

PHOTOS BY MIKE SALMON/THE GAZETTE



Mount Vernon area firefighters Mike Fischer, John "JD" Leary, Carlos Solomon, Jason Roberts, and Chief Richard Bower, middle, were among those recognized.

Honoring Valor and Service

Chamber recognizes Mount Vernon police, firefighters.

BY MIKE SALMON
THE GAZETTE

When Officer Carlos Lama helped the fire and rescue operations at a burning apartment complex in Kingstowne back in 2004, it was just one of the several points in his police career that added up to recognition by the Mount Vernon-Lee Chamber of Commerce on Friday, Nov. 18 at the Hilton in Springfield.

The apartment fire still stays with him. "The flames engulfed it pretty much, we helped carry a lot of people to the ambulance," he said.

Lama, an officer at the Mount Vernon Police Station, was being awarded by the chamber for Supervisor of the Year. Other police department awardees included Mike Fischer, Captain of the

Year; Nicholas Shivley, Officer of the Year; Marvin Goodley, Detective of the Year; Rick Lopez, Auxiliary Police Officer of the Year; and Station Logistics Technician Michael Jessee.

The police station officers were honored at the event alongside with officers from the Mount Vernon Fire Department and emergency response officers from Fort Belvoir.

"We are delighted to welcome our elected officials, police, emergency medical personnel, firefighters and their families to this community celebration of dedication, valor and service," said Scott Stroh, the chamber president.

On the stage were Supervisor Dan Storck (D-Mt. Vernon); Supervisor Jeff McKay (D-Lee); Lt. Col. James Matheson, Commander of Fort Belvoir; Col. Edwin C. Rossler, Fairfax County Police Chief; Chief Richard Bower of the Fairfax County Fire and Rescue; and other officials. The event was emceed by Jonathan Elias, an ABC network newscaster, who interjected a little humor over the course of the evening to relieve tension, he said. Elias grew up with parents in the military

SEE HONORING VALOR, PAGE 4



Col. John Morris, chaplain at Fort Belvoir, says a blessing before the meal.



The fire trucks from Penn Daw and Mount Vernon were in the parking lot at the Springfield Hilton during the awards ceremony.

Transform Office Buildings?

The equivalent of 308 football fields of office space are vacant in Fairfax County.

BY KEN MOORE
THE GAZETTE

There are a lot of empty office buildings around Fairfax County — the equivalent of more than 400 acres of floor space.

More than 18.4 million square feet of office space remains vacant, according to the Fairfax County Economic Development Authority (FCEDA), which reported a 15.8 percent direct vacancy rate in 2016 and a double-digit percentage since 2007.

The Planning Commission on Thursday, Nov. 16, recommended approval of a plan amendment

that would pave the way for using vacant office buildings for other purposes, such as residential or schools.

"I think there is a pent-up demand that is out there and we've been approached by a number of people that are waiting for this amendment to go through," said Scott Adams, land use attorney with McGuire Woods.

"The flexibility offered, we think, is going to incentivize revitalization in Fairfax County," he said.

The Board of Supervisors will hold its own public hearing before voting on the proposal on Tuesday, Dec. 5.

"IS THERE POTENTIAL here for public private partnerships for converting and repurposing some of these buildings?" asked Dranesville Planning Commissioner John W. Ulfelder, during an hour-long public hearing the Planning Commission held on Nov. 2.

SEE TRANSFORM, PAGE 5

Fr. Gerard Creedon Dies

Longtime area priest formerly served at Blessed Sacrament and Good Shepherd.

BY JEANNE THEISMANN
THE GAZETTE

Father Gerard Creedon, formerly of Blessed Sacrament and Good Shepherd Catholic churches in Alexandria, died Nov. 16 at Washington Hospital Center following complications from heart surgery. He was 73.

Known as a crusader on behalf of the poor, Creedon served as pastor for several area parishes, including Holy Family Catholic

Church in Dale City, where he was serving at the time of his death.

Born Feb. 16, 1944, in Inchigeelagh County

Cork, Ireland, Creedon was the

SEE LONGTIME, PAGE 3



Fr. Gerard Creedon

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there when it counts



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Kate Patterson 703.627.2166
www.KatePattersonHomes.com



Old Town \$2,950,000

A striking Italianate facade welcomes you to this 19th century, free-standing residence. Center hall floorplan, with spacious, well-appointed rooms for formal and informal living on two levels. Rare double lot affords a beautiful walled garden and coveted off-street parking.
Sissy Zimmerman 703.989.9779
www.BBZgroup.com



Old Town \$1,799,000

Zoned Residential/Commercial – Captivating, elegant and grand home built by Capt. John McCobb in 1810. Beautifully renovated with 5 fireplaces, original wide-plank flooring & 10+ foot ceilings on all levels. Brick walled garden. Extra large corner lot one block from King Street.
Joan Shannon 703.507.8655
www.JoanHome.com



Old Town \$1,565,000

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Alexandria \$799,000

Classic Clover home nestled on leafy .24-acre lot. 4 bedrooms, 2-baths, hardwoods & parquet throughout. HUGE walk-in attic ready for finishing as a playroom or master suite. Fireplace, garage. Slate-tiled screened patio with views to outdoor terrace & private yard. 310 Vassar Rd.
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Focused on Improving Health of the Community

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 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 Arlington. 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.



PHOTO BY VERNON MILES/GAZETTE PACKET
Dr. Basim Khan (left) and Susan Abramson at Neighborhood Health Clinic's office at 6677 Richmond Hwy.

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 Khan. "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.

Longtime Area Priest Formerly Served at Good Shepherd

FROM PAGE 1

fourth of 14 children of John J. and Margaret Creedon. He attended seminary at All Hallows College in Dublin and was ordained a priest for the Diocese of Richmond on June 16, 1968.

Creedon earned a bachelor's degree in English and Latin from University College in Dublin, a master's degree in Theology from Washington Theological Union and a second master's degree in Social Work from The Catholic University of America.

Well-known within the Catholic Diocese of Arlington, Creedon served at a number of area parishes. He served as parochial vicar of Blessed Sacrament Church, 1968-75; St. Luke Church in McLean, 1975-78;

and St. Agnes Church in Arlington, 1978-79; and pastor of Good Shepherd Church, 1979-91.

While serving at Good Shepherd, Creedon was appointed director of diocesan Catholic Charities, a position he held from 1981 until 1988. In 1991, he moved to the Dominican Republic, where he was founding pastor of the Arlington Mission in the parish of San Francisco de Asis Bánica.

Creedon returned to Virginia in 1995 when he became pastor of St. Charles Borromeo Church in Arlington, where he served until his appointment to Holy Family in 2010.

Among his many contributions, Creedon founded Gabriel Homes for people with disabilities and the diocesan Peace and Jus-

tice Commission, where he served as chair from 2002 until his death.

Additionally, he served as diocesan director of Catholic Relief Services and the Campaign for Human Development; founder of Catholics for Housing; diocesan representative on the board of the Virginia Interfaith Center for Public Policy; board member of Social Action Linking Together (SALT); and strategy team member of Virginians Organized for Interfaith Community Engagement (VOICE).

Fluent in Spanish, Gaelic and French, Creedon served on the Virginia Catholic Conference's Respect Life, Health and Social Concerns Policy Committee from the organization's beginning in 2005.

In April, Creedon received the Della

Strada Award from the Ignatian Volunteer Corps and on Nov. 18 was posthumously awarded First Home Alliance's 2017 Alliance Leadership Award.

Creedon was preceded in death by brothers Cornelius D., Richard and Michael Anthony Creedon. Survivors include sisters Therese Wilson, Nora Mary Hyde, Miriam O'Connell and Margaret O'Shea, and brothers Oliver, Bernard, Thomas, Joseph, Dominic and Willie John Creedon.

A Mass of Christian burial was held Nov. 21 at Good Shepherd Church. Burial will take place in Inchigeelagh, Ireland at a later date. In lieu of flowers, contributions can be made to the Holy Family Building Fund at 14160 Ferndale Road, Dale City, VA 22193.



Notice of Public Hearing

NOTICE OF BUDGET AND WATER RATE PUBLIC HEARING

December 14, 2017 at 6:30 p.m.

At 6:30 p.m. on Thursday, December 14, 2017, Fairfax Water will conduct a public hearing on its Proposed Schedule of Rates, Fees, and Charges. The hearing will be held in Fairfax Water's offices at 8570 Executive Park Avenue, Fairfax, VA.

The proposed changes, to be effective April 1, 2018, include the following:

1. An increase in the Availability Charge from \$4,100 to \$4,150¹
2. An increase in the Local Facilities Charge from \$11,685 to \$13,420
3. An increase in the Service Connection Charge from \$1,240 to \$1,260¹
4. An increase in the base Commodity Charge from \$2.81 to \$2.94 per 1,000 gallons of water
5. An increase in the Turn Off / Turn On Charge from \$44 to \$45
6. An increase in the Fees for Use of Fairfax Water Fire Hydrants to include the increase in the Commodity Charge
7. An increase in the Installation of Sewer Use Meter Charge from \$35 to \$36

¹ Charges reflect fees associated with a standard 5/8" residential meter. Changes in charges for larger residential and commercial meters are reflected in the Proposed Schedule of Rates, Fees, and Charges.

Fairfax County Water Authority (Fairfax Water) is proposing a \$178.7 million budget² for calendar year 2018. Revenues are expected to be \$178.7 million in 2018. Water sales are expected to provide \$155.8 million. Approximately \$22.9 million is expected from connection charges, investment income and other sources.

The major areas of operation and maintenance expense are:

Category	-- \$1,000s --	
	2017	2018
Personal Services & Employee Benefits	\$ 54,270	\$ 55,983
Power and Utilities	10,468	10,670
Chemicals	6,846	7,732
Purchased Water	7,677	6,540
Supplies and Materials	4,850	5,102
Insurance	1,186	1,200
Fuel	595	655
Postage	611	614
Contractual Services	11,252	11,610
Professional Services	990	1,025
Other	2,280	2,503
Sub-Total	101,025	103,634
Transfer to Improvement Fund	(9,991)	(10,248)
Total	\$ 91,034	\$ 93,386

Net revenues are expected to be appropriated as follows:	
Debt Payment	\$42,981,000
Improvement Fund	\$11,000,000
General Fund	\$31,087,000

² Fairfax Water's Board will continue to monitor economic factors and review revenues and expenditures at mid-year to determine if additional action is needed.

A copy of the proposed changes to the rates can be viewed on our website at www.fairfaxwater.org/rates. A copy of the proposed budget can be found at www.fairfaxwater.org. Those wishing to speak or receive a copy of the proposed changes should call Ms. Eva Catlin at 703-289-6017.

Interested parties may submit written comments to PublicHearingComments@fairfaxwater.org or mail written comments to:

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

All written comments must be received by close of business on Wednesday, December 13, 2017 to be included in the record of the public hearing.

News



Captain Mike Fischer of the Mount Vernon Station, with his wife Becky.

PHOTOS BY
MIKE SALMON
THE GAZETTE

Honoring Valor and Service

FROM PAGE 1

and police. "I've always had an affinity for police and fire, hats off to you," he said.

The Fairfax County Public Safety Honor Guard kicked off the event with the colors, and the Viva Voces, the advanced Women's Choir from Mount Vernon High School sang the national anthem among other patriotic

songs. "It's important to recognize individuals that make public safety a priority," said Francis Mensah, a member of the Public Safety Honor Guard for 22 years.

This sentiment was felt on the stage too. "It's a great feeling, it means even more when you're recognized by your peers," said Lama.

2017 Police and Firefighters Tribute Awardees

By the Mount Vernon-Lee Chamber of Commerce

Mount Vernon area Fire and Rescue:

- ❖ Captain Mike Fischer, Company Officer of the Year
- ❖ John "JD" Leary, Meritorious Service Award
- ❖ Carlos Solomon, EMT/Medic of the Year
- ❖ Jason Roberts, Firefighter of the Year

Mount Vernon Police:

- ❖ Nicholas Shively, Police Officer of the Year
- ❖ Carlos Lama, Supervisor of the Year
- ❖ Marvin Goodley, Detective of the Year
- ❖ Rick Lopez, Auxiliary Police Officer of the Year
- ❖ Michael Jessee, Meritorious Service Award Station Logistics

Fort Belvoir Fire and Police:

- ❖ Christopher Craft, Company Officer of the Year

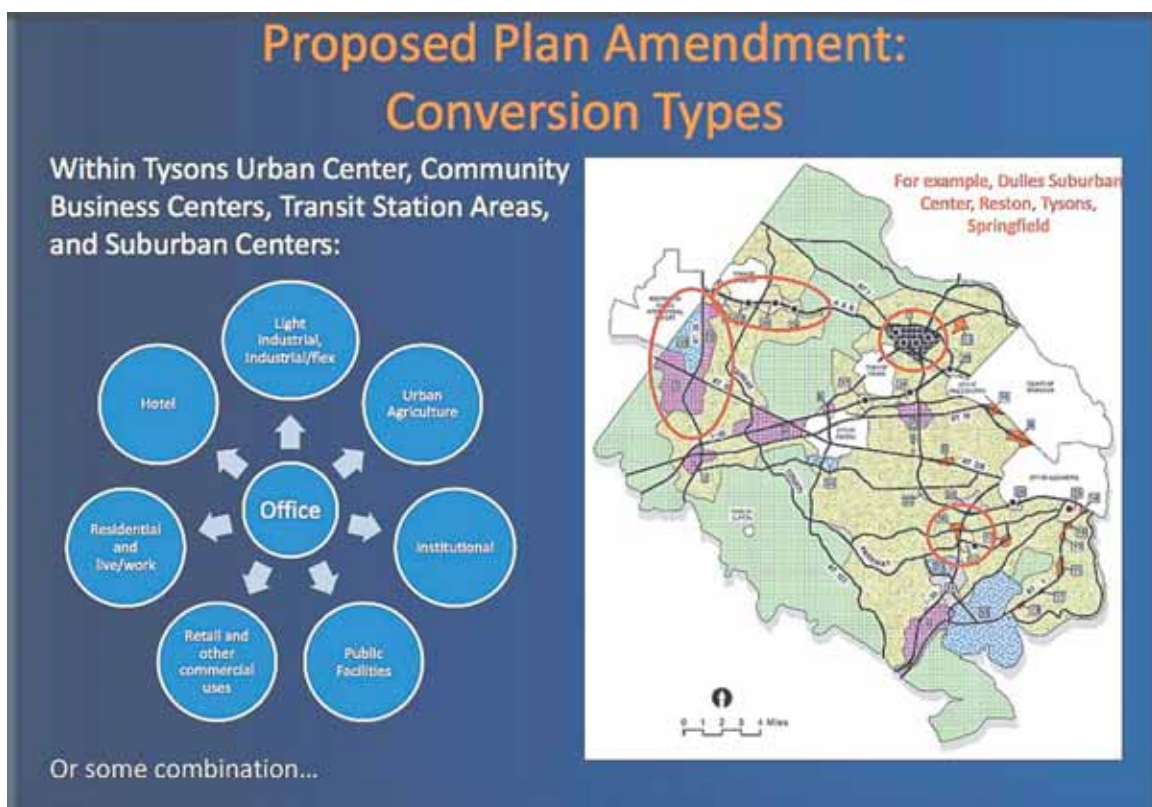
- ❖ Andrew Funk, Firefighter Medic
- ❖ Jonathan Lang, Firefighter of the Year
- ❖ Steven Kinchen, Police Department Supervisor of the Year
- ❖ Christian J. McCreary, Traffic Investigator of the Year
- ❖ Dewitt Parker, Patrol Officer of the Year
- ❖ Alicia Handy, Detective of the Year
- ❖ Paul J Arney, Army Security Supervisor of the Year
- ❖ Sean Murphy, Army Security Guard of the Year

Franconia Police:

- ❖ Martin Russell, Police Officer of the Year
- ❖ Phillip Edwards, Detective of the Year
- ❖ Alice Eggers, Meritorious Service Award
- ❖ Athena Caul, Auxiliary Police Officer of the Year
- ❖ Jonathan Nytes, Supervisor of the Year



The Mount Vernon High School choir provides music for the honor guard.



The Planning Commission on Thursday, Nov. 16, recommended approval of a plan amendment that would pave the way for using vacant office buildings for other purposes, such as residential or schools.

Transform Office Buildings?

FROM PAGE 1

"The answer to that has to be yes, whether that's schools or other facilities," said attorney Gregory Riegler, who chairs the Tysons Partnership. "I'm certainly encouraged in seeing the county be more creative in terms of those solutions."

Opportunities could include converting office buildings to uses such as makerspaces, food incubators, urban farming or flexible live/work units, schools and e-lofts, which can accommodate work or residential uses, or both.

The repurposing of existing buildings is frequently more sustainable than the demolition and replacement of structures and can shorten the time of bringing the building to market, according to county documents and planner Sophia Fisher.

Changes to these uses have often required an authorization of an amendment to the Comprehensive Plan by the Board of Supervisors if the proposed use is not consistent with the planned use.

"There's no short-circuiting of the public process?" asked Providence Commissioner Phillip Niedzielski-Eichner.

The amendment would bypass the necessity for a site specific comprehensive plan amendment, Fisher said, but the remaining steps in the zoning process would still require public hearings and a vote by the Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors.

"You're doing all of this with the trust in your own process and all the procedural protections that case by case review in this building allows," said Riegler.

RESTON ASSOCIATION requested to be exempt from the plan amendment.

Reston advocates said that they have just been through a transit area planning process, and that the mix of residential and commercial is a more delicate balance in Reston.

Commissioner Ellen "Nell" Hurley (Braddock) who made a motion to exclude the exemption, said it would be unworkable to have the option to convert vacant office space to other uses in all but one part of the county.

The board recommended approval of the motion, with Hunter Mill Commission Frank de la Fe and at-large commissioner Tim Sargeant dissenting.

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.

SATURDAY/DEC. 2

Future Quest. 8 a.m.-3 p.m. at GMU's Johnson Center, 4400 University Drive, Fairfax. College and career conference for area middle and high school students with disabilities, as well as their parents, teachers and other professionals. Featuring more than 40 workshops and exhibits related to successful life after high school. Free. There is free parking in Lot K, or in the Mason Pond Parking Garage for \$8. Visit www.futurequestgmu.org to register or

email futurequestnova@gmail.com.

THROUGH DEC. 3

Coat and Blanket Drive. Nova Relief Center is holding a blanket and coat drive for Syrian and Iraqi refugees who have fled their homelands to escape the violence from the civil war in Syria. Paxton Van Lines and Maersk are donating their services this year. Donated blankets and coats should be new or gently worn, and may be dropped off at any designated drop-off location below. To make a tax-deductible donation, visit NOVA Relief Center's website at www.NOVAReliefCenter.org

❖ Office of Supervisor Dan Storck, Mount Vernon Governmental Center, 2511 Parkers Lane, Mount Vernon

❖ Office of Supervisor Jeff McKay, Franconia Governmental Center, 6121 Franconia Road, Alexandria

THURSDAY/DEC. 7

Holiday Grief Workshop. 2 p.m. at Spring Hills Mount Vernon, 3709 Shannons Green Way, Alexandria. Capital Caring's Alexandria Neighborhood is offering grief workshops during the holiday season. These workshops will include tips on how to cope with grief during the holiday season, reflection about how to care for ourselves and a closing ritual of remembrance. The workshops are open to the community, free of charge. Contact Chesley Simpson at 703-333-6954 or csimpson@capitalcaring.org. Visit capitalcaring.org.



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OPEN SUNDAY 1-4



Mt. Vernon Grove \$574,900
9336 Heather Glen Drive
Beautiful 4 BR, 2 1/2 BA colonial w/2 car garage on the Potomac River side of Mount Vernon. .34 Acre. Library on main level. Family Room w/fireplace off of the kitchen w/ French doors to backyard. Dressing room & walk-in closet adjoin the spacious Master suite. Separate Dining and Living Rooms. Unfinished basement w/walk-up steps.

OPEN SUNDAY 1-4



Alex/Berkshire East \$449,000
5956 Berkshire Court
Lovely three level townhouse, 3 bedrooms, 3 1/2 Baths in walking distance to Huntington Metro! Freshly painted, new carpeting, beautiful kitchen. Spacious floor plan, recessed lighting, hardwood floors. Updated bathrooms. Wood burning fireplace in lower level Family Room with walkout door to backyard patio.

OPEN SUNDAY 1-4



Alex/Yacht Haven \$649,900
9417 Forest Haven Drive
Stunning immaculate 2 level Rambler on a large spectacular landscaped half acre lot. Updated: Kitchen w/corrian, SS appliances & cherry cabinets, 3 updated baths, 2 wood burning fpls. Beautiful new/refinished hdwd floors-Large finished basement w/family rm, den/BR, 3rd bath & could be used as an in-law suite. Tons of storage available plus a 2 car garage- Great location in prestigious Yacht Haven Estates w/water front properties & an amazing Marina, Pool and Club House.

RENTAL



Alex/Riverside Estates \$2,857
8314 Bound Brook Lane
Beautiful 3 level colonial w/1 car gar. Meticulously maintained. Lovely landscaping. Renovated kitchen, SS appliances, granite, breakfast bar. Refin Hdwd floors. Gorgeous screened porch off Din Rm. Beautiful finished lower level. Minutes to Ft. Belvoir (S) & a5 mins to Old Town, Alex (N).

UNDER CONTRACT



Alex/Riverside Estates \$539,900
8603 Cherry Valley Lane
A whole lot of house for a great price at \$539,000. Approximately 2800 sq ft of living space w/5BRs, 3BAs plus a large 2 car garage. Updated kitchen w/granite counters and backsplash - 3 gorgeous, updated baths - replacement double pane windows and beautiful hardwood floors. Large workshop/storage room behind garage. Walk to elementary and high schools. 5 minutes to Ft. Belvoir (S) and 15 mins to Old Town Alex, (N) - This is a bargain!

COMING SOON



Alex/Potomac Valley \$554,900
8807 Vernon View Drive
Lovely 4BR, 2BA, 4 lvl, Split on a large, beautiful .3 acre lot w/a fenced bkyd. Main lvl has a spacious & cozy Family rm w/gas FPL, 4th BR, & 2nd full bath. Upper level #1 offers an open kitchen w/ceramic tile floor & space for a table plus Living & Dining Rm. Upper level #2 has a full bath & 3BRs w/carpet over the hdwd floors. The lower level has a large partially finished Rec rm. Good price on a super lot & very nice home that you can add some personal touches to. Keep an eye out for the Estate Sale on furniture. CS 3% on the house-Call Rex for an early visit 703-409-4784

OPEN SUNDAY 1-4



Alex/Riverside Estates \$548,000
8608 Cherry Valley Lane
Charming 4BR, 3.5BA Colonial w/3 finished levels. Kitchen has been updated w/granite counters, breakfast bar & porcelain flooring. All Baths have been updated w/new tile, vanities, & fixtures to include double sinks in the master & main bathrooms. Family rm on main level has gas fireplace. Beautiful hardwood floors throughout. Lower level Rec Rm & extra Den/5th BR. 2 car garage has work area (work bench conveyers). Walk-in attic access on upper level for lots of storage. Cozy brick patio w/ screened gazebo (conveys). New roof in 2016. Walk to elementary & high schools. 5 minutes to Ft. Belvoir (S) & 15 minutes to Old Town, Alex (N). Best Value in Riverside Estates! Call Rex for showing.



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OBITUARIES

Demetrios 'Jim' Gadonas Dies at 78

BY JEANNE THEISMANN

Demetrios "Jim" Gadonas, a lifelong Alexandrian and son of the late "Mr. John" Gadonas, founder of the landmark Majestic Café on King Street, died Nov. 22 at Inova Alexandria Hos-

pital. He was 78.

Born Demetrios John Gadonas on Feb. 26, 1939 at Alexandria Hospital, Gadonas was the son of John D. Gadonas and Zoe Gadonas. He attended Alexandria City Public Schools, graduating from George Washington High School in 1957. During this time

he was an avid participant in recreational youth leagues and high school sports.

"My uncle was a product of old Alexandria," said Greg Paspatis, one of two surviving nephews. "He was a tremendous sports fan and passed his love of sports along to me."

Gadonas attended Columbia Prep School in Washington D.C. prior to beginning work as a mail carrier for the U.S. Postal Service. In the early 1960s, he began a career of over three decades on Capitol Hill. Around 1961 he became a Capitol Police officer, serving until early 1976. He then began working for the Office of the Clerk in the U.S. House of Representatives, retiring from that position in 1995.

"He loved politics and how things worked on Capitol Hill," Paspatis said of his uncle. "He never lost his fascination with how government functioned."

Gadonas went on to work for about a decade with the Radisson Hotel in North Old Town. Previously, he served in the Virginia Army National Guard from 1962 to 1968. He went to basic training at Fort Jackson, S.C., and Signal Corps School at Fort Gordon, Ga.

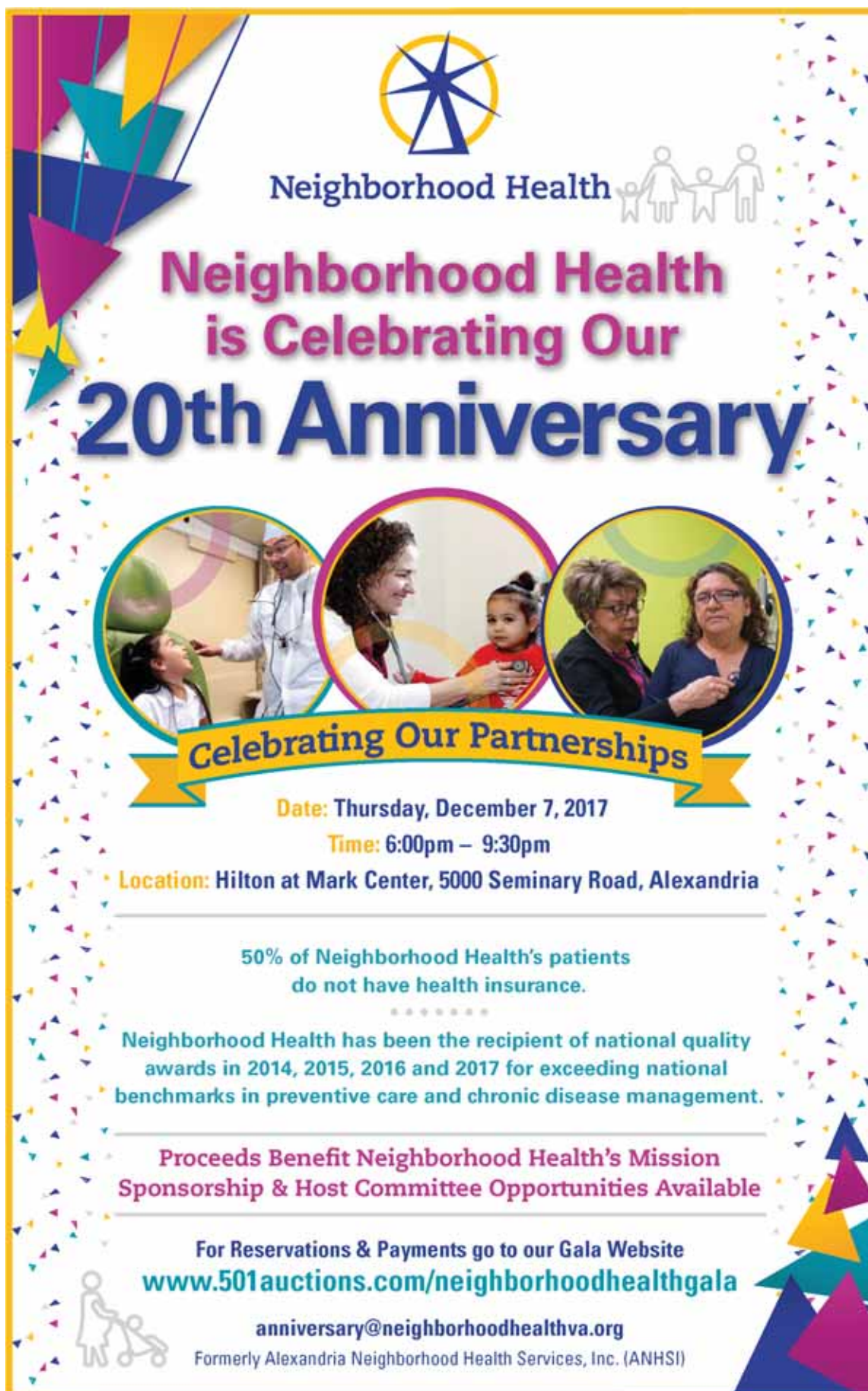
Gadonas received a bachelor of arts degree in government from the University of Maryland in January 1972. For nearly 40 years he made his home in the Waynewood neighborhood of Fort Hunt. He was an avid follower of sports, running the gamut from

organized college and pro leagues to golf, tennis, horse racing and boxing.

"I still remember my uncle piling my brother and me into his Austin Healey convertible just to sit outside the sold-out game at GW High School stadium when Joe Namath made his NFL debut in a 1965 preseason game against the Houston Oilers," Paspatis said. "In 1969, he brought me to my first high school football game when Hammond won a national championship. He really loved sports, especially the local teams."

In addition to his parents, Gadonas was predeceased by two sisters; Pauline J. Gadonas and Eugenia "Virginia" J. Gadonas, both of Alexandria. He is survived by his two nephews, Gregory G. Paspatis, and John D. Paspatis, both of Alexandria.

A funeral service will be held Nov. 30 at noon at Saint Katherine's Greek Orthodox Church, 3149 Glen Carlyn Road, in Falls Church. Interment will follow at Ivy Hill Cemetery in Alexandria. Arrangements are being handled by Everly-Wheatley Funeral Home. www.everlywheatley.com



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Annabel Stover

Born on June 5, 1919 in Leal, North Dakota, Annabel Augusta Grover was the daughter of Amanda and Adolph Grover. She died on Thanksgiving Day, Nov. 23, 2017.

She graduated from Hannaford High School in 1937 and went on to attend Jamestown Commercial College to acquire office management skills. After graduation she worked for the County Extension Agent and then the General Accounting Office in Fargo. In February of 1941, after taking the Civil Service Exam, she left North Dakota for Washington D.C. There she worked for the Navy Nurse Corps, the Bureau of Ships, and finally Special Branch at the Pentagon.

In 1944, she left the U.S. on her birthday, arrived in England on D-Day, and was attached to the American Embassy.

She ultimately moved to Bletchley Park where the code breakers deciphered Nazi messages sent out through the Enigma Machine, and funneled decoded messages to their proper recipients. At the conclu-



sion of World War II she went to Germany as a secretary to one of the Chief

Prosecutors of the Nuremberg War Crimes Trials. Upon returning to the U.S. she worked briefly for the C.I.A. before meeting and marrying the love her of life, Joseph Bell Stover in 1947 where they were happily married for over 50 years.

While raising two children, she did volunteer work for the Alexandria Red Cross, Meals on Wheels, Gunston Hall, and for 25 years was a greeter at INOVA Mount Vernon Hospital. She was an active member of Mount Vernon Presbyterian Church. She is survived by her two children, Margaret Ann Smith and Joseph McNair Stover, two granddaughters Amanda Thomas Henegar and Kelly Ann Smith, and five great grandchildren, Willow, Abigail, Zachary, Emily and Tyler.



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OPINION

Careful What To Wish For

Could changes in General Assembly mean some legislative requests from Northern Virginia might not be dead on arrival?

When the Virginia House of Representatives adjourned from its 2017 session, Republicans controlled the house by 66 to 34. The exact count following elections earlier in November is still unclear, but one party or the other could have a 51-49 majority, or even face a 50-50 split.

I don't recall anyone predicting this level of change. Three very close races are likely headed for recount, including one in Fairfax County, and since this is the first time all voters have used paper ballots, it's hard to predict how that will go. But one way or the other, Northern Virginia localities are likely to have more influence.

Fairfax County, along with Arlington and Alexandria, prepare a state legislative wish list each year, made all the more urgent because localities in Virginia have only the powers specifically given to them by the General Assembly. If there is any reasonable doubt whether a power has been conferred on a local government, then the locality does not have that power.

That has meant, for example, localities can only raise revenue from limited sources, can't restrict where people carry guns, can't set their own minimum wage, and can't fully control land use within their boundaries. Some haven't been able to ban discrimination on the basis

of sexual orientation and gender identity.

Not all of these restrictions are based on party affiliation.

Aside from more local authority, the top wish is for more funding.

Fairfax County's draft on funding schools: "Public education funding in the Commonwealth is enshrined in the Virginia Constitution as a joint responsibility of both state and local governments, so it is essential that the state fully meet its Constitutional responsibility to adequately fund K-12 education. Unfortunately, the Commonwealth continues to allow critical gaps to persist between state fund-

ing and the actual costs of providing a high-quality education, placing more of the fiscal burden on localities while substantially limiting local revenue sources, creating a discrepancy that has become increasingly untenable."

The one action that could produce significant funding and services with very low cost to state coffers: expanding Medicaid in Virginia under the Affordable Care Act. Virginia has turned away billions of dollars, plus the jobs and healthier citizenry that come with that.

— MARY KIMM

MKIMM@CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM

Next Week: More Local Giving

Next week, we will publish our lists of local nonprofits for holiday giving. If you know of an organization that should be included or whose listing needs updating, please email mkimm@connectionnewspapers.com.

Deadline Extended: Children's Edition

Submissions of student art and writing are due by Friday, Dec. 8, an extended deadline. You can see last year's editions by visiting www.connectionnewspapers.com/PDFs/ and scroll down to Children's Edition. Email submissions 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.

Preparing Bills for New Session

BY PAUL KRIZEK
STATE DELEGATE



Monday was the first day to prefile legislation for the 2018 General Assembly Session. I have already filed two bills. The first is to repeal 2012 legislation from Barbara Comstock when she was a state delegate that banned the use of Private Labor Agreements (PLAs) on state contracts. My second bill is one I

patroned last year from West Potomac student Jonathan Tucker to require all passengers in a vehicle to use their seatbelts.

This is just the first week and there will be thousands of bills drafted and filed in the days leading up to the next General Assembly Session, but let me take a minute to explain why PLAs are so important.

PLAs create career paths for women, minorities, veterans, and other underrepresented popula-

tions. Developing qualified workers in the building trades, and including people who historically were underrepresented in those trades, has a positive long-term economic benefit for the individuals who receive the jobs and for the construction industry as a whole.

Using PLAs — as we did on the 395 Express Lanes and the initial Silver Line Metro expansion — provides uniform wages, benefits, overtime pay, standard hours, working conditions, and work rules for work on major construction projects, and provide contractors with a reliable and uninterrupted supply of qualified workers at predictable costs.

It also ensures that a project will be completed on time and on budget due to the supply of qualified labor and relative ease of project management and makes large

projects easier to manage by placing unions under one contract, the PLA, rather than dealing with several unions that may have different wage and benefit structures.

Using PLAs will also reduce the misclassification of workers and the related underpayment of payroll taxes, workers compensation, and other requirements, which lets a larger percentage of construction wages stay in state.

In addition to my legislation, Democrats announced several day-one bills to "return power to the people," to use the words of Democratic Leader David Toscano, highlighting the important themes of transparency and good government. Del. Marcus Simon and Delegate-elect Kelly Fowler are introducing a bill to ban the personal

use of campaign funds.

Del. Rip Sullivan and Delegate-elect Wendy Gooditis are introducing a bill on nonpartisan redistricting reform.

Del. Mike Mullin and Delegate-elect Dawn Adams are introducing a bill to make the General District Court database a public record (it is currently only searchable by individual case).

Del. Sam Rasoul and Delegate-elect Cheryl Turpin, a Mount Vernon native, are introducing a bill to ban credit agencies from charging people for freezing their credit reports.

Stay tuned for more information and important legislation to follow in the coming weeks from House Democrats, which now have at least 49 members.

Write

The Gazette 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.

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NEWS DEPARTMENT:
gazette@connectionnewspapers.com

Steven Mauren
Editor, 703-778-9415
smauren@connectionnewspapers.com

Mike Salmon
Assistant Editor
msalmon@connectionnewspapers.com

Andrea Worker
Reporter
aworker@connectionnewspapers.com

Jeanne Theismann
jtheismann@connectionnewspapers.com
@TheismannMedia

ADVERTISING:
For advertising information
sales@connectionnewspapers.com
703-778-9431

Debbie Funk
Display Advertising/National Sales
703-778-9444
debfunk@connectionnewspapers.com

Julie Ferrill
Real Estate, 703-927-1364
jferrill@connectionnewspapers.com

Helen Walutes
Display Advertising, 703-778-9410
hwalutes@connectionnewspapers.com

David Griffin
Marketing Assistant
703-778-9431
dgriffin@connectionnewspapers.com

Publisher
Jerry Vernon
703-549-0004
jvernon@connectionnewspapers.com

Editor & Publisher
Mary Kimm
mkimm@connectionnewspapers.com
@MaryKimm

Editor in Chief
Steven Mauren
Art/Design:
Laurence Foong, John Heinly,
Ali Khaligh
Production Manager:
Geovani Flores

CIRCULATION
Circulation Manager:
Ann Oliver
circulation@connectionnewspapers.com

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LETTERS

Oppose Cuts To National Parks

To the Editor:

The Trump Administration proposes to slash the National Park Service's budget by \$400 million. Congress should reject those cuts.

In Northern Virginia, amid the seemingly endless sprawl are natural jewels like Prince William Forest Park, Manassas National Battlefield Park, the natural areas of Wolf Trap and the George Washington Memorial Parkway's parks, including the Dyke Marsh Wildlife Preserve.

The George Washington Memorial Parkway's parks alone have a deferred maintenance backlog of \$207 million.

This means, for example, that invasive plants expand out of control, park rangers are too few, educational programs for youngsters are foregone, historic sites are not maintained and trails fall into disrepair.

Our national parks are local treasures, our green infrastructure and custodians of our natural resources and nation's history.

I call on Virginia's U.S. senators and representative to adequately fund our public lands, including Dyke Marsh, and to oppose cuts the National Park Service's funding.

Ned Stone

Vice President, Friends of Dyke Marsh

Healthcare Options

To the Editor:

There is a lot of confusion and misinformation right now about the future of the Affordable Care Act (ACA) and open enrollment for purchasing healthcare through Healthcare.gov. Many solo entrepreneurs and small business employees rely on the ACA marketplaces for their health insurance, so it's crucial that small business owners learn about their options and get covered early. It's important to know that open enrollment is shorter this year, running from Nov. 1 through Dec. 15.

Recent cuts to advertising and enrollment assistance may also make it harder to find the information you need to enroll, but many organizations are stepping up to fill this gap. What's more, contrary to some claims, most customers won't see huge cost increases — in fact, 8 out of 10 enrollees will be able to find a plan for less than \$75 a month or less.

The ACA is still the law of the land, and it's important for small business owners, employees, and self-employed individuals to learn about their options now to make sure they are covered for 2018.

Erik Rettig
Alexandria

SEE LETTERS, PAGE 17



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"We've made a lot of good friends since moving to Hermitage"

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Meet Carol and MJ. Carol and MJ are great buddies. They are also next door neighbors. Carol is 88 years old and MJ is 79. Carol moved to Hermitage Northern Virginia from Arlington about a year before MJ, who came from Montgomery County, Maryland. After moving, the two friends discovered a shared love of outdoor walks on the grounds of the community and around the quiet neighborhood streets. Carol focuses on her balance with a functional fitness class 4x a week and MJ enjoys reading in the library. Carol likes the many interesting people and MJ enjoys the many excursions and the reading club. It feels like a family here at Hermitage Northern Virginia.

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West Potomac Students Help in Stream Cleanup

BY MARTIN TILLET

Student members from the Liberty's Promise club at West Potomac High School and their faculty sponsor teamed up with 10 residents of the Spring Bank community at 10 a.m. on Nov. 18 and by noon all visible trash in the stream that is on Fairfax County owned land was removed from three sections of Quander Brook.

Liberty's Promise is a nonprofit that works with young immigrants while encouraging them to be active and conscientious American citizens. Liberty's Promise runs after-school programs at West Potomac High School where youth participate in service activities, learn about different college and scholarship opportunities, write resumes and practice interviews, take field trips, and hear from guest speakers.

Recently they heard from Wendy Cohen, a speaker representing Clean Fairfax about the issue of trash in our local streams and watersheds. Cohen suggested that they join up with the Spring Bank Community Association in the same neighborhood where West Potomac is located and join them during the semi annual stream cleanup to remove trash that enters Quander Brook from storm water drains in the Kings Crossing Shopping Center.

McKenzie Williams the club sponsor de-



From left: Esther Sowan, McKenzie Williams, Thiedelle Ndiaye, Jaylen Glenn, Adja Ly, and Carie Kessie.

scribed her students as incredibly motivated. She described the experience as a great way for the students to give back to their community and as being very eye-opening about the environmental challenges facing nearby watersheds. Participating in such efforts gives students and residents alike a heightened awareness of personal responsibility in the handling of trash and wastes in the community business and shopping centers.

Stream bed before cleanup.



Students in the stream bed collecting trash.



Stream bed after cleanup.

If a Tree Falls on the Road ...

Although drivers and trees avoid each other, a fall could be fatal.

BY MIKE SALMON
THE GAZETTE

Drivers using the Newington cut-through, from I-95 to Telegraph Road in southern Fairfax County, pass under a branch that could cause some serious damage if it fell. Although the tree looks healthy, wind or ice could put extra stress on this branch, and the results could be fatal.

All around Northern Virginia, there are probably dozens of situations like this, so it conjures the "what if," question. Paranoia?

According to John Townsend, the manager of Public & Government Affairs at the Mid-Atlantic division of the American Automobile Association, it does happen.

"In September 2016, a Northern Virginia man was killed when a tree fell near his pickup truck in Woodstock after a mighty gust of wind knocked the tree down. The three passengers were outside the truck when the tree fell onto them, killing the victim," said Townsend.

On July 17, 2012, a "64-year-old Reston man was killed when a 100-foot oak tree" fell on his car in Great Falls, crushing him



This car was not so lucky during a past storm that roared through Fairfax County.

to death, added Townsend.

Is it an "act of God?" in the insurance world, or is anyone responsible? According to Townsend, tree limbs that fall on a house or other insured structures on the property would be covered for both the damage the tree(s) inflicts on the house and the cost of removing the tree(s), generally up to about \$500. In addition, if a tree fell on a house or car, and the owner is insured, in most cases they're covered. If a tree falls on a house, homeowners insurance will cover removal of the tree and home repairs. How-

ever, if a tree falls in the yard, but doesn't hit anything, the homeowner would pay for its removal in most cases.

The county and state have an eye on trees too, along with drivers, said Jennifer McCord at the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT). If a driver or resident sees something alarming on the roadside, they can report it to VDOT at my.vdot.virginia.gov, or 800-367-7623.

Also the assorted VDOT maintenance teams that are out on the road every day report issues as they ride the roads, said

McCord. "We also have an arborist who examines and marks trees of concern for maintenance or tree contractors to address," she said.

On the VDOT website, there is a list of "Ordinary Maintenance Criteria and Timeliness Requirements" that addresses trees, talking about sight distance, overhang limits, deadfall, and whether the trees impact inspection areas on bridges, structures or utilities. "Trees/brush affecting sight distance to regulatory signs and/or creating a safety hazard shall be removed within 48 hours of notification," the guideline states.

There are eyes on the trees on the county level as well, said Keith Cline, director of the Fairfax County Urban Forest Management Division. In the county code, 46-1-1, "trees or parts thereof in danger of falling" are listed under health or safety menaces. "We do investigate it if it's threatening to the public at large," Cline said. The county also addresses tree danger "on a complaint basis," said Cline, and works with VDOT to remedy the situation near roads.

If the tree is on private property, they work with the property owner, and on rare occasions, call in a contractor to cut it back, and then they bill the homeowner. "This doesn't happen very often," said Cline.

James Donegan at Donegan Tree Service has worked with Fairfax County to take care of roadside tree hazards, and cited the ash tree problem with the emerald ash borer pests that have decimated the ash tree population in the county.

PHOTO BY MIKE SALMON/THE GAZETTE

GIFT IDEAS

Trends in Gift Giving

From charitable to sustainable, shopping ideas to please even the pickiest.

BY MARILYN CAMPBELL

Consider eco-friendly gifts that are constructed from recycled materials. “Items made from reclaimed materials are a great way to give a unique gift,” said Courtney Thomas of the Picket Fence in Burke. “Reclaimed wood is especially popular.”

Solemate Socks are another colorful option. They are made by repurposing recycled cotton yarn that is then spun into vibrant, patterned socks. Thomas also recommends decorative items made from reclaimed wood. “We have some beautiful churches made from wood salvaged from barns in Alabama,” she said.

Ornaments made from reclaimed paper are another environmentally conscious option. “Not only are these beautiful decorations, but they help provide jobs for people in third-world countries,” said Thomas.

Kevin Sweitzer of Thos. Moser, Handmade American Furniture recommends items made from sustainable North American hardwoods, “Namely cherry from the Allegheny Plateau in Pennsylvania and walnut from the riverbanks of Missouri.”

Examples include stacks of food-safe wooden bowls, which are “are sustainable and reusable, [make] a perfect hostess gift ... and a great conversation piece.”

GIFTS THAT MAKE A DIFFERENCE in the lives of others are also on trend this year.

One example is Starling Project candles. Proceeds from the sales of these scented candles are donated to UNICEF to help provide solar energy to under-resourced countries.

“Products that support a cause are also a great way to both give a meaningful gift and help those in need,” said Thomas. “We have pottery ornaments that are made in Alabama by women escaping domestic violence.”

Vintage-inspired gifts are trendy this season, says Susan Nelson from Home on Cameron in Alexandria. “Wooden toys, [for example] appeal to all ages, as do vintage items such as magnifying glasses,” she said. “Gifts that are unique and offer a unique experience are popular right now.”

Handmade gifts are another consideration, adds



PHOTO COURTESY OF HOME ON CAMERON

Vintage items such as these at Home on Cameron in Alexandria make unique holiday gifts.

Todd Martz, also from Home on Cameron. “Visitors ... love the handmade items for gifts, such as felt flowers from Nepal, hand painted vases, and the custom pillows [which come] in a variety of colors and patterns.

GIVING PRACTICAL GIFTS that the recipient will actually use can minimize the need for gift returns. Merchants who are on the receiving end of after-season holiday gift returns suggest customers think about what it will be like for the recipient to actually own the gift, rather than the moment of receiving the gift.

One example, says Madeline Fairbanks of Country Casual Teak, “are accessories for those who entertain regularly such as ... wine stopper or wine caddy,” she said. “Purchasers like the thoughtfulness of the items and the durability of the products because they last for many years.”

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ENTERTAINMENT

LTA Presents 'A Christmas Carol'

Ebenezer Scrooge travels with ghostly guides through Christmas past, present, and future.

BY STEVE HIBBARD

The Little Theatre of Alexandria (LTA) is presenting Charles Dickens' classic, "A Christmas Carol," from Dec. 1-16. The story features Ebenezer Scrooge, a miserable Victorian humbug, who travels with ghostly guides through Christmas past, present, and future to find the true meaning of the holidays. The show is complete with special effects, Victorian carols and Tiny Tim.

Co-producer Jean Coyle said, "The story of this play is a familiar one to many of us. As we come closer to the end of another year, the story calls out to us to review our lives just as Mr. Scrooge is called by the ghosts of Christmas past, present, and future to do so. While this is an old-fashioned tale, the lesson in it is very contemporary — one of love and kindness always winning the day."

She added that because of LTA's long tradition of presenting the show each December, that it's a wonderful legacy of which to be a part. "The play is such a significant part of the holiday season for many people and we often have sell-out audiences, so it is an awesome responsibility to play a part in helping these performances happen," she said.

Co-producer Maria Ciarrocchi said over the years she's performed in seven productions of "A Christmas Carol" and seen countless others. "It's not really Christmas for me unless I see this story so when the opportu-



Members of the cast of LTA's production of "A Christmas Carol."

nity presented itself I gladly agreed to spend the season in Dickens' London," she said.

She said three things she hopes the audience takes away from the play are: that it is never too late to change the course of your life, you just have to want to do it; that everyone matters, no exceptions; and, remember to take time out of the hustle and bustle of the holiday season to actually enjoy the holidays, and that it's the people not the gifts that make it.

Director Eleanore Tapscott said LTA has been presenting "A Christmas Carol" for several years now. "Although the story is well known, audiences continued to be intrigued by the idea that even the most despicable of us is potentially redeemable. With this year's production, we've focused on the subtitle of the novella — A Ghost Story of Christmas, and I also tried to incorporate

more of Dickens' words into the text," she said.

She said the play has many principle and feature roles, and all of the cast, except for Cal Whitehurst, who plays Scrooge, play multiple roles. "Coordinating acting, music, and dance for a cast of 32 was definitely challenging," she said.

CAL WHITEHURST plays Scrooge, a man who has become greedy, selfish, and even cruel in his pursuit of wealth. "At the end, he is transformed by his encounters with the ghosts of Christmas past, present, and future into a man full of generosity, joy and love," Whitehurst said.

He said the greatest challenge to playing Scrooge is the familiarity of the character. "I sort of see myself as haunted by the ghosts of Scrooge's past, so I need to meet the

audience's expectations and bring Scrooge to life for them once more," he said.

Carol Clark plays the role of Belle, who is Scrooge's love interest in the show. "She's a quiet, loving woman with a backbone of steel who isn't afraid to speak her mind when necessary," she said.

She calls the show "a cautionary tale full of ghosts and greed." She added, "A Christmas Carol' reaches out to the heart with bright notes of hope, love, and a few carols, of course. I hope our audience leaves us singing with the joy of the season in their hearts."

Kevin J. Broderick Jr. plays the role of the Ghost of Christmas Present. With a joie de vivre, "he loves being in any and all Christmas celebrations happening around the

SEE 'A CHRISTMAS CAROL.' PAGE 16

CALENDAR

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

ONGOING

IMPart Exhibit Showcases the Power of Art. Through Dec. 3, 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.

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.

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

The Lyceum: 175 Years of Local History. Ongoing, Monday-Saturday 10 a.m.-5 p.m. and Sunday 1-5 p.m. at The Lyceum, 201 S. Washington St. On view in the museum's Goldsmith 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 for more

Alexandria's Nurses and Hospitals

ENTERTAINMENT

6 Dates to Circle in December

BY HOPE NELSON

December is teeming with festive ways to spend the days. Here are a few top choices to wet your whistle and fill your stomach.

Taste of Scotland, Dec. 1

The annual Scottish Christmas Walk weekend is back for its 47th year, and with it comes one of the premier events of the holiday season: The Taste of Scotland Scotch tasting. From peaty to malty beverages, there's something for every Scotch aficionado (and those aficionados still in training).

APPETITE Society Fair is catering the event; be sure to take them up on their fare throughout the tasting. 8-10:30 p.m., 277 S. Washington St. \$110 for general admission; \$180 for the Patron Hour at 6:30 p.m.

Dolce & Bean Coffee Tasting, Dec. 2

Perk up your holiday prep with some coffees from around the world at Del Ray's coffee and fine chocolates purveyor this weekend. From nutty to sweet, Dolce & Bean will have a plethora of blends to try. Who knows? Maybe you'll come home with a new favorite. 10:30 a.m.-2:30 p.m., 2003A Mount Vernon Ave.

Wines of Piedmont Dinner at Vermilion, Dec. 5

Enjoy a taste of Italy with a pairing of wines with a five-course dinner menu courtesy of Vermilion. From veal terrine to risotto with chicken to a bacon-wrapped venison loin, every aspect of the taste buds

will be amused as you work your way through a plethora of wines. 6:30-9:30 p.m., 1120 King St. \$90 per person.

Second Annual Taco Eating Contest at Don Taco, Dec. 11

Are you the fastest taco eater in all the land? Test your prowess at Don Taco's now-annual competition. Start with the preliminary round, which tests your skill at eating as many tacos as you can in 60 seconds, and if you're a winner, move on to the championship round, featuring 10 tacos as fast as you can. 7-10 p.m., 808 King St. \$20 entry fee.

Gingerbread Cookie Decoration Party at Pizzeria Paradiso, Dec. 17

There will be treats for kids and adults alike at one of Old Town's most popular pizza joints. Kids will enjoy letting their artistry shine through on Paradiso's gingerbread cookies; adults will enjoy some festive holiday draft brews from Hardywood. 11:30 a.m.-10 p.m., 124 King St.

Christmas Day Dinner at Sonoma Cellars, Dec. 25

Looking for a new way to spend Christmas Day? Join Sonoma Cellars' owners, Rick and Elizabeth Myllenbeck, for a feast. The intimate table will fit up to two dozen for a family-style dinner complete with – of course – wine. 4-7 p.m., 207 King St. \$65 per person.

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

CALENDAR

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 Athenaeum, 201 Prince St. A joint exhibition of artists Katie Baines and Amy Chan who use diverse painting materials such as acrylic,

gouache, airbrush and screen print to build energized abstract paintings. www.nfaa.org or 703-548-0035.

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

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

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

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

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

www.fortward.org or call 703-746-4848.

Dinner for the Washingtons. 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.alexandriarchaeology.org.

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

SEE CALENDAR, PAGE 14

THE ALEXANDRIA HARMONIZERS



PRESENT



PEACE & JOY: AN A CAPPELLA HOLIDAY CONCERT

WITH

VIRGINIA BRONZE, PRATT STREET POWER AND TBD ENSEMBLE

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<https://www.eventbrite.com/o/alexandria-harmonizers-15043680749>

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ENTERTAINMENT

FROM PAGE 16

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 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.

THURSDAY/NOV. 30

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/.

A Cappella Holiday Concert. 7 p.m. at The Athenaeum, 201 Prince St. Featuring the Capital Hearings, a D.C.-based 13-member vocal ensemble, that play a selection of

pop, classical, and jazz music for the season. \$30 includes wine and dessert. Call 703-548-0035 or visit nvfaa.org.

Kirkin of Tartans. 7-8:30 p.m. at St. Andrew & St. Margaret of Scotland Anglican Church, 402 E. Monroe Ave. Features a blessing of Scottish tartans, bagpiper, Scottish fiddling followed by reception. Free. Visit www.standrewandstmargaret.org.

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.

FRIDAY-SUNDAY/DEC. 1-3

T.C. Williams Book Fair. Friday and Saturday 10 a.m.-8 p.m.; Sunday 10 a.m.-6 p.m. at Hooray for Books!, 1555 King St. Proceeds go to the T.C.

'Tangled in the Tinsel' by Port City

17 short sketches capture the "fun side" of Christmas.

BY STEVE HIBBARD

The Port City Playhouse is presenting "Tangled in the Tinsel" for three days only: Dec. 1 and 2 at 8 p.m.; and Dec. 3 at 3 p.m. The show is a collection of 17 short sketches that capture the "fun side" of Christmas — from the mall parking lot to the Sunday School pageant to a gift exchange. It is a prequel to last year's holiday hit by Martha Bolton — "The 12 Plays of Christmas."

The show is a light-hearted look at all the ways people manage to complicate their lives during the Christmas season. All but one of the cast of 13 are new to Port City and several are first-time actors. The show runs about one hour and 15 minutes and there are no intermissions. After the show, cookies and drinks will be served so people can meet the cast and share a cup of good cheer.

Director Becky Patton said playwright Bolton has a great knack for getting to the heart of matters without being too preachy. "And she's very funny," she said. "We have to be able to laugh at ourselves in order to step back and honor the season."

She said what she was trying to accomplish was "that we can laugh in church and we can use humor to make us see that there is more to the season than gifts and parties."

As far as challenges, she added, "This is an ensemble play — there are no specific stars or leads, but lots of people who have to work together to make the play happen. And it is a comedy, which means timing has to be spot on. Lastly, keeping a cast of 13 healthy through the rehearsal period was very challenging."

Patton said that since Port City Playhouse moved into new space at Sleepy Hollow United Methodist Church in Falls Church, that they've been working with the church to build out the Fellowship Hall to be a theater space. "The Christmas show is a benefit for both of us," she said.

Maya Andersen is playing two characters. She said the first is a girl who wants to receive the best gift at a gift exchange while trying to give away her own crummy gift. The second is a young girl setting straight a church play Diva. "I think that's my favorite character because she is innocent and funny without trying to be," she said.

As far as audience takeaways, she said, "When the audience sees our show, I hope they realize that there is more to Christmas than presents ... there's also comedy."

Chris Andersen is playing the role of a grumpy

SEE 'TANGLED,' PAGE 18

THE CAMPAGNA CENTER'S SCOTTISH CHRISTMAS WALK PARADE

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 2 AT 11AM



For the 47th consecutive year, we proudly present The Campagna Center's Scottish Christmas Walk Parade. Enjoy marching units filled with the magnificent tartans of Scottish Clans, the stirring sound of Scottish bagpipes and drums, Scottish dancers, reenactment groups, Scottie dogs, dignitaries, classic cars, Santa Claus, and much more.

For more information on The Campagna Center and Scottish Walk Weekend, visit campagnacenter.org/scottishwalkweekend.

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ENTERTAINMENT




50th Anniversary of Decorating Contest

This holiday season marks the golden anniversary of an Old Town Alexandria tradition: the Old Town Walled Garden Club Holiday Door Decorating Contest. Each December for the last 50 years, the Old Town Walled Garden Club has encouraged creative and tasteful decorations on the doors in the old and historic district by sponsoring a contest to recognize the most striking doors in town.

In keeping with Old Town's historic provenance, contest rules require that, except for festive bows and ribbons, the decorations feature only natural materials and that they be made by the homeowners themselves. Purchased, professionally made decorations are not eligible to win. Judging criteria include originality of design, scale, color, contrast, and attractiveness from the street.

The first, second, and third place winners as well as runners up will be awarded generous prizes donated by local restaurants Bastille, Brabo Tasting Room, Hunting Creek Steakhouse and Hummingbird Bar-Kitchen. Photographs of the winning doors will appear in the holiday issue of the Gazette Packet. From traditional greens to more contemporary designs, Alexandria's door decorations make Old Town a holiday destination. Judging will take place Dec. 9-16.

For additional information, email the Old Town Walled Garden Club at OTWGClub@gmail.com.



FIRST NIGHT ALEXANDRIA



December 31, 2017

An Old Town New Year's Eve CELEBRATION

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Badge and schedule information at
FirstNightAlexandria.org
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PRESENTING SPONSORS

CALENDAR

Williams English Department. Call 703-548-4092.

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 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

Christmas Cheer Weekend.

Saturday, 10 a.m.-6 p.m.; Sunday, 11 a.m.-5 p.m. at The Church of Saint Clement, 1701 North Quaker Lane. Trees for sale with a bake sale, extended hours for its thrift and gift shop, caroling, a photo backdrop, and free hot cocoa. Visit saintclement.org.

Original Artwork Sale.

4-7 p.m. Saturday, noon-4 pm. 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/.

Alexandria Harmonizers Holiday Show.

Saturday 8-10 p.m.; Sunday 2-4 p.m. at T.C. Williams High School Auditorium, 3330 King St. Tickets start at \$15. Visit harmonizers.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.

Meet the Artists. 4-7 p.m. at the Gallery 311 at the Torpedo Factory Art Center, 105 N. Union St. Participating mixed media artists include Ahmed Ansari, Jennifer Brewer Stone, Lesley Clarke, Dennis Crayon, Tsolmon Damba, Jamie Fine, Greenway, Whitney Staiger, and Meg Talley. Visit www.torpedofactoryartists.com.

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.

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.

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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.

Holiday Open House. 6-8 p.m. at the Mount Vernon District Office, 2511 Parkers Lane. An evening of refreshments, get to know the staff and tour the office. Artwork from Bryant High School students will be on display. Call 703-780-7518 or email us at mtvernon@fairfaxcounty.gov.

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.

Volunteer Appreciation Dinner. 7:30 p.m. at the Minnie Howard School, 3801 W. Braddock Road. Alexandria GOP Committee volunteer appreciation dinner and December meeting. \$5. Call 571-281-7042.

FRIDAY-SATURDAY/DEC. 8-9

Holiday Pops Concert. 7:30-9:30 p.m. at Convergence, 1801 N. Quaker Lane. "Reflections!" show weaves pop arrangements of holiday classics with new tunes. Collecting donations and wrapped gifts for the Alexandria Community Shelter adult residents at all performances. \$20/under 5 years old free. Email marketing@alexandriasingers.com.

DEC. 8-10

Artfête Weekend. Various times at The Art League's Madison Annex, 305 Madison St. Open house and holiday party, holiday ceramics sale, and more. Visit www.theartleague.org.

SATURDAY/DEC. 9

Holiday Market. 10 a.m.-3 p.m. at Mount Vernon High School, 8515 Old Mount Vernon Road. Shop indoors from over 50 vendors. Email ptsaholidayfest@gmail.com.

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 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.

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 www.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.

Concerts at Saint Luke's. 5 p.m. at St. Luke's Episcopal Church, 8009 Fort Hunt Road. A candlelight concert presented by Words&Music, who play holiday music of the Advent season. Words&Music is a vocal quartet with piano from the Alexandria area. \$20 Adult; \$15 Senior; free to students 18 and under. Call 703-765-4342 or visit www.saintlukeschurch.net.

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.

'A Christmas Carol' at LTA

FROM PAGE 12

world. Where there is Christmas, so too is the Ghost of Christmas Present. He loves knowing that his 'spirit and blessing' occupy the hearts of all who feel the joy of Christmas day," he said.

He added, "The only way for Scrooge to embrace his reclamation is for him to face his ignorance. He has to know how he got to this place (his past), what effect his choices and beliefs are having upon his present, and what shall happen to him if things don't change (his future)."

Natalie Cavender, who is 8 years old, is playing the role of Caroline's daughter No. 2, a curious kid whose family owes Mr. Scrooge money. "Something that was hard was that I have never been in a play and all of it is very new, but very exciting," she said.

Hannah Pecoraro is playing the role of Mrs. Fezziwig, who she calls the hostess with the mostest. "She thrives on parties and good barley ale. Her Christmas cheer is contagious and, despite the age gap, she's besotted with her kind-hearted hubby, Mr. Fezziwig," she said.

She said the challenge was the cast who play multiple roles. "The key challenge is bringing your different characters to life with their own distinct personalities and mannerisms. Accents can certainly help with that – another challenge – but movement, make up and costuming help separate those characters," she said.

Larry Grey is playing the role of Mr. Fezziwig, who provides contrast to Scrooge's attitudes toward business ethics, and Jacob Marley. "The challenge for me in playing these two roles is that they are on the surface so opposed to each other," he said.

"Jacob Marley represents death, regret, the eternal price paid for greed and selfishness in life. He is beyond hope yet feels a great desire to help his 'sole friend and mourner' escape his fate," he said. "Fezziwig, on the other hand, is life and joy. He represents the true meaning of Christmas, selflessly giving and concerned with people above profit."

Thomas Kennedy, who is 9 years old, plays the role of Tiny Tim, who he describes as a little shy and weak, partly because he has a disability. "His father, Mr. Cratchit, works as a clerk for Ebenezer Scrooge. The family is very poor, but they love each other very much," he said.



PHOTO BY MARIA CIARROCCHI

Kevin Broderick stars as the Ghost of Christmas Present in LTA's production of "A Christmas Carol."

"I like playing Tiny Tim," he said. "I try to be strong and show that the crutch isn't going to stop him from being a good kid and working hard to have a happy life! It is fun to play a real boy in a large cast with children and adult actors."

The Little Theatre of Alexandria (LTA) is presenting Charles Dickens' classic, "A Christmas Carol," from Dec. 1-16, 2017. Showtimes are Thursdays and Fridays at 8 p.m.; Saturdays and Sundays at 3 p.m. and 6 p.m. Tickets are \$17. The venue is at 600 Wolfe Street, Alexandria, VA 22314. Visit the website at www.thelittletheatre.com.

SUNDAY/DEC. 17

The Mount Vernon Flutes. 2 p.m. at The Athenaeum, 201 Prince St. This small ensemble from the Mount Vernon Concert Band will perform holiday songs in the gallery. Free. Visit www.nvfaa.org or call 703-548-0035.

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.
Celtic Christmas with Iona. 7 p.m. at the George Washington Masonic Memorial 101 Callahan Drive. Sponsored by FocusMusic. \$15/18 at door. Email Herb@FocusMusic.org or call 703-380-3151.

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.

SUNDAY/DEC. 24

Waterskiing Santa. 1 p.m. at the waterfront between King and Oronoco streets. Free. Visit www.waterskiingsanta.com.

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 www.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

SEE CALENDAR, PAGE 18

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OPINION

Honoring Patients' Wishes

BY MALENE DAVIS, MBA, MSN, RN, CHPN
CAPITAL CARING

November is National Hospice and Palliative Care Month, and we encourage Virginians to be more aware of the innovative and compassionate end-of-life care available throughout the Commonwealth.

Capital Caring — a non-profit, community-based, hospice and palliative care organization — was founded in 1977 and is one of the oldest and most experienced non-profit hospices in the United States.

COMMENTARY

Our dedicated staff serve more than 1,400 patients and families every day in the mid-Atlantic region. Our commitment to providing the best medical care for patients with life-limiting illnesses is imperative, and we are fortunate to have skilled medical professionals, caregivers and volunteers in a four-state region.

I would like to emphasize an increasingly-utilized program for honoring patients' wishes that is underway in Virginia. The Virginia POST (Physician Orders for Scope of Treatment) is part of the POLST (Physician Orders for Life-Sustaining Treatment) Paradigm that originated in Oregon in the 1990s to combat the "failure of advance directives." It is an approach to end-of-life planning that emphasizes advance care planning conversations and shared decision-making which culminates in the POST order set — an actionable set of medical orders that, according to the Journal of the American Geriatrics Society, is far better than advance directives in following patient's wishes.

The Virginia POST Collaborative's Executive Committee — consisting of members from hospital systems and other healthcare organizations throughout the Commonwealth — has designated Capital Caring as the organizational home of the program.

We are deeply honored by this responsibility and excited about the opportunities and challenges that lie ahead.

Our greatest challenge is the lack of awareness and funding available for this meaningful program. Since the inception of the Virginia POST Collaborative in 2008, the program has existed only because of the in-kind donation of time and personnel by our member organizations. However, full implementation of this important initiative throughout the Commonwealth requires financial assistance from partners so that we can offer comprehensive education, provide expert training, and achieve national certification for our POST program.

Frankly, Virginia got off to a late start with the POST program and is lagging behind other states nationally and regionally. We have made great progress in the past few years, but this month should be a reminder of its importance and need.

Capital Caring has assumed the major costs of education, training, and building awareness for the Virginia POST program. Matthew G. Kestenbaum, M.D., medical director, Health Information & Training at Capital Caring, and associate medical director of the Virginia POST Collaborative (703-957-1768 or mkestenbaum@capitalcaring.org) is our point person. For more details, one can contact Dr. Kestenbaum or visit our website at www.virginiapost.org.

The estimated annual cost for the POST program is \$200,000. Any contributions are tax-deductible, and will directly impact the most frail and vulnerable citizens of the Commonwealth. We need your support, but we also need your dollars to help grow and to sustain this valuable program. Thank you for your consideration.

Malene Davis, MBA, MSN, RN, CHPN, president and chief executive officer of Capital Caring based in Falls Church and the home of the Virginia POST program, can be reached at MDavis@capitalcaring.org.

POETRY

Life's Blessings

In a chair, in pain,
Waiting for the doctor to see me,
Around the corner comes an old dog.

He comes to my chair and rests by me,
An old soul knowing I need healing.
My fingers gently stroke his head and neck,
Calming the pain and warming my heart.
His eyes meet mine with compassion and love.

A few minutes pass.
Then, realizing his work is done,
He walks down the hall in search of the next needy soul.

Life is full of blessings each day, but
We must be open to receive them.

— LINDA HERBERT

LETTERS

FROM PAGE 9

A Paradox Of Perception

To the Editor:

Dec. 8 marks the 37th anniversary of John Lennon's death. He would have been 77 years old. His life and music touched the lives of a great many people around the world and his sudden loss was deeply felt.

Ironically, this man, who meant so much to so many, was an unwanted child left to grow up in the custody of his aunt Mimi. Yet, Lennon ultimately found love and fulfillment in life. Paradoxically, had his assassin been a physician who aborted John Lennon as a fetus rather than killing him as an adult, he would have been financially compensated for his actions rather than universally condemned. No one would have shed a tear for Lennon's passing ... the sole difference being that the world would have never had the opportunity to know the genius of the man or the beauty of his music. Imagine that.

Mark S. Kelly
Alexandria

Write

The Gazette 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:

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Giving Thanks for the Going



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

Four hours up north with moderate hassle first thing Thanksgiving-Thursdays morning. Dinner and all the fixings with family and friends upon arrival, after a midday break. Conversations and such with young, medium and old (with yours truly being the oldest of our generation) until 1:15 a.m., (a recent time record for many). Up at 7:30 a.m. for breakfast with more casual talk and noshing. Out the door at 9:15-ish heading back for an immediate day-after return trip home scheduled to make an early Friday afternoon chemotherapy infusion. Infusion completed and on the final way home, a stop at the supermarket at 4 p.m. — since we had no Thanksgiving leftovers (turkey sandwiches in particular) to satiate the deprived. Dinner as soon as possible since we were both hungry and tired after our up-and-back. Turkey breast, mashed potatoes and peas for our own leftovers, off-and-on television and napping and then we both called it at 9:15 p.m. or so.

Twelve hours later, we were both awake. What a sleep! What a 24 hours! What a wonderful holiday! I wouldn't characterize it as an ordeal. However, it was a bit of an undertaking given my Friday afternoon commitment; my first-ever, post-holiday, having-to-rush-back-from-out-of-town excursion. Though in previous years, we may have occasionally travelled up and back in the same day, when our route was two-hours to Pennsylvania where the in-laws lived, we are older and presumably wiser now and somewhat less able and inclined to travel with as little margin and rest.

Compounded of course with Kenny-with-cancer being mostly behind the wheel, a permanent designated driver since I don't drink and still see pretty well at night. Still, I'm hardly the driver I used to be and the affect of the holiday festivities on my fellow drivers is always cause for concern.

But all's well that ends well, except for the piles of Thanksgiving day-afters left where we last saw them, miles away. Nevertheless, we are happy to have made the effort, despite the less-than-ideal timing. As difficult as this kind of schedule was/had to be, I can't let, as much as possible anyway, my cancer stuff: infusions, 24-hour urine collection, pre-chemotherapy lab work, quarterly scans and yearly MRIs and quarterly appointments with my oncologist impact my semi-normal life. In fact, my oncologist has been a major proponent of my "quality of life," an advisory he has regularly encouraged.

I've always felt, from the beginning of my diagnosis/prognosis, that I was not going to live my life any differently than I had previous to 2/27/09. As challenging as that proved to be on many occasions, my goal has been to try and integrate my life around my chemotherapy — and vice versa, and to not let too many chips fall along the wayside. Moreover, my philosophy has been not to bucket a list either, but rather to simply live my usual and customary life and not be affected by my "13-month to two-year prognosis." If I was doing bucket list-type things, things that I would ordinarily not be doing, I felt that would be reinforcing a negative: that I was going to die prematurely, rather than encouraging a positive: that I am going to live.

For me, maintaining the status quo and continuing to do the little things that characterize who I am and what I value seemed more appropriate and more Kenny-like. Not sharing Thanksgiving dinner with relatives with whom I've shared a table going on nearly 40 years wouldn't have helped at all. Not now, or ever.

Finding balance — and sanity in the midst of a battle royal — vs a "terminal" diagnosis, stage IV, non-small cell lung cancer, is all it's cracked up to be. A little fun, make that a lot of fun, never hurt anyone, especially those of us fighting for our lives.

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

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ENTERTAINMENT

'Tangled'

FROM PAGE 14

husband trying to get rid of the world's worst in-law. "I also play a hungry caroler trying to trade carols for food and a take-charge Christmas dad," he said. "My favorite character is the grumpy husband. Rosemarie is a great scene partner. She plays my wife and smacks me around."

Jocelyn Brinlee gets to play several different characters. They include: Linda (a concerned caroler) in "Visions of Sugarplums (and Other Things Fattening);" Sarah (a disgruntled bargain hunter) in "Store Wars" (her favorite); the month of May in "The Twelve Months of Christmas;" Marcia (a cynical Christmas decorator) in "Oh, Christmas Tree! Oh, Christmas Tree!"; Mom in "The Recitation;" Mary (noisy shoe gal) in "Mistletoe Macho;" and Judy (charade enthusiast) in "Birthday Party."

She said the most challenging part of preparing for the show was overcoming a fear of singing in front of people during "The Twelve Months of Christmas."

She added, "I hope the audience will have as much fun watching the show as the cast has had rehearsing for it. This show is a great way to kick off the holiday season for those are who looking for an entertaining way to get into the Christmas spirit."

Christian Alzona is playing the roles of the Clerk, Matt, Shopper, and October. "I like them all; it's all about how to enjoy your characters to me," he said.

He added, "I hope the audience, amidst the fun and laughter, can bring with them that Christmas is more than the circus that happens with presents, get-togethers, shopping, etc. That on top of recognizing the reason for the season (Jesus), it is a time for caring and loving one another in many ways we can 'give.'"

The Port City Playhouse is presenting "Tangled in the Tinsel" for three days only: Dec. 1 and 2 at 8 p.m.; and Dec. 3 at 3 p.m. Performances are at Sleepy Hollow United Methodist Church, 3435 Sleepy Hollow Road, Falls Church. Tickets can be found at www.portcityplayhouse.org or at the door prior to the performance.

CALENDAR

FROM PAGE 16

www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/parktates 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/.

SATURDAY/FEB. 3

Watercolor Workshop: Paint a Winter Scene. 9:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m. at Green Spring Gardens, 4603 Green Spring Road. Learn to paint a winter landscape in watercolor with the help of artist Erik Hottenstein, who demonstrates techniques for translating photographs into winter scenes and provides guidance for your individual piece. \$90. Visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/parktates or call 703-642-5173.

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Opportunity is knocking!

Spacious three level home on gorgeous level grounds in the heart of Mount Vernon's finest neighborhoods. Home

has huge potential and many positive features including: beautifully stained hardwoods, fireplace, finished lower level with walk out, covered parking, and large level lot.



Completely Updated in MVOP with water access!

Better than new! Stunning updated home in area's premier waterfront community! Fabulous home has been renovated from top to bottom. Features include: 3 finished levels, 6 Bedrooms, 3.5 Baths, designer kitchen, hardwood floors, new HVAC, new windows, doors, and 2 car garage. Spacious screened in porch overlooks expansive rear yard. Unparalleled community amenities include marina, tennis, and waterfront park. Amazing Value!



3705 Riverwood Ct.
\$889,500
Classic Colonial!

4708 Ferry Landing Rd.
\$475,000
Great Value!



8721 Plymouth Road
\$1,467,998
Brand New Home!



4102 Sulgrave Dr.
\$519,500
Just Listed!



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www.chrisandpeggywhite.com

chris.white@longandfoster.com

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

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