

life of the project."

Kenneth Wire, a land use attorney for the developer, held the line against a lifetime of the project extension. "We can only agree to a period of 40 years," said Wire. "That's quite a long period of time."

Wire also apologized to Smedberg for the last minute change, but in general, the council's tone towards the new development was one of gratitude with several of them offering their thanks to the developer before the project was unanimously approved.



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There's No Place Like Home

HomeGoods opens in Potomac Yard.

BY JEANNE THEISMANN
GAZETTE PACKET

Dozens of shoppers waited in line to be among the first to check out the wares as home décor retailer HomeGoods opened the doors to its newest location Nov. 16 at Potomac Yard in Alexandria.

"I would have been here even earlier if it hadn't been for the traffic," said Constance Johnson, who traveled from Camp Springs, Md., for the 8 a.m. opening. "What can I say? I'm a HomeGoods junkie."

The 21,896 square-foot store is located in Potomac Yard at 3701 Jefferson Davis Highway in the space formerly occupied by Sports Authority. The Alexandria location is the 18th in the Washington D.C. market and is expected to fill 65 full and part time positions from the local workforce.

As part of the grand opening, a check for \$10,000 was presented by HomeGoods store manager Polly Searight to Joe Meyer, president and CEO of Shelter House, a non-profit serving homeless families and victims of domestic violence in Northern Virginia.

"We are very grateful to HomeGoods for selecting us for this grant," Meyer said. "This will go a long way to helping those in our community."

HomeGoods operates more than 570 stores across the country and is a division of The TJX Companies, which includes T.J.Maxx, Marshalls, HomeGoods, Sierra Trading Post and Homesense.

For store hours and other HomeGoods locations, visit Homegoods.com.



Shelter House CEO Joe Meyer, left, accepts a check for \$10,000 from representatives of the new HomeGoods store located in Potomac Yard. Pictured with Meyer at the Nov. 16 opening are: associates Corey Wright; store manager Polly Searight; Brenda Smith; and Sam Mendis.

Employees greet shoppers at the opening of the new HomeGoods store at Potomac Yard Nov. 16.



Shoppers check out the new HomeGoods store at Potomac Yard on.



Demaine Completes Renovations Alexandria funeral home has been serving community for 65 years.

BY VERNON MILES
GAZETTE PACKET

The building at 520 S. Washington St. is one of the oldest commercial properties in Old Town to stay in the same business — since 1952. The Demaine Funeral Home cares for the dead, but inside the building has never been more alive.

After a series of complete interior renovations, the Demaine Funeral Home has been updated into the 21st century. Inside the walls are freshly painted and the bathrooms are ADA compliant, but beyond this the atmosphere is fresh. The building is divided into a series of rooms, each with displays that reflect the life and passions of the recently deceased.

"We're not grim," said Robert Damitz. "We have a sense of humor. We laugh and cry. We've all been through what these families are going through."

Damitz has been a funeral home director for 33 years. His interest in the field was

sparked as a young child growing up poor, where funeral homes were the nicest places in the neighborhood.

"It's the only thing I've ever done," Damitz said. "It's not easy. You're always sweating or freezing. Sometimes you can really relate to what a family is going through, and we get teary eyed, but you have to hide it and act like it doesn't get to us."

Funerals have changed over the years. Branham Mann, location manager at the Alexandria location for Demaine Funeral Homes, said over the last 10 years families have transitioned away from more traditional funerals. Cremations have increased, and services have shifted away from ceremonies like the dour, all-black wakes.

"There's less traditional services," said Mann. "People want things more unique. Less like a funeral." Mann says funeral home staff now do research and get to learn a lot about the deceased. One of the memorials in the home is covered with maps and wine bottles. Mann says the deceased was a world

SEE DEMAIN FURNAL, PAGE 22

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Back row, from left: Anna Gomes, Alex Aleman, Thomas Doherty, Branham Mann, Robert Damitz; front row, from left: Lesel Frinks, Britany Smith, and Dr. Dana Neese.

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1021 Towlston Road, McLean VA Beautifully maintained All brick estate home privately sited on 2+ acres. Great outdoor entertaining w/Pool & integrated Spa, deck & screen porch. Two story foyer, open kitchen/fam rm, Large master suite, full apartment style guest suite. Freshly updated move-in condition. In the heart of McLean located just 6 miles from Tysons Corner & Silver Line. \$1,649,000 Susan Gray & Alexandra Attiliis (703) 203-9900 <http://bit.ly/2fgDeC8>



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Open House Sunday 1-4pm • Belle Haven

2200 Foresthill Road, Alexandria VA Situated on one of the Belle Haven's most sought after streets, you will find this beautiful and stylishly renovated center hall colonial. The owners have lovingly utilized every inch to afford the next family, luxury living with old world charm! Just completed, a "state of the art" gourmet kitchen with handcrafted custom cabinetry, a six burner Wolf gas range/convection dual oven. Subzero fridge! \$1,450,000 Ellis Duncan (703) 307-4295 <http://bit.ly/2ynksmZ>



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PRICE REDUCED! • Marina Towers

501 Slaters Lane # 1019, Alexandria VA WATERFRONT rarely available 2BR/2BA, (formerly 3) Fully equipped, oversize gourmet kitchen Upgraded bathrooms Generous closet space. All rooms have river views. Enjoy sunset & capitol views from balcony. Underground garage parking w option of additional space Fully equipped fitness center. Club rm with pool, grill & access to bike path. UTILITIES INCLUDED Airport DC minutes away. \$665,000 Mary Cay Harris (703) 981-9976 <http://bit.ly/2fgmUnZ>



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6821 Murray Ln, Annandale VA Sunny and bright home. Amazing backyard with plenty of room to entertain and play! Relax poolside! Large lower level with family room, bedroom, full bath, huge laundry room and plenty of storage! \$599,000 Tracy Vitali (904) 505-1874 <http://bit.ly/2hggKCK>



Carlyle Towers

2181 Jamieson Avenue, Unit 1010, Alexandria VA PRISTINE, freshly painted vacant 2 bedroom, 2 bath condo with glass enclosed balcony has wood floors THROUGHOUT, bath upgrades to include Quartz tops, new faucets, sinks, light, etc. Storage Room. Garage parking. Open Sunday OR give Marie a call if you want to see it another time! \$525,000 Marie Louise Meyer (703) 929-1002 <http://bit.ly/2zeplQg>



Open House Sunday 1-4pm • Jefferson Manor

5800 North Kings Highway, Alexandria VA Great investment property across the street from Huntington Metro Station. 100yards from the Metro escalator! Price has been reduced! Fantastic value. All brick 3 lvl Semi-D home w/gracious hardwoods, new roof, new AC, and new 200 AMP panel. Fresh paint throughout. This is a turn-key house in exceptional condition. Finished LL. Large fenced backyard. Hurry over soon. \$355,000 om Rickert (703) 477-79010 <http://bit.ly/2u9hqhq>



Mount Vernon Valley

4407 Wyres street, alexandria va Updated 3 BR, one level rambler with carport on huge lot. Updates include new kitchen appliances, cabinets, ceramic tile floor and granite counter tops; carpet; doors; bath and painting. Vacant and ready for the buyer who wants a detached home at a great price. \$335,000 Edward Pagett (571) 237-4753 <http://bit.ly/2yc7d5B>



Parkside at Alexandria

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PRICE REDUCED! • Open House Sunday 2-4pm

MONTEBELLO 5901 Mount Eagle Drive #215, Alexandria VA This very well maintained and lovely large "G" Model 2 bedroom condo in top Montebello building. This unit has close access to the Huntington Metro Station. Enjoy the terrific restaurant/bar, indoor and outdoor pools, tennis courts and walking/jogging trails! \$287,500 Ellis Duncan (703) 307-4295 <http://bit.ly/2yfhjjo>

A Very Happy Thanksgiving to All from the Alexandria Office!

Alexandria 310 King St. | Alexandria, VA 22314 | 703.518.8300

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ALEXANDRIA GAZETTE PACKET ❖ NOVEMBER 23-29, 2017 ❖ 11



OPINION

Shop Locally, Give Locally

Every day is for shopping small and shopping locally.

An effort to support locally owned businesses has resulted in the recognition of Small Business Saturday, the Saturday after Thanksgiving. This year that is Nov. 25. Black Friday, the day after Thanksgiving, is promoted as a day of national zeal for shopping. Presumably the next day shoppers can focus on local shopping.

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

We all benefit when local stores thrive, when local business districts beckon.

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

Supporting small businesses, locally owned businesses, has to be more than a one-day affair. And in this area, there doesn't have to be anything small about shopping locally.

But still, local families will shop and exchange gifts during the next month, spending tens of millions of dollars in a variety of

places.

One way to be sure holiday shopping comes with some holiday spirit is to do a portion of your shopping in some of the area's locally owned stores. There is special holiday ambiance available by shopping in the heart of a town that is decked out for the season. Small retail shops are part of defining any community. Their livelihood depends on the livability and quality of the neighborhoods around them. A small business owner pays attention to every detail in his or her business in a way that no chain can.

The small business owner is often the leader for fundraising for local charities, for fire and rescue service, for local schools and in organizing holiday events.

Local shoppers should be sure to save some shopping time and dollars for local stores. Spend some time shopping in your own community, and also plan an excursion to a nearby town to check out the holiday spirit there.

See Connection's Holiday Calendar for great celebrations near you.

❖ **Fairfax County:**
www.connectionnewspapers.com/news/2017/nov/16/holiday-calendar-2017/

❖ **Arlington:**
www.connectionnewspapers.com/news/2017/nov/15/arlington-holiday-calendar-2017/

❖ **Potomac:**
www.connectionnewspapers.com/news/2017/nov/15/potomac-almanac-holiday-calendar-2017/

❖ **Alexandria:**
www.connectionnewspapers.com/news/2017/nov/20/alexandria-holiday-calendar-2017/

— MARY KIMM

MKIMM@CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM

Short Deadline for Children's Edition

During the last week of each year, this newspaper devotes its pages to the creativity of local students and children. The results are always remarkable. It is a keepsake edition for many families. Even readers without children of that age spend time admiring and chuckling over the issue. The annual Children's Connection (including Children's Gazette, Children's Almanac and Children's Centre View) is a tradition of well over a decade.

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

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

format.

We welcome contributions from public and private schools, individuals and homeschoolers. To be published, we must have first and last name of the student. Please include the student's age and/or grade, school attended and town of residence, plus the name of the school, name of teacher and town of school location. Provide submissions by Friday, Dec. 1.

Email submissions for the Children's Edition to the following editors:

❖ For Burke, Clifton, Fairfax, Fairfax Station, Great Falls, Herndon, Lorton, McLean, Reston, or Springfield, email to Kemal Kurspahic at kemal@connectionnewspapers.com.

❖ For Alexandria, Arlington, Centreville, Chantilly, Mount Vernon, or Potomac, Md., email to Steven Mauren at smauren@connectionnewspapers.com.



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

'Bountiful Tom Turkey'

The students at Grace Episcopal School created the "Bountiful Tom Turkey" on Wednesday, Nov. 15, completely out of canned and boxed food, which was all donated by Grace Episcopal School students and their families. More than 300 cans, jars and boxes of food were used in the construction. All of the food was donated to the Grace Episcopal Church Food Pantry, which works in conjunction with the Alexandria Department of Human Services to feed Alexandria families in need.

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LETTERS

High Taxes, Adequate Services

To the Editor:

"Mayoral Battle" news story reporting on Vice Mayor Justin Wilson's announcement about running for mayor never uses the phrase "tax increase" or "tax hike," but includes six euphemisms for one, drawn mainly from Vice mayor Wilson's announcement:

- ❖ "... what kind of future the city is working towards"
- ❖ "additional leadership required"
- ❖ "Mayoral leadership ... to make big decisions"
- ❖ "driving progressive change"
- ❖ "lack of sustainable revenue growth"
- ❖ "investment into city infrastructure"

As the District of Columbia's experience exhibits, high taxes do not guarantee good services. We spend about the same per student as Arlington where schools are all accredited fully, while only two-thirds of ours are. We are better off with low taxes for merely adequate services.

Dino Drudi
Alexandria

When Will City Be 'Full?'

To the Editor:

When will Alexandria be "full?" Cities – like any vessel – have limits. And Alexandria, restricted from growing any larger than the 15 square miles it occupies, will

never have any more land that it has now. Nor will it get any more roads to traverse this land. All Alexandria can do is become more dense.

However, to learn about the many projects to build more structures within the confining boundaries of Alexandria, you'd think there's space galore for ever more houses, people and their vehicles. Several examples of this mindset were subjects of recent news stories.

One article detailed how a declining parish revitalized itself by converting open space into an architecturally bland, but massive structure entirely set aside for affordable housing. Another story described the Planning Commission decision to permit venerable woodland on precarious soil containing the last free flowing spring in Alexandria to be replaced by McMansions.

And then there's the mega church that will swallow an entire city block (and destroy affordable housing in the process). This mega church is but another Planning Commission error: a massive structure that will disfigure a neighborhood but will pay no property tax despite the real cost to city to render services to it and its occupants.

Concerned citizens have made any number of suggestions to redress the anti-resident mindset of our Planning Commission and City Council. Kevin Dunne recently proposed a genuine master plan; Townsend Van Fleet and others would like an ombudsman. Nearly all decry the community-deaf, imperious Planning Commission decision-making process. Some – including me – have proposed replacing the current Plan

SEE LETTERS, PAGE 14

THANKSGIVING THOUGHTS

'The Little Things I Think Of — For It's Thanksgiving'

Family friends and good neighbors
Walking through autumn leaves
And the sound of many colors because it's Fall.
Autumn colors and cool breeze and the crisp smell of firewood,
Through the air you can hear the sound of children playing full of laughter.

Those are a few things I think of and of course "Thanksgiving Dinner"
The smell of pumpkin, apple and sweet potato pies
Basket full of red apples, oranges on the counter, and cinnamon sticks, Cappuccino coffee, hot chocolate and green tea, that's just the start.
Glazed turkey and some ham, stuffing and gravy of course
And all the trimmings — mashed potatoes, casserole, yams, cranberry sauce,
Roasted glazed carrots, onions, rice, home-made macaroni, cabbage, walnut relish and celery along with a good salad.

Of the many things I am thankful for: My mother,
She loved to fix a feast for Thanksgiving,
Especially her potato soup I miss
And how she would smile for I loved her home-made soup
And the laughter we shared because I would say
"Mom I'm still a vegetarian"
And dinner we would have family together
And friends and good neighbors
And many different conversations
And football of course.

Happy Thanksgiving to all throughout the City of Alexandria,
Activist **Geri Baldwin**
Alexandria

Join Us for Falls Church Tree Fest

Pass the love, please.
It's holiday time
at The Kensington!

We've saved a place for you,
at our table and in our hearts.

Come share in the magic of The Kensington holidays
as we gather for festivities, food and fun
with family and friends. Help us make lasting traditions
as we open our doors and spread a little cheer.

To kick off the season, please join us
for our first holiday event, co-hosted with Falls Church Arts.
Support your favorite cause with a donation
or a bid for a chance to win
a beautifully decorated holiday tree.

— Falls Church Tree Fest —

An annual holiday celebration and silent auction
to raise money and awareness for
Falls Church area nonprofits

Thursday, November 30, 2017 from 4:30pm-7:30pm
RSVP to 703-992-9868 or conciergefs@kensingtonsl.com


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LETTERS

FROM PAGE 13

ning Commission members with individuals from each ward in the city.

These wards exist; they do not have to be created from whole cloth. Nor does the city need permission from the state to use them for more than their current purpose: electing school board members. What's lacking is a will to make the Planning Commission, much less the City Council, an instrument of the citizens whereby neighbors elect someone who lives among them to represent them and their interests.

Except for Mayor Silberberg, our current City Council lacks this will. Its decisions and explanations, certainly those made by Vice Mayor Wilson, dismiss citizen concerns in favor of pave and build; more is good, ever more is better. Wilson and his council colleagues are oblivious that there are limits to everything, including how dense a small city can become before its taxes become onerous, its schools and street parking never adequate, and its charm and quality of life diminished.

Jimm Roberts
Alexandria

Preserve Environment

To the Editor:

I would like to encourage all Alexandrians who support the concept of ours being a "green city" to call or write those who sit on the Planning Commission and City Council to ask that the approval for the development of four huge (6500-9000 sq.ft.) homes be reconsidered. The more people who make their wishes known, the greater the chance that they will reconsider approval of this environmentally disastrous project.

Our property at 1211 Saint Stephens Road abuts the ravine which makes up a good part of that property. When we purchased our home in 1997, we were informed by our Realtor as well as the seller's Realtor that the property to the back of ours was unbuildable and would be wooded in perpetuity. Sadly, that now appears to have been untrue. The woods, wetlands, and ravine that we love is in danger of being lost at this point. There are old growth trees there from the 1860s. There is an intermittent stream and, we suspect, an underground spring and stream on our property which feed into the headwaters of Strawberry Run and on into the Potomac River.

Anyone with even a rudimentary understanding of water quality knows that wetlands are nature's filters. Destroying any wetland area has repercussions beyond the immediate property. The proposed development cannot help but impact the wetland area. The developer plans to run the sewer line from the huge new homes down through the wetland. This is unacceptable.

The woods are also home to wildlife that those of us who live here are lucky enough to enjoy. The balance of nature is maintained as long as the woods remain. It seems that the entire city benefits directly from maintaining tree canopy, maintaining healthy trees whose roots help to stabilize

the marine clay slope, and maintaining a greenway for our wild creatures. Despite testimony at the Planning Commission hearing by a

lawyer involved in the sale of the property, there are many old trees down in the ravine. Several are right at our property line. These, too, add to our city's tree canopy.

We moved here because we believed that Alexandria was dedicated to the preservation of green space. We are happy to pay our property taxes a portion of which go to sustain parks and wild spaces throughout the city. Privately, we used to clear invasives from the ravine behind our home for the elderly woman who lived on the property that is now slated for destruction. Should the city see its way clear to purchase that property outright in order to preserve it, we would be more than happy to volunteer as much time as necessary to help save that treasure for everyone in Alexandria.

I hope the council will step in and stop the devastation that this development will cause. This is a unique piece of property and an wonderful opportunity for the city to show its true priorities. I hope you will rethink this development in order to live up to the title of being an Eco-City.

Cynthia B. Evans
Alexandria

Learn How Police Do Their Jobs

To the Editor:

I graduated yesterday from the Alexandria Community Police Academy, and I would strongly recommend this 10-week program which gives attendees an inside look at police operations. Why do I think this is so important? When I decided to sign up for the class, I had studied criminology in college. But I had no idea of the internal operations of our police force and what they face on the job every day to keep us safe.

This course goes a very long way to humanize the police. There were members of our class who had always been afraid of the police or who came from another city where the police force did not have a good name. Those people came away with a total change of heart because of the excellent force that Alexandria is fortunate to have.

These are men and women like us who have homes, families, and pets. They are not highly paid, but, nevertheless, put themselves in danger every day in the ongoing fight against criminal elements in our city. Some are on call 24 hours per day. Each officer who addressed our class and/or demonstrated his or her area of expertise was totally committed to the job.

The course includes a "ride along" in a police cruiser while the officer is on duty. And I can tell you that there are a lot of lawbreakers behind the wheels of cars who do not obey the law to pull over to the right and stop when they see or hear an emergency vehicle. I rode in a squad car speeding through the city en route to an accident, and it was terrifying to me — although not to the officer who was driving — how many cars did not get out of our way.

Among many things we learned was



What's Wrong with This Picture?

To the Editor:

The scene is of a stag, named Buck Carrier, who is standing just back of our property in an ancient ravine soon to be destroyed by a developer with the help of local lawyers and city planners. The scene of this unique, forested, animal corridor behind Temple Beth-El on Seminary Road will change first, to an image of massive destruction of the natural woodland and ravine topography and then to a scene of four massive four-story homes with their new public street crammed onto a mere three acres newly named Karig Estates.

The story behind the scene is complicated. Planning and Zoning (P&Z) and the Planning Commission (PC) have approved a site plan. Those approvals are being appealed to City Council on the basis that the site plan has not adequately addressed two of the many interconnected, overarching and vital issues — risk of slope collapse on both sides of the ravine and risk of storm water overflows which will flood down-stream properties on Colonel Ellis Avenue and might even undermine planned foundations.

The presence of marine clay is a common denominator for both slope failure and ineffective stormwater management. Marine clay is the key risk factor at the construction site. Although Alexandria residents have long suffered slope collapse, water damage and foundation failures caused by marine clay, neither the developer, nor P&Z, nor the PC address

the risk factors associated with construction atop marine clay.

Anthony Fleming, geologist and author of Alexandria's Geologic Atlas, recently wrote: "The [developer's] geotechnical report studiously avoids discussing the clay-related runoff potential from this site.... For context, a garden-variety hurricane or prolonged series of rain storms could generate as much as an acre foot (~329,000 gallons) of overland runoff from the site (post development), which would totally swamp the proposed Virginia Best Management Practices (BMP) features in the site plan not to mention the Colonel Ellis Avenue residents living below."

It's all about risk, folks. The developer, the lawyers, P&Z, and the PC do not mention the word "risk" because they are not taking risk or are accountable for negative outcomes that risks may bring. Do they expect taxpayers to unknowingly take on the proven risks of costly damages and reduced home values?

Let's hope council will protect us by rejecting the present site plan. Good government means the council must lead its staff to protect its citizens from hidden risks and find ways to approve projects that first serve clearly stated interests of citizens, then the city and lastly, the developers.

Loren Needles

Co-founder
Alexandria Coalition for
Responsible Stewardship

about the canine corps. What an exceptional group of trained canines and handlers. The work they do is pretty amazing, and those dogs are totally devoted to their handlers with whom they live fulltime.

This Alexandria Community Police Academy program is a total gamechanger. And for those who have not taken it, do it. You will not only learn a lot, you will come out with a much better appreciation for those who keep us safe.

Judith D. Baer
Alexandria

Fix Blocked Intersections

To the Editor:

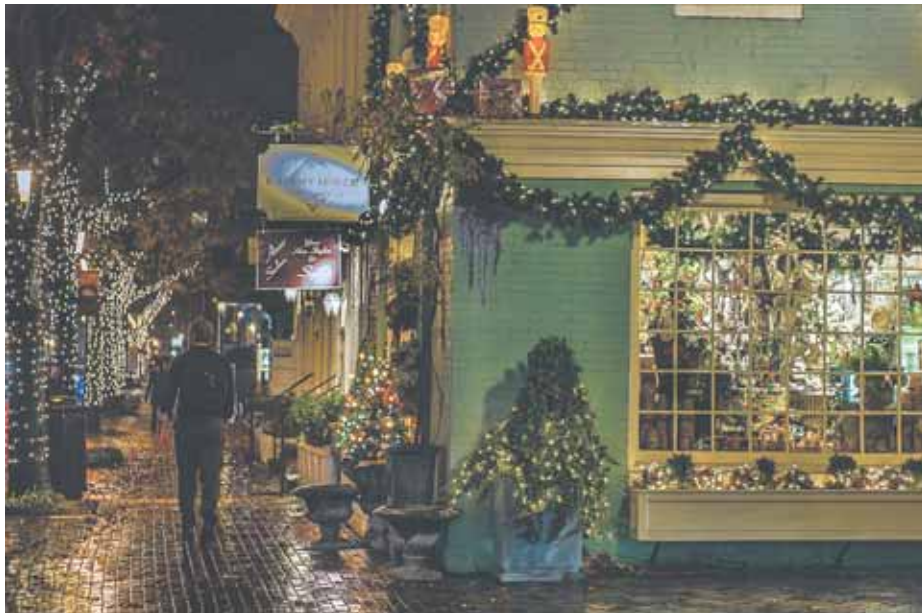
VISION ZERO is the latest effort by the city to reduce death and injury on our streets. It has resulted in a 10-year plan contained in two draft documents, the "Vision Zero Action Plan" and the "Alexandria Police Department Traffic Safety Plan." Public comment is being solicited through the

SEE LETTERS, PAGE 21

BUSINESS

Shops along King Street are getting ready for the holidays.

PHOTO BY
R. KENNEDY/
VISIT ALEXANDRIA



Experience Alternative Black Friday

Alexandria's alternative Black Friday experience on Nov. 24 features more than 50 independent boutiques kicking off the holiday shopping season with one-of-a-kind deals on home décor, fashions, gourmet food, classic toys and gifts for dogs. Store offers vary, with special discounts throughout the day and 10 boutiques opening at 6 a.m., including Pacers Running, fibre space, The Shoe Hive, Olio and Hooray for Books!

After the shopping is done, stay for the City of Alexandria Annual Tree Lighting Ceremony at 6 p.m. on historic Market Square. The ceremony includes live entertainment, a visit from Santa Claus, and community caroling.

Black Friday Alexandria is part of a weekend of "Shop Small" festivities that includes a bigger-than-ever Small Business Saturday and first-ever Museum Store Sunday with 10 Alexandria museum stores featuring historically inspired gifts with special offers and seasonal refreshment.

Individual retail store hours vary. Some stores will open at 6 a.m. Check VisitAlexandriaVA.com/blackfriday for details.

A sample of Black Friday Alexandria deals include:

❖ **Bellacara (beauty):** Independent beauty boutique Bellacara will offer store-wide discounts on Black Friday. Enjoy 20 percent off 6-8 a.m.; 15 percent off 8-10 a.m.; and 10 percent off 10 a.m.-6 p.m. This is the only day of the year that Bellacara offers a 20 percent discount.

❖ **The Shoe Hive & The Hive (fashion and shoes):** Take 30 percent off the entire store from 6-8 a.m.; 20 percent off from 8-10 a.m.; and 10 percent off the rest of the day.

❖ **fibre space (yarn):** 25 percent off all day on Black Friday at fibre space. Be in line at 6 a.m. and receive a coupon for 40 percent off any one item in the store.

❖ **The Dog Park (pet accessories):** 30 percent from 8-10 a.m.; 20 percent off from 10 a.m. to 12 p.m.; and 10 percent off from 12-7 p.m.

❖ **Red Barn Mercantile (home):** Stop by from 6-8 a.m. to get 30 percent off your entire purchase; 20 percent off from 8-10 a.m.; and 10 percent off from 10 a.m.-7 p.m. Plus, take 20 percent off all in-stock and special order rug purchases starting at 8 a.m.

❖ **Acme Mid-Century + Modern (home):** 10 percent to 25 percent off everything at Acme Mid-Century + Modern.

❖ **Hooray for Books! (children's):** 40 percent off 6-8 a.m.; 30 percent off 8:01 a.m.-11 a.m.; 20 percent off 11:01 a.m.-3 p.m.; and 10 percent off the rest of the day.

❖ **The Hour (modern/vintage cocktail glassware):** 20 percent off all vintage purchases.

❖ **The Purple Goose (children's):** 20 percent off from 7 a.m. to noon.

❖ **La Cuisine (kitchen):** 25 percent off all day.

For a full list of participating Black Friday businesses, visit VisitAlexandriaVA.com/blackfriday.



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The Children's CONNECTION 2017

This keepsake, award-winning issue will be filled with the artwork and writings of local children starring their families, friends, pets, schools and more. Our family readers are your best customers, who take time to savor this edition during the holidays and beyond.

Be Part of the Children's Connection

During the last week of each year, The Connection devotes its entire issue to the creativity of local students and children. The results are always remarkable. It is a keepsake edition for many families.

The edition has won many awards. We welcome contributions from public and private schools, individuals and homeschoolers. We publish artwork, poetry, essays, creative writing, opinion pieces, short stories, photography, photos of sculpture or gardens, or other creative efforts. To submit material, identify each piece of writing or art, including the student's full name, age, grade and town of residence, plus the name of the school if applicable, name of teacher and town of school location. E-mail to editors@connectionnewspapers.com. To send CDs or flash drives containing artwork and typed, electronic submissions, mark them clearly by school and hometown and mail the CD to Children's Connection, 1606 King Street, Alexandria, VA 22314. Please send all submissions by December 27.

Publishes December 27 | Ads Due December 15

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ENTERTAINMENT

Submit entertainment announcements at www.connectionnewspapers.com/Calendar/. The deadline is noon on Friday. Photos/artwork encouraged.

ONGOING

Multiple Exposures Gallery.

Through Nov. 26, various times at the Torpedo Factory Art Center, 105 North Union Street, #312. Photo exhibit. Visit

www.multipleexposuresgallery.com.

Holiday Toy Drive. Through Dec. 8, various times at Quander Road School, 6400 Quander Road. Donate new/slightly used unwrapped toys for toddlers to 12 years old (puzzles, dolls, board games, action figures and more). Call 703-718-2400, Ext. 2431.

Toy Collection. Through Dec. 10, Sheehy Honda of Alexandria, 2434 Richmond Highway, Alexandria will collect new and unwrapped toys as part of the company's annual Sheehy Cares Toy Collection to benefit the U.S. Marine Corps Reserve Toys for Tots Program, which will distribute those toys as Christmas gifts to less fortunate children in the community in which the campaign is conducted.

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.

39th Annual Weichert Toy Drive.

Through Dec. 15, various times at Weichert Realty, 121 N. Pitt St. Members of the community are invited to drop off new, unwrapped toys at the company's sales offices which will be delivered throughout the holidays in conjunction with local charities that assist financially and physically disadvantaged children. Call 703-549-8700.

Watercolor Exhibit. Through Dec. 19, various times at Green Spring Gardens, 4603 Green Spring Road. See "Nature from Three Points of View", the work of Jan Burns, Madeleine Chen, and Shari MacFarlane, at the Horticulture Center. Sunday, Oct. 29 is the Artists Reception. Visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/greenspring or call 703-642-5173.

The Old Bull and Bush. Through Dec. 24, various times at MetroStage, 1201 North Royal St. An effort to reopen the famous Hampstead England pub on stage to celebrate the holidays with food, song, jokes, dance and a sing-along. Call 703-548- 9044 or visit www.metrostage.org.

Potomac Fiber Art Show. Through Jan. 7, various times at the Torpedo Factory, 105 North Union St., Studio 29. The show will be supplemented with juried items on Dec. 5. The Torpedo Factory has new hours, 10:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. daily and weekends, and 10:30 a.m. to 9 p.m. on the second Thursday of each month. Visit torpedofactory.org.

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.

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



Art Exhibit

IMPart Exhibit Showcases the Power of Art through Dec. 3 at the Art League Gallery, 105 N. Union St., Studio 21. The Art League's IMPart visual arts education program connects returning Injured Military Personnel with transformative art experiences. These experiences are designed for creative enrichment, relaxed social engagement, redevelopment of fine motor skills, and expressive catharsis. Visit www.theartleague.org for more.

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.

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.

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.

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.

Shield of Earth: Defending the Heart of the Union exhibit. Ongoing, museum hours Tuesday through Saturday, 10 a.m. -5 p.m., 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.leeendallhouse.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. 11 a.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. \$7 in addition to estate admission. Visit www.mountvernon.org.

Evenings at the Athenaeum. 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.alexandriaarchaeology.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 St. near Motley Fool. The cafe will feature coffee, live music to help commuters start the day off right and donuts from Sugar Shack. maurisapotts@gmail.com

CAMPS, CLASSES & WORKSHOPS

Community Dance. 7:30-9:30 p.m. every third Friday at Hollin Hall Senior Center, 1500 Shenandoah Road. Live music. Tickets are \$4. Call 703-765-4573.

Life Drawing. Del Ray Artisans offers a range of open life drawing sessions for anyone to develop life-drawing skills further. Drop-in for the session and bring supplies to draw or paint live models. Fee ranges from \$8-\$12. All skill levels are welcome. Del Ray Artisans is located at 2704 Mount Vernon Ave. Visit www.TheDelRayArtisans.org for a schedule.

The Harmony Heritage Singers (Mount Vernon Chapter of



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ENTERTAINMENT



MetroStage Celebrates

The Old Bull and Bush will be at MetroStage, 1201 North Royal St. through Dec. 24. An effort to reopen the famous Hampstead England pub on stage to celebrate the holidays with food, song, jokes, dance and a sing-along. Call 703-548- 9044 or visit www.metrostage.org.

CALENDAR

Barbershop Harmony Society), a daytime, a cappella, Chorus, rehearses on the 2nd and 4th Tuesdays, monthly, at Sherwood Hall Regional Library, 2501 Sherwood Hall Lane, 10 a.m.-1 p.m. Newcomers welcome for fun or to book for a performance. Visit www.HHSingers.org, or call Bruce at 703-352-5271.

THROUGH DEC. 3

IMPart Exhibit Showcases the Power of Art . Various times at the Art League Gallery, 105 N. Union St., Studio 21. The Art League's IMPart visual arts education program connects returning Injured Military Personnel with transformative art experiences. These experiences are designed for creative enrichment, relaxed social engagement, redevelopment of fine motor skills, and expressive catharsis. Visit www.theartleague.org.

FRIDAY/NOV. 24

Cookies with Santa. 4-5:30 p.m. at the Union Street Public House, 121 South Union St. Meet with Santa and Mrs. Claus. Visit www.unionstreetpublichouse.com.

City of Alexandria Tree Lighting Ceremony. 6-9 p.m. at Market Square, 301 King St. Free. Call 703-746-4343 or visit www.alexandriava.gov.

SATURDAY/NOV. 25

Small Business Saturday. Noon-3 p.m. at various businesses on King Street and Mt. Vernon Avenue in Del Ray. Visit VisitAlexandriaVA.com/SmallBusinessSaturday.

Frosty Follies. 6 p.m. at Market Square, 300 King St. The Metropolitan Arts Dance School presents the annual Frosty Follies. Call 703-339-0444 or visit www.metropolitanarts.org.

NOV. 24-25

Mount Vernon by Candlelight. 5-8 p.m. at George Washington's Mount Vernon Estate, 3200 Mount Vernon Memorial Highway, Mount Vernon. \$24 for adults; \$16 for youth. Call 703-780-2000 or visit www.mountvernon.org/candlelight.

SUNDAY/NOV. 26

Musical Sunday Brunch. 11 a.m.-3

p.m. at Union Street Public House, 121 S. Union St. Featuring international Latin and Brazilian jazz and classical guitarist Cristian Perez, with John-Marc Diner on bass and Nick Natalie on saxophone. Visit www.unionstreetpublichouse.com.

Museum Store Sunday. Various times at the following 10 participating museums across Alexandria. Visit AlexandriaVA.com/museumstoresunday or www.museumstoresunday.org.

- ❖ George Washington's Mount Vernon (free tote bag with purchase of \$50 or more while supplies last; open 9 a.m.-5 p.m.)
- ❖ Alexandria Archaeology Museum (20 percent off; open 1-5 p.m.)
- ❖ Alexandria Black History Museum (20 percent off; open 1-5 p.m.)
- ❖ Carlyle House (10 percent discount and free Carlyle House postcard with purchase; open 12-4 p.m.)
- ❖ Fort Ward Museum and Historic Site (20 percent off; open 1-5 p.m.)
- ❖ Friendship Firehouse Museum (20 percent off; open 1-5 p.m.)
- ❖ Gadsby's Tavern Museum (20 percent off; open 1-5 p.m.)
- ❖ Lee-Fendall House Museum (20 percent off; open 1-5 p.m.)
- ❖ The Lyceum: Alexandria's History Museum (20 percent off; open 1-5 p.m.)
- ❖ Stabler-Leadbeater Apothecary Museum (20 percent off; open 1-5 p.m.)

MONDAY/NOV. 27

Yoga for Gardeners. 9:30-10:30 a.m. at Green Spring Gardens, 4603 Green Spring Road. This class features a gentle introduction to the vinyasa method which helps participants increase the strength, flexibility and endurance necessary for gardening. Class held indoors. Visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks or call 703-642-5173.

THROUGH NOV. 30

Training for Turkey. Various times at the Metropolitan School of the Arts, 5775 Barclay Drive, Suite 4. Prepare for feasting with an unlimited fitness pass for their Barre Fitness (MetroBarre) and yoga classes for the month of November. \$60. Visit www.metropolitanarts.org or call 703-339-0444.

Local Author Thursdays . 5-7 p.m. at the Old Town Shop, 105 S. Union St. Featuring Barbara Cousens, who came to this country in 2001 from

her native South Africa and will be talking about her book "My Alexandria Tales." Visit theoldtownshop.com/.

NOV. 30-DEC 2

West Potomac Academy's Nutcracker. Various times at West Potomac High School, 6500 Quander Road. Guest choreographers include professional dancers Paul McGill and Brittany Hall (a West Potomac Academy Dance alumna), and Christie Elise (a Washington Wizards dancer). \$12/\$15. Visit www.fcps.edu/WestPotomacHS/.

Mt. Vernon Oral History. 10 a.m.-2 p.m. at Mount Vernon Government Center, 2511 Parkers Lane. Recording residents experiences living in the community. Free. Call 703-799-7601.

DEC. 1-2

Scottish Christmas Walk Weekend. Various times at the The Campagna Center, 418 S. Washington St. The 47th Annual Scottish Christmas Walk Weekend has activities throughout the weekend. Visit campagnacenter.org or call 703-224-2395.

DEC 1-17

Del Ray Artisans' Holiday Market. Weekend hours only, Fridays: 6-9 p.m., Saturdays & Sundays: 11 a.m.-6 p.m. at the Del Ray Artisans, 2704 Mount Vernon Ave. Free to browse. Call 703-838-4827 or visit www.delrayartisans.org.

DEC. 1-16

Snow Day on Stage. Various times at The Lab at Convergence, 1819 N. Quaker Lane. This nonverbal production features live music and lots of wintertime fun, just in time for the holiday season. \$9. Visit www.artsonthehorizon.org.

"A Christmas Carol." Various times at The Little Theatre of Alexandria, 600 Wolfe St. \$17. Call 703-683-0496 or visit www.thelittletheatre.com.

DEC. 1-23

4th Annual Holiday Market Festival. Various times in the Carlyle District, 300 John Carlyle St. Art and craft items, enjoy sweets, mulled wine and live entertainment

ENTERTAINMENT



Holiday Fun

Frosty Follies will be on stage **Saturday, Nov. 25, 6 p.m.** at **Market Square, 300 King St.** The **Frosty Follies** are from the **Metropolitan Arts Dance School**. Call **703-339-0444** or visit **www.metropolitanarts.org**.

CALENDAR

from local musicians. Visit www.alexandriaholidaymarket.com.

SATURDAY/DEC. 2

Alexandria Archaeology Ornament Decorating Workshop. 1-4 p.m. at the Alexandria Archaeology Museum, Torpedo Factory Art Center, 105 N. Union St. Call 703-746-4399 or visit www.alexandriaarchaeology.org.

Boat Parade of Lights. 5:30 p.m. waterfront at the foot of Cameron Street near the Torpedo Factory Art Center, 105 N. Union St. 18th Annual Alexandria Holiday Boat Parade of Lights. Festivities at the marina 2-9 p.m. Visit www.visitalexandriava.com/boatparade.

SATURDAY-SUNDAY/DEC. 2-3

Original Artwork Sale. 4-7 p.m. Saturday, noon-4 p.m. Sunday at Hollin Hall Senior Center, 1500 Shenandoah Road. Eighty local artists,

most members of the Torpedo Factory Art League, will display and sell their original artwork. Visit www.hollinhallseniorcenter.org/.

SUNDAY/DEC. 3

Royal Scottish Country Dance Society. 2 p.m. at The Athenaeum, 201 Prince St. The dancers will show the audience how it's done and then invite spectators to give it a try. Music will be provided by local and well-known Scottish Country Dance fiddler, Becky Ross. Visit www.nvfaa.org or call 703-548-0035.

MONDAY/DEC. 4

Ballroom Dance Classes. 7 p.m. at The Athenaeum, 201 Prince St. Led by Gary Stephans on Fox Trot, Waltz, Tango, Swing, Salsa, Merengue, Rumba, Cha-Cha and Samba. Visit www.nvfaa.org or call 703-505-5998 for more.

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The Alexandria Harmonizers gratefully acknowledges
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Another  Community Partner

ENTERTAINMENT

WEDNESDAY/DEC. 6

Japanese Art Auction. 10 a.m. at the Potomack Company, 1120 N. Fairfax St. Featuring the Hauge Collection. call 703-684-4550 or visit www.potomackcompany.com.

"A Christmas Carol" at the Tavern. Reception at 7 p.m., Performance from 8-9:15. At The Little Theatre of Alexandria, 600 Wolfe St. Gadsby's Tavern Museum Society is hosting a special performance of "A Christmas Carol" at The Little Theater of Alexandria. \$25. Visit www.gadsbystavernmuseum.us/.

Holiday Magician. 7-8:15 p.m. at the Holiday Inn-Carlyle, 2460 Eisenhower Ave. Featuring three family magicians in the region: Noland the Magician, Captain Token the Magician and Louis the Magician. Donations of nonperishable food items or new toy are encouraged: Donations go to the Salvation Army. Contact Danny at DanielSelnick@yahoo.com or call 703-347-5540.

THURSDAY/DEC. 7

Worldly Collection for Auction. 10 a.m. at the Potomack Company, 1120 N. Fairfax St. Featuring the Ron Krannich Collection from Burma, Thailand, Indonesia, Papua New Guinea and Democratic Republic of Congo. Call 703-684-4550 or visit www.potomackcompany.com.

Shops of Del Ray's Ladies' Night Out. 5:30-8:30 p.m. on Mount Vernon Ave., Del Ray. Shop local and enjoy special promotions while sipping Virginia wine. Call 703-683-2570 or visit www.visitdelray.com.

Neighborhood Health 20th Anniversary Gala. 6-9:30 p.m. at the Hilton Mark Center, 5000 Seminary Road. Join the gala "Celebrating Our Partnerships" to support Neighborhood Health's mission of serving thousands of uninsured patients in the community. Email anniversary@neighborhoodhealthva.org or phone 571-438-7715.

An Introduction to French Comics. 7-9 p.m. at The Lyceum, 201 S. Washington St. Arlington resident RM Rhodes leads this lecture about comics. Visit www.alexandriava.gov/Lyceum or call 703-838-4994.

Meet the Author. 7 p.m. at The Athenaeum, 201 Prince St. "A Civil Life in an Uncivil Time: Julia Wilbur's Struggle for Purpose" by Paula Tarnapol Whitacre. \$15. Visit www.nvfaa.org or call 703-548-0035.

SATURDAY/DEC. 9

Civil War Christmas in Camp. noon-4 p.m. at Fort Ward Museum & Historic Site, 4301 W. Braddock Road. \$2 suggested donation per person; \$5 per family. Call 703-746-4356 or visit alexandriava.gov/blackhistory.

Historic Alexandria Candlelight Tours. 4-9 p.m. at Gadsby's Tavern Museum, 134 N. Royal St. Tour stops at several locations around Old Town. \$25 adults; \$20 seniors (65 years and older) and active military; \$5 children (ages 6-17). Call 703-746-4242.

Del Ray Candy Cane Bar Crawl. 4 p.m. at Mount Vernon Ave., Del Ray. Free. Call 703-683-2570 or visit www.visitdelray.com.

Ivy Hill Cemetery Presents: The History and Mystery of Christmas. 7 p.m. at Ivy Hill Cemetery, 2823 King St. Historians Terry Gish and Wayne Kehoe host an informational event. \$10. Not for children under 10. Call 301-395-9541 or 703-549-7413.

Alexandria Choral Society concert. 7:30-9:30 p.m. at George Washington Masonic Memorial, 101



Little Hunting Creek in the Winter

Art exhibition and sale on Dec. 2-3 from 4-7 p.m. on Saturday and noon-4 p.m. Sunday at the Hollin Hall Senior Center, 1500 Shenandoah Road. Eighty local artists, will exhibit and offer their artwork for sale. Call 703-799-9635 for more.

Callahan Drive. Alexandria Choral Society presents "On This Shining Night," featuring new settings of familiar works, modern compositions to evoke the season, and traditional seasonal carols. \$20 adult, \$15 senior/military/student. Visit www.alexandriachoralsociety.org.

Vernon Concert Band will perform holiday songs in the gallery. Free. Visit www.nvfaa.org.

Cookies with Santa. 4-5:30 p.m. at the Union Street Public House, 121 South Union St. Meet with Santa and Mrs. Claus. Visit www.unionstreetpublichouse.com.

SUNDAY/DEC. 10

Apothecary Museum Geek Tour Series. noon-1 p.m. at Stabler-Leadbeater Apothecary Museum, 105 S. Fairfax St. \$15. Call 703-746-3852.

Colonial Handbell Ringers Concert. 2 and 4 p.m. at 201 S. Washington St. Free. Call 703-746-4994 or visit colonialringers.com.

Cookies with Santa. 4-5:30 p.m. at the Union Street Public House, 121 South Union St. Meet with Santa and Mrs. Claus. Visit www.unionstreetpublichouse.com.

TUESDAY/DEC. 12

Homeschool Programs with Historic Alexandria. Each class offers two sessions, 10-11:30 a.m. or 1-2:30 p.m. Class is "Ship Science" at the Alexandria Archaeology Museum, 105 N. Union St., #327. Use dendrochronology and other scientific methods to uncover the mystery behind Alexandria's 18th-century ship discovered along the waterfront. Visit shop.alexandriava.gov.

WEDNESDAY/DEC. 13

AARP Virginia Dinner Group. 4-8 p.m. at FireFlies, 1501 Mount Vernon Ave. Enjoy dinner with other AARP members and their guests and receive a 20 percent discount on a dinner entree. Call 703-548-7200.

DEC. 15-16

Christmas Illuminations at Mount Vernon. 5:30-9 p.m. at George Washington's Mount Vernon Estate, 3200 Mount Vernon Memorial Highway. \$34 adult/\$24 youth with mansion tour; \$30 adult/\$20 youth without mansion tour. Visit www.mountvernon.org/illuminations.

SUNDAY/DEC. 17

The Mount Vernon Flutes. 2 p.m. at The Athenaeum, 201 Prince St. This small ensemble from the Mount

MONDAY/DEC. 18

Ballroom Dance Classes. 7 p.m. at The Athenaeum, 201 Prince St. Led by Gary Stephans on Fox Trot, Waltz, Tango, Swing, Salsa, Merengue, Rumba, Cha-Cha and Samba. Visit www.nvfaa.org or call 703-505-5998.

THURSDAY/DEC. 28

Piff The Magic Dragon Magician. 7:30 p.m. at The Birchmere, 3701 Mt. Vernon Ave. A former participant on America's Got Talent. Visit www.birchmere.com.

SUNDAY/DEC. 31

First Night Alexandria. 2 p.m. to midnight at venues throughout Old Town. Activities include the Ninth Annual Fun Hunt, musical entertainment, food, drink and midnight fireworks over the Potomac River. Visit firstnightalexandria.org or call 703-746-3299.

JAN.9-FEB. 4


"Déjà Vu," Art Exhibit. Various times at the Torpedo Factory, 105 North Union St., Studio 29. Potomac Fiber Arts Gallery show "Déjà Vu," highlights the work of artists Elizabeth Davison, Elise Miller, and Dianne Harris Thomas. Visit torpedofactory.org.

SATURDAY/JAN. 13

Watercolor Workshop: Painting on Yupo. 9:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. at Green Spring Gardens, 4603 Green Spring Road. Paint on slick plastic called yupo with in-structor Marni Maree. \$90. Visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/parktakes or call 703-642-5173.

THURSDAY/JAN. 18

Air Force Band Concert. 8 p.m. at Rachel M. Schlesinger Concert Hall 4915 East Campus Drive. Special appearance by tubist Patrick Sheridan. Visit www.nvcc.edu/schlesingercenter/.



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December 31, 2017

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PRESENTING SPONSORS

LETTERS

FROM PAGE 14

city's website, and will remain open only until Nov. 26.

Unfortunately, the "Vision Zero Action Plan" is long on pledge-taking, messaging, data gathering, educating, evaluating, etc., and rather short on actual, do-it-right-now, specific action(s). Conversely, the "APD

Traffic Safety Plan," in all fairness, probably promises more than the APD is actually resourced to deliver. Most surprising and disappointing, is that neither plan addresses the single most significant and largest scale threat faced daily by our pedestrians and cyclists — blocked crosswalks and intersections.

During every "rush hour", Monday-Friday, on Washington Street in the morning; and on both Washington Street and Henry Street in the afternoon, there is gridlock.

While the traffic is to be expected, what is absolutely unacceptable is that bad drivers create an extremely hazardous condition for pedestrians and cyclists by blocking the crosswalks, thereby forcing them out into the crossing vehicle traffic lanes where they dangerously mingle with cars. Of most serious concern is the fact that those affected include our schoolchildren, who have to cross these intersections to go and come from school during those same rush hours.

The bad drivers are so egregious, they not only illegally block the crosswalks, they illegally block the intersections themselves. This only worsens the dangers for pedestrians and cyclists. It also creates needless gridlock, as drivers on cross streets can't proceed when they get the green light. This in turn creates a negative quality of life issue for residents, as for several hours during every morning and afternoon rush hour, they must endure the frequent blaring of car horns from drivers who are understandably showing their displeasure toward the imbeciles who are illegally blocking their passage.

All of this is needlessly unsafe and can be made better. Neighboring communities have already dealt with this, as have large cities such as New York. Many approaches are possible, some at little or no cost to the city, and in fact, could potentially generate revenue.

At the barest minimum, install highly visible signage (e.g., "Do Not Block Crosswalks — Do Not Block Intersection") at intersections throughout the affected corridors. While this would not likely ameliorate the problem completely, it would certainly have at

least some measurable impact. As this represents no change in laws, ordinances, traffic patterns, enforcement, penalties, etc., this is readily executable with no further study.

A more serious approach would be to paint cross hatch striping in the interior square formed by the four crosswalks at each intersection. That square, including the crosswalks themselves, becomes "The Box." Install signage at each intersection reading, "Block The Box — \$250 Fine" (or whatever

amount the city deems appropriate to stop the illegal behavior).

With respect to enforcement, one potential option is cameras, which if executed properly, would be cost neutral to the city. For example, D.C. uses cameras that detect cars that are stopped at red lights forward of stop lines (and are therefore blocking crosswalks and/or intersections). The resulting fines pay for the system.

Vision Zero's silence on this issue is simply indefensible. Financial resources are no excuse for

inaction. Readily executable actions exist and are virtually cost neutral — some may actually generate revenue.

Please take the time to provide specific and constructive feedback to the city. Demand recognition of this issue in both plans, as well as specific actions to address it. Otherwise, at the end of Vision Zero's 10-year course, our pedestrians, cyclists, and school children will almost certainly still be in the traffic lanes, zig-zagging around cars, as they pick their way through

these intersections.


Dan Koslov
Alexandria

Effects Of Tax Bill

To the Editor:

I want to voice my concerns about the effects of the proposed tax reform bill — Tax Cuts and

SEE LETTERS, PAGE 26




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Salute to Veterans

BY JEANNE THEISMANN
GAZETTE PACKET

The value of veterans in the workforce was the focus of remarks by Air Force Major General Mark K. Johnson as the Chamber of Commerce presented its Salute to Veterans Awards Nov. 8 at the Fred W. Smith National Library for the Study of George Washington on the grounds of Mount Vernon Estate.

“Nothing is more precious to this nation than our veterans, who have secured our liberties,” said Johnson, whose father was a West Point graduate killed in Vietnam. “We owe them a debt of gratitude and to show them their service is not forgotten or ignored.”

Johnson, director of DLA Logistics Operations, stressed the skills that veterans bring to a business as they transition from the military into the civilian workforce.

“Why should you hire a veteran?” Johnson asked. “Because they deliver results. Veterans bring a variety of skills and perspective to your team and they have the discipline, drive and motivation to accomplish the task in front of them.”

Sponsored by the National Industries For the Blind, the event presented awards in three categories: Small Veteran Owned Business of the Year – Patriot Strategies LLC, a service disabled veteran owned business

founded by former Fort Belvoir Garrison Commander Col. Greg Gadson (ret.) and fellow West Point graduate Kurt Gutierrez; Large Veteran Owned Business of the Year – Long & Foster, founded by Army veteran Wes Foster; Hiring and Empowering Veterans — the Alexandria Sheriff’s Office, where nearly one-third of the deputies are military veterans or reservists in the Armed Forces.

“I come from a family of 15, with eight retired military,” said Deputy Ernesto Arroyo, who accepted the award with Sergeant Waraphan Srikongyos. “I want to thank Sheriff Lawhorne for giving veterans a chance to show what they have learned in the military.”

“My father’s generation did not always receive the thanks that was due to them,” Johnson said. “We cannot

forget those warriors as we stand on the shoulders of those who served to protect this great nation.”

Deputy Ernesto Arroyo, second from left, talks about his military service with Chamber of Commerce CEO Joe Haggerty, USAF Maj. Gen. Mark K. Johnson and Sergeant Waraphan Srikongyos at the Salute to Veterans Awards Nov. 8 at Mount Vernon Estate.

“Nothing is more precious to this nation than our veterans, who have secured our liberties.”

— Maj. General Mark Johnson

Chamber honors veterans in business.



PHOTOS BY JEANNE THEISMANN/GAZETTE PACKET

Alexandria Chamber of Commerce chair-elect Gin Kinneman, Chamber CEO Joe Haggerty, Deputy Ernesto Arroyo, Sergeant Waraphan Srikongyos, retired firefighter Callie Terrell and USAF Maj. Gen. Mark K. Johnson at the Salute to Veterans Awards Nov. 8 at Mount Vernon Estate.



Demaine Funeral Home Completes Renovations

FROM PAGE 10

traveler and a wine connoisseur.

One of Mann’s favorite services was one for a WWII veteran. Mann says those are generally his favorites. He studied history in college, and as a location manager for a funeral home he gets to hear first- or second-hand accounts of history

from the people who lived it.

“A lot of people think it’s all sad and dreary, but it’s not,” said Mann. “You get to hear stories about what made people special. I sometimes bring those stories home and share them with my wife ... it’s just a chance to get to hear all these people’s stories.”



520 S. Washington St. in the 1950s.



Interior of the renovated Demaine Funeral Home.



Interior of the renovated Demaine Funeral Home.

PHOTOS BY
VERNON MILES
GAZETTE PACKET



PHOTOS BY JEANNE THEISMANN/GAZETTE PACKET

AEDP president and CEO Stephanie Landrum makes remarks at the Nov. 8 opening reception of the National Science Foundation Headquarters.



Artist Nicoll Fuller, right, created the History Mural in the lobby of the new National Science Foundation Headquarters building in Alexandria. Pictured with her at the Nov. 3 welcome reception are NSF historian Leo B. Slater, NSF project manager Trinkia Kensill and History Mural researcher Marnie Briggs.

New Kid on the Block

National Science Foundation opens its doors.

BY JEANNE THEISMANN
GAZETTE PACKET

The National Science Foundation joined with the Alexandria Economic Development Partnership and the Alexandria Chamber of Commerce to host an opening reception Nov. 8 at the new NSF Headquarters build-

ing on Eisenhower Avenue.

"We are excited to welcome the National Science Foundation to Alexandria," said AEDP President and CEO Stephanie Landrum. "This project is a catalyst and kickstarter for future development projects in the city."

The reception featured displays of scientific innovations throughout history,

many of which are depicted in the History Mural, a 52-foot wide, 11-foot tall mural that is the focal point of the building's lobby.

"This was a thrilling project to be a part of," said Nicoll Fuller, the mural's artist.

The NSF headquarters is located at 2415 Eisenhower Ave. For more information, visit www.nsf.gov.



The 52-foot wide and 11-foot tall History Mural is the focal point of the new National Science Foundation Headquarters building in Alexandria. It provides a visual history of the NSF and depicts seven decades of scientific discovery and innovation.



Marcy Anderson and Kurt Gutierrez of Patriot Strategies at the Nov. 3 NSF headquarters welcome reception.



Dirk Mosis of USAA Real Estate, left, chats with former AEDP President Val Hawkins.

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.

THROUGH DEC. 1

Honoring Alexandria's Veterans.

As part of Alexandria's World War One Commemoration, the Office of Historic Alexandria is collecting knitted or crocheted poppies to honor veterans. These poppies will be used in a community art project and displayed during a special event for the 100th anniversary of Armistice

Day. Poppies can be any shade of red, 2 to 4 inches in diameter. Drop-off poppies along with a card with your name or group's name on it for recognition at any Alexandria City Public Library, City Recreation Center, The Lyceum, Alexandria's History Museum, or Hooray for Books! Visit bit.ly/2uM6M4x for more.

THROUGH DEC. 14

Ad Hoc Joint City-Schools Facility Investment Task Force

Meetings. All meetings take place at City Hall in the Council Workroom, 2nd Floor, unless otherwise noted. The agendas and relevant materials will be posted at www.alexandriava.gov/97580 prior to each meeting. Upcoming meetings

associated with the mission of the Ad Hoc Joint City-Schools Facility Investment Task Force to provide guidance to City Council to help frame the City and Alexandria City Public Schools Facilities Capital Improvement Program for FY 2019 – FY 2028 are as follows:

- ❖ Monday, Nov. 27, 5:00 p.m. – Facility Maintenance & Operations Subcommittee Meeting (takes place

in City Hall, Room 2000)

- ❖ Thursday, Nov. 30, 7:30 a.m. – Alternative Project Delivery Methods Subcommittee Meeting
- ❖ Thursday, Nov. 30, 9:00 a.m. – Joint Task Force Meeting
- ❖ Monday, Dec. 4, 7:00 p.m. – Capital Planning & Implementation Subcommittee Meeting
- ❖ Thursday, Dec. 14, 9:00 a.m. – Joint Task Force Meeting

Council Guidance: No Tax Rate Increase Next Year

FROM PAGE 1

This is your guideline; this is your sending the message to me, to the school board, to the community.”

Though quick to add that they don’t necessarily advocate raising taxes, a few council members expressed discomfort with not leaving the question more open.

Mayor Allison Silberberg said that in the past she’s suggested council not direct, but rather “urge [the manager] to come in without a tax increase,” giving him some “flexibility.”

Councilwoman Redella Pepper cautioned that a budget proposal based on no tax increase “could be so austere that nobody will like it.”

Councilman Paul Smedberg offered a similar caution, saying: “I think we have to go in eyes wide open, knowing that there will be no room for anything, essentially.” He pointed out that the city already anticipates a funding gap — \$32 million, according to a forecast presented at council’s retreat Nov. 4.

He worries that transportation and public school demands may require dipping into funding for capital projects. But he believes capital commitments should be “sort of sacrosanct ... We have got to commit to sticking to our guns ... Typically it’s the councils



that have been the ones that have moved the projects out, for various reasons. But we’re going to hopefully change that kind of thing.”

Vice Mayor Justin Wilson took the hardest line, saying: “It’s no secret that I think this is the most important part of the budget process, and I always have. Because this

is the opportunity to set the framework for the budget. And I have to say” — referring to earlier discussion about council members’ individual meetings — “the council speaks through its legislative action, not through ex parte conversations with the staff. I’m deeply concerned from a process perspective with the suggestion that we say one

thing in our resolution and then convey something else in conversations. This is the opportunity for the council to speak. So if we do not want to see the tax rate increase in the proposed budget, then let’s say that, and say that as a council. If we want to give [Jinks] that flexibility to bring in a rate increase, then let’s not say that. But, one way or the other, we need to say that.”

Councilman John Chapman concurred, saying: “There’s an opportunity here for us to allow the manager and the manager’s professional staff to make the cuts necessary. ... I don’t know if we make the best cuts when it comes to making cuts, when it’s left directly to council.” That was reflected last cycle in “our decisions — every member up here — to not make any cuts on the operational side last year. Not one person really came with a cut that was worthy.”

“You can always add back during the budget process,” said Wilson. “But if we feel like there is a desire to make additional reductions, I think Councilman Chapman was dead on target: the budget process is not a good time to make those decisions.”

Residents can access council’s FY19 budget process and guidance documents — Resolutions 2796 and 2797 — at alexandria.legistar.com/Legislation.aspx.

Neighborhood Health Celebrates 20 Years of Service

FROM PAGE 1

out of dialogues in the 1990s under the Clinton administration about healthcare reform. Susan Abramson was working in U.S. Rep. Jim Moran’s office at the time and part of her work involved meeting with health department officials and becoming familiar with the health situation in the undocumented communities within Arlandria.

Abramson said what she found was a community with no access to health insurance and families that couldn’t go to hospitals. Abramson said it was a community facing sexually transmitted disease, babies born at home, and children kept home from school. Abramson said the majority of them had come from El Salvador.

The organization that would later become Neighborhood Health began with a couple of nurses able to secure an apartment to work out of. Most of what they did was immunizations and prenatal care. Eventually it expanded into two apartments. When Abramson became involved, the three-year grant sponsoring the program had ended. Health and Human Services was going to give the program one more year to figure out how to continue. Abramson said the Alexandria hospital and Alexandria Health Department contacted her and asked her to help organize the efforts. Abramson left her job with Moran. She was initially told to create a funding mechanism for what already existed, but Abramson said it was apparent that what was in place wasn’t good enough.

“By the end of the first year, 1997, it was

pretty clear that we were only addressing a fraction of the need,” said Abramson. Many of the patients they were seeing were living with rats, malnutrition, sexual abuse, sometimes no running water. “There were no services. There was nowhere to go. People would come in with serious illnesses and there was nowhere to send them.”

Abramson said the organization started partnering with ALIVE! (ALEXandrians In Volved Ecumenically) and other local charities for clothing and book drives. What had started as a health department initiative had outgrown its original mission, and after a couple years, the group broke away from the health department and became a separate 501c.

By that point, the group was operating out of 14 apartments and had expanded services to include counseling and therapy, along with partnerships built with the police and social workers.

“It was an evolution,” said Abramson. “One step at a time.”

Seven years later, as the organization continued to grow, Abramson stepped down to begin the nearly full-time job of getting Neighborhood Health federal recognition. After a year of administrative work, Neighborhood Health was designated a federally recognized health center.

Over the years, while the mission has stayed the same, the strategies have had to evolve. Abramson recalled early in the organization’s history when the staff would do house visits.

“It was important for me, at the beginning, to convey to the community that these

are people in need and this is what their lives are like,” said Abramson. “Now, that’s not as practical.”

But Khan, now executive director, still personally sees patients one day a week.

“You want to be connected to the community you serve,” said Khan. “You need to listen to patients to figure out how best to serve them.”

Khan says this also helps with the public health balancing act: ensuring widespread access to care while also remembering that behind every number is an individual with their own history and needs.

Khan grew up in Pakistan. He knew from an early age that he wanted to be involved in helping the underserved and work in healthcare specifically.

Khan originally had an interest in international health, but says over time he realized there was a great need inside the United States and it would be easier to make a long-term commitment here. Khan trained at the San Francisco Public Hospital then moved to Northern Virginia, joining Neighborhood Health first as a physician then slowly working up.

“It’s very gratifying,” said Khab. “It gives me a sense of purpose.”

Every case is different. Khan says in many ways, there is no “average” neighborhood health clinic patient. But many of those they serve are poor and immigrants. The client demographics have changed over time. Initially, Abramson said the clientele was 80 percent Latino, but both Alexandria and Neighborhood Health have grown and diversified. Now, Khan says Neighborhood

Health’s clientele is roughly half Hispanic, a quarter African American or African immigrant, and another quarter is various.

Today, Neighborhood Health faces a heavy financial strain from the troubled national health care divide.

“Virginia didn’t expand Medicaid eligibility, which meant there were many more uninsured here than in other states,” said Khan. “That puts a constraint on our ability to grow. The demand is still greater than our supply. It’s a very challenging environment. The cost of living here is very high and there’s a much higher demand for services. And with half of our clients not having health insurance, for them, there are no other options.”

A third of the organization’s funding comes from patient insurance. The rest comes from philanthropy. Half of that is from federal grants, the other half from private donations or partnerships.

Abramson says the upcoming gala is a way for Neighborhood Health to celebrate their sponsors and partners over the years who have advocated for them. The 20th anniversary celebration will be held in the Mark Center on Dec. 7, with a cocktail reception at 6 p.m. and a dinner and program at 7. The gala’s goal is to help fund the Neighborhood Health expansion goals for 2018.

Despite the financial hardships, Khan hopes to see the organization grow in the coming years to meet the demand. The goal in 2018 is to have 21,000 patients.

“We will continue to need support,” Khan said.

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Announcements

Obituary

LYDIA CHADWICK nee GRISL, 96 years old; born 12/27/1920 in Philadelphia, PA; died 11/15/2017 in Harleysville, PA. Was a first generation American of Italian immigrants, the ninth of 12 children. Married PFC Jack B. Chadwick, USMC, of Navoo, AL, in 1939. They lived together in Phenix City, AL for a short time, but spent most of their married years in Alexandria, VA. They were married 66 years, until his death in 2005, after which she relocated to Harleysville, PA to be closer to family. She was preceded in death by all of her siblings. Was also preceded by both



of her sons, Conrad R Chadwick of Honolulu, HI, & John O Chadwick of Pittsburgh, PA. Survived by a daughter-in-law, Elizabeth Budenz Chadwick, of Skippack, PA; six grandchildren; George M Chadwick of California, John P Chadwick of Hawaii, Ann Chadwick-Wilkes of Lorton, VA; David C Chadwick of Quakertown, PA; J Michael Chadwick of Mullica Hill, NJ; & C Andrew Chadwick of Lawrence, KS. Also survived by 10 great-grandchildren. Services will be held at St. John's Lutheran Church, Centre Square, PA., Saturday, November 25, 2017, at 11am.

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Welcome to the Club



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

"Some club," as my late mother would likely scoff. And the club to which I refer is, to spin an old Groucho Marx joke: a club you'd rather not join especially if they'd have you as a member. This is of course, the cancer club, a club whose membership continues to grow despite worldwide efforts to the contrary. According to Medscape.com, one in two men and one in three women will be affected by cancer in their lifetime. Hardly a statistic to be ignored. And so, even though I had a rather uneventful/healthy upbringing and further on into adulthood, in late middle age, 54 and five months, Feb. 27, 2009, I was impacted and rudely awakened with a non-small cell lung cancer, stage IV diagnosis – out of the blue, and given a "13 month to two-year" prognosis to boot. As a life long non-smoker with no immediate family history of cancer, whose parents both lived well into their 80s, I was more inclined to worry about the Boston Red Sox pitching depth than I was about cancer.

But cancer, for the past nearly nine years has been my life and amazingly, so far anyway, not the cause of my premature death (what death isn't 'premature?'). And what brightens my day and lifts my spirits more than anything else (other than a Red Sox World Series Championship) is when I meet a newly-diagnosed lung cancer patient who exhibits the can/will do positive-type attitude necessary to endure the inevitable ups and downs to follow. To be selfish, it empowers me and strengthens my own resolve to live life to the fullest (it's not as simple as saying it) and damn the torpedoes.

Within the last few months, I have met, over the phone, two such individuals. The first man, Lee, I met before he even had his first infusion. The second man, Mark, a bit more experienced, I met a year and a half after his first infusion. Each man was engaging, outgoing, confident, enthusiastic and quite frankly, happy to make my acquaintance. You see, after being given a less-than-desirable prognosis, it's helpful to meet someone who, despite having received a similar diagnosis, has nevertheless managed to live almost nine years post diagnosis. (If he can do it, I can do it kind of feeling.)

As for me, the nearly nine-year survivor, meeting cancer patients who are at the beginning of their respective cancer journeys, helps me to reconnect with my roots, so to speak, and share and share alike some memorable experiences, both cancer-related and not. In a way, we get to live vicariously through one another which for me reinforces how lucky I've been to survive for as long as I have.

And not that I need reminding, but it's easy to take for granted one's good fortune and forget – occasionally, the seriousness of my situation and the cloud that hangs over my head. The sword of Damocles has got nothing on me, literally or figuratively. Living with cancer is akin to nothing really. The chance that you'll survive beyond your prognosis, maybe even have your tumors shrink, or see your scans show "no evidence of disease," creates a kind of tease that cause your emotions to run the gamut. The possibility of living after being told you're dying – and vice versa, perhaps more than once, over your abbreviated – or not, life expectancy, is simply too much to handle/absorb sometimes. It's a roller coaster for sure, but one that rarely comes to a complete stop and never allows you to get off. Moreover, it's not multiple rides, it's one long, endless ride with no guarantees about what happens next – or where it even happens.

Meeting people who are ready, willing and able to confront their cancer future is just as important and stimulating as meeting someone like me who hasn't succumbed to this terrible disease. It's a win-win situation. Particularly significant when at date of diagnosis, it appeared to be a lose-lose. I'm proud to be a member of the cancer club, especially so when I meet people like Lee and Mark.

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

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LETTERS

FROM PAGE 21

Jobs Act — and its impact on higher education. There are many provisions in the proposed law which will have adverse impacts on graduate students and the most significant among those is repealing Section 117(d).

Currently, Section 117 (d) of the Tax Code allows institutions to provide tax-free undergraduate-level tuition waiver or reimbursements (for study at schools with reciprocal agreements) to employees, spouses and dependents. It also allows tax-free tuition of individuals employed as graduate-level teaching and research assistants. The proposed tax policy repeals these provisions thereby eliminating tax free treatment of tuition remissions.

This would result in leaving students in a situation where they cannot survive on their incomes. Further it hurts the higher education community at large, since this would make it hard for universities to recruit graduate students.

I strongly urge that everyone interested in education to urge your legislators to vote against the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act.

Benjamin Himes
Alexandria

Non-Profit Of the Year

To the Editor:

Rebuilding Together Alexandria was recently named the Association/Non-Profit Business of the Year by the Alexandria Chamber of Commerce. And although we were handed the trophy, we accepted the award on behalf of each of our 1,192 volunteers and donors!

Without the amazing support of our partners, our work would not be possible. On behalf of our staff, our board members, and the thousands of clients we have served, thank you volunteers and supporters for making us the Association/Non-Profit Business of the Year.

Katharine Dixon
President,
Rebuilding Together Alexandria

Write

The Gazette Packet welcomes views on any public issue.

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

Letters to the Editor
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1606 King St.
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Call: 703-917-6444.
By e-mail:
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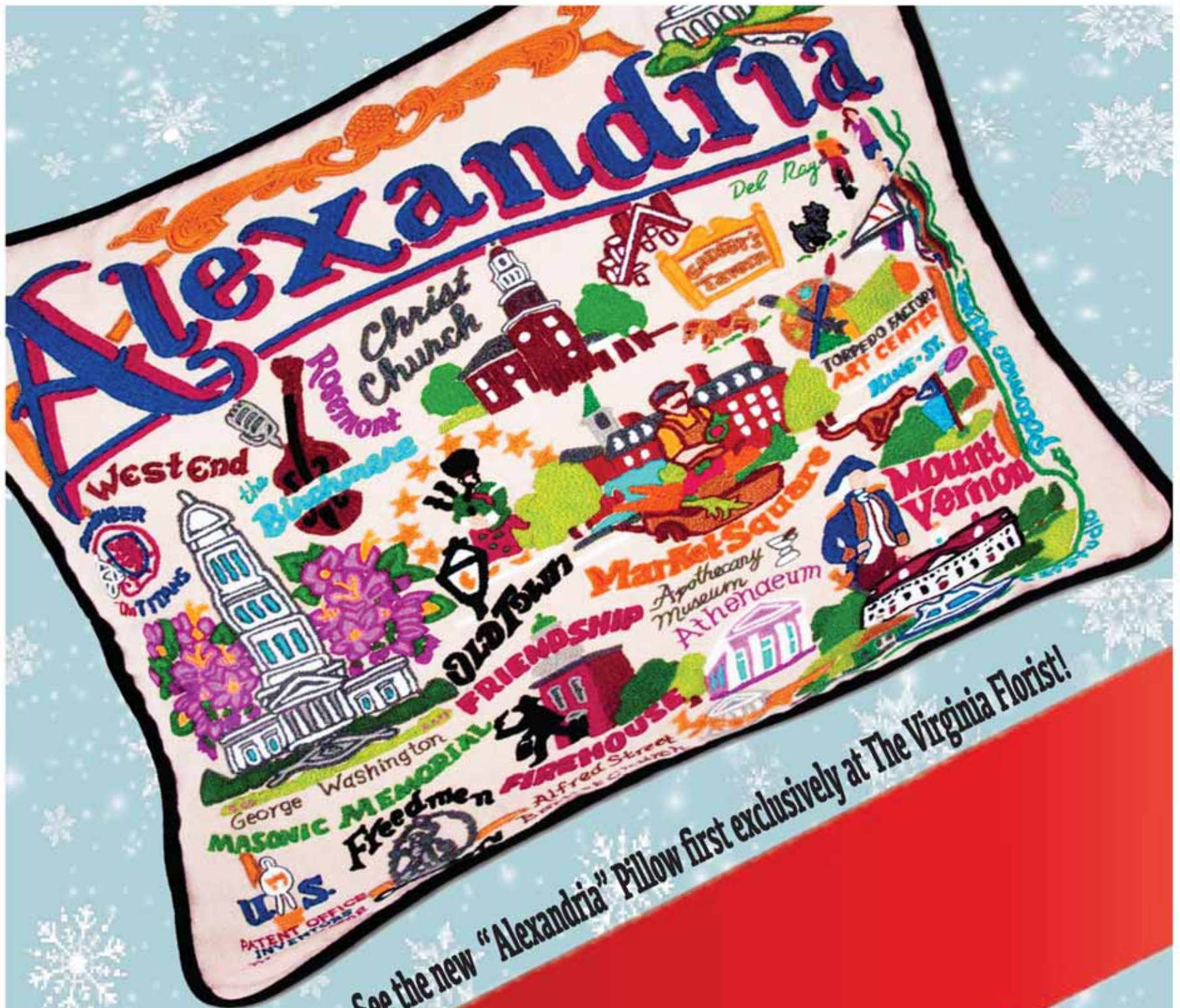
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