

Simply Frigid

Burst pipes close city and school facilities.

A sudden rush of cold weather wreaked havoc on pipes in Alexandria. On Sunday, Jan. 7, a sprinkler pipe burst at the Gadsby's Tavern Museum, causing flooding from the second floor to the basement of the historic 18th century building. Damage to the historical structure is currently under review, but impact on the museum collection was minimal. The museum will be closed through at least Jan. 24, though dance nights and other planned events on the restaurant side will proceed as scheduled.

SEE BURST PIPES, PAGE 4

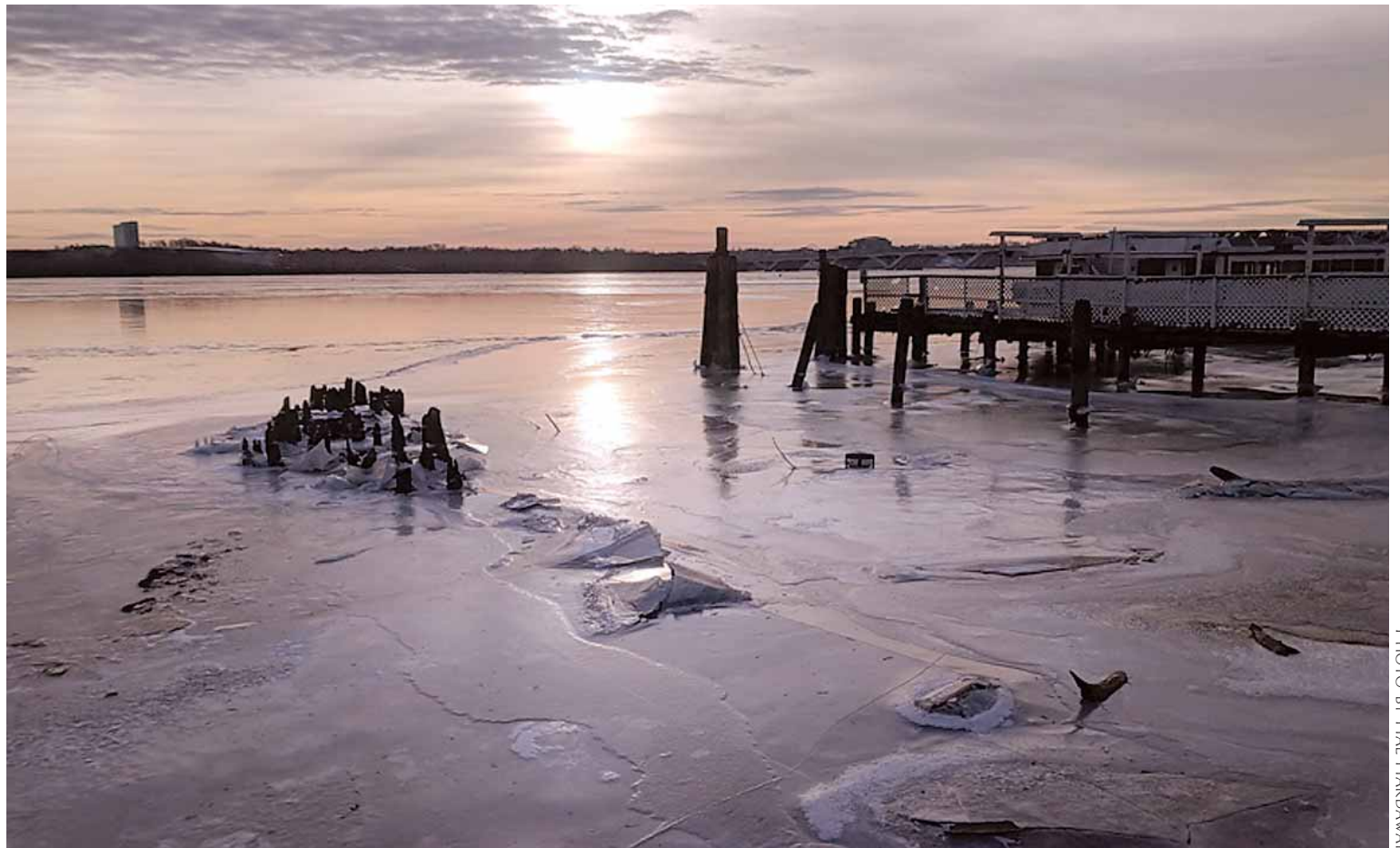


PHOTO BY HAL HARDWAY

A view of the Potomac River on Monday morning, Jan. 8. From Dec. 25 through Jan. 9, daily low temperatures were below freezing. Sunday, Jan. 7's low was 8 degrees, according to AccuWeather.

Drug Take-back Nets 140 Pounds

Old medicines are a danger — to the owners and other members of the household. But they can also be a hassle to get rid of. At the drug take-back

event on Saturday, Jan. 6, law enforcement collected 140 pounds of unwanted medication. Deputies from the Alexandria Sheriff's Department and the Alexandria Police Department, in cooperation

with the Substance Abuse Prevention Coalition of Alexandria, collected anonymously dropped off unwanted and expired medication at sites across Alexandria.

"These events are important for a number of reasons," said Crystal Nosal, public information officer for the Alexandria Police Department. "When the country is dealing with an opioid crisis, disposal of unneeded medication is important so the medications don't pose temptation for theft or misuse." Beyond the threat the danger posed to humans, Nosal also noted that improperly disposed medications flushed down the sink or toilet also has harmful environmental effects.

In addition to drug take-back events, there is now a permanent drop off box inside The Neighborhood Pharmacy in Del Ray.

— VERNON MILES



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

Drugs recovered at the drug take-back event.

One Step Closer

Planning Commission approves church's affordable housing project.

BY DAN BRENDEN
GAZETTE PACKET

The Planning Commission unanimously approved at its Jan. 4 meeting an all-affordable housing development on the Episcopal Church of the Resurrection's West End property.

"We observe that many of our neighbors [in the Beauregard corridor] struggle to afford housing. ... So we decided to practice what we preach," the Rev. Jo Belser, Resurrection's pastor, told commis-

SEE COMMISSION, PAGE 4



Betsy Faga, a parishioner at the Episcopal Church of the Resurrection, gives public testimony to the Planning Commission in favor of the church's proposed all-affordable West End housing development.

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In 2017, Shelter Cared for 2,145 Animals

Euthanasia rate below state average.

BY VERNON MILES
GAZETTE PACKET

In an update to City Council at its Jan. 9 meeting, Animal Shelter Director Megan Webb offered a snapshot of the shelter in 2017.

The Animal Welfare League of Alexandria cared for 2,145 animals in 2017, the majority were cats at 822. Unlike other shelters, which mostly pick up stray, Webb says the majority of their animals come in as surrenders. These are pets whose owners are no longer able to care for the animal.

"This is unusual for a shelter," Webb said, "and our high cat numbers come from that."

The shelter and animal services in Alexandria operated on a \$2.8 million budget in 2017. The majority of the funding, \$1.5 million, comes from fundraising while \$1 million is from a city contract. Over \$200,000 was raised in in-kind support.

One of the main goals of the shelter has been reducing its euthanasia rate. Across all of the shelters in Virginia, the euthanasia rate at shelters is 25 percent. At Alexandria, the euthanasia rate is 8 percent, which includes animals that have to be put down on intake. Webb says the animals put down



Shelby was left after the owner became so ill he had trouble caring for himself. Shelby was severely matted and bug infested, but foster parents came forward and helped the dog recover.

PHOTO BY VERNON MILES /
GAZETTE PACKET

by the shelter are ones with medical issues too costly or dangerous to fix that are causing the animal pain or distress.

These euthanasias are a last resort for the Animal Welfare League. Webb pointed to a case this past year where Arielle, a dog with dens aplasia, a condition that causes severe spinal instability and damage. It was looking increasingly likely, despite extensive care from the shelter, that Arielle would face euthanasia. But a last minute donation paid for the expensive surgery the dog needed and it was able to make an ongoing recovery with a new adopted family.

Webb said there are also changing phi-

losophies on animal care that are changing operations at the Animal Welfare League.

"Some of the thoughts of what was appropriate in 2009, has changed," said Webb. "Many of the cats we get show aggression in the cage, and many times assumed those cats were aggressive. But now realized most of the cats will calm down and become very friendly cats later. Making assumptions based on the way a cat or dog behaves in a kennel or shelter setting means making decisions that may not be based on what animal is like outside of the shelter."

Animals Cared for in 2017 (up to 12/7/17)

Dog	765
Cat	822
Bird	69
Other	222
Wildlife	267
TOTAL	2145

Out of Crisis New mental health initiative in Commonwealth Attorney's Office.

BY VERNON MILES
GAZETTE PACKET

In a criminal case involving mental illness, a conviction isn't always the same as justice.

A new initiative in Alexandria's Commonwealth Attorney Office aims to address mental illness issues connected with criminal cases.

"Any case that comes under our office which one of the prosecutors thinks involves severe mental illness as the primary cause for the offense will let [Chief Deputy Attorney] Molly Sullivan know to let her investigate and determine if it fits into the initiative," said Commonwealth Attorney Bryan Porter. "Then Sullivan will adopt the case and steward it through the system as the case moves forward. The idea is to get to the root cause of criminal offenses. If that's mental illness, then we need to take that into account and put resources into the issue to get the offender the necessary treatment and eliminate the core problem to stop recidivism for people who are mentally ill."

A set of criteria has been established to determine whether a case is eligible for the Mental Health Initiative (MHI). The adult charged by the court must suffer from a severe mental illness and that illness must have substantially contributed to the

charged crime. In determining which cases to accept, eligibility for MHI could also vary depending on whether it was a violent crime. The accused's willingness to participate and the thoughts of the victim of the crime are both taken into consideration. The program also looks into the records for the accused, for past mental health treatment and past criminal records.

Those who participate in the MHI would be eligible for a range of dispositions. In some cases, issues that might have become a criminal justice issue are dropped, particularly for minor, non-violent offenses. In other cases, sentencing could be suspended with probation including compliance with mental health treatment. Some charges could be reduced to a lesser offense to limit the severity of the sentencing, or an agreed "not guilty by reason of insanity" plea.

Porter says law enforcement often becomes a last resort mental health treatment. Problems can escalate out of the limelight

and away from mental health services until they boil over into legal trouble.

"In a lot of ways, unfortunately, we get left holding the bag," said Porter. "There are people who are mentally ill and not a danger to themselves or others, but if they don't

seek out treatment we can't force them to. It's not until they commit an offense and police get involved ... [that we] become the last resort provider of mental health treatment. We're the ones stuck trying to figure out a way to get treatment to the offenders. It

might seem counterintuitive, but my job is to get a just result, not a conviction. We have a duty to all citizens, including people who offend."

Porter said the program won't require any additional funding from the city at the start. The pool of candidates for the MHI is limited to six at the start as a pilot program, but Porter also said that's about as many cases as he could additionally assign to one of his lead prosecutors without additional

"It might seem counterintuitive, but my job is to get a just result, not a conviction. We have a duty to all citizens, including people who offend."

— Commonwealth Attorney Bryan Porter

funding for staff from the city.

"Right now, the idea is to get these programs off the ground, see how they do," said Porter. "If they are a success in a year or two and had an impact, then maybe [we will be] in a position during a budget process [to expand]. Without additional resources, I don't know how much bigger I could make it. It's a pilot, so the idea is to get it up there and get it running."

Part of the program involves partnerships with other local organizations, from the local mental health community to other branches of law enforcement.

Staff from the Department of Community and Human Services began working closely with the Commonwealth Attorney's Office over a decade ago, "when we came together to begin discussions about bridging the gap between the behavioral health system and the criminal justice system," said Liz Wixson, director of Clinical and Emergency Services. "We recognized years ago that many persons with mental health and substance use disorders were falling through the cracks in our systems because, despite our best intentions, we simply weren't designed to stop this from happening."

Wixson said MHI is a continuation of work started with the Criminal Justice/Behavioral

SEE OUT OF CRISIS, PAGE 17

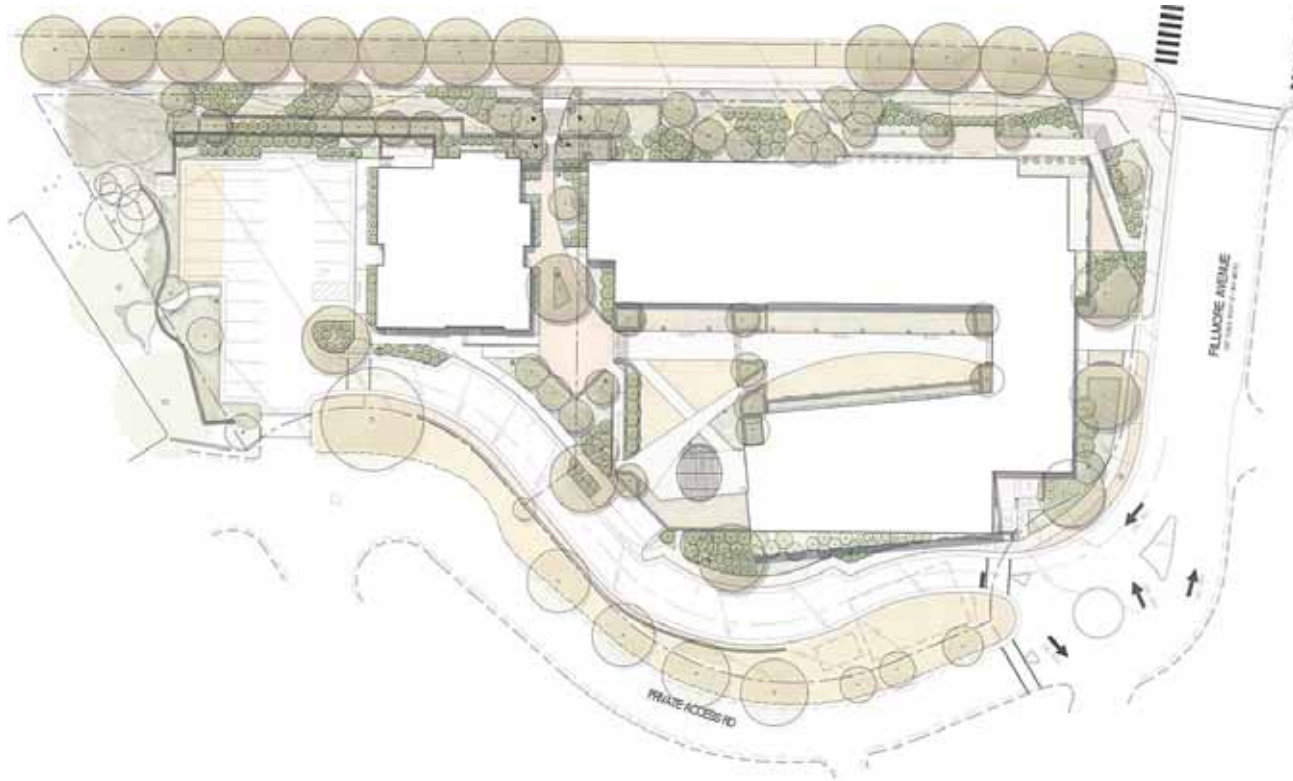
Commission Approves Church's Affordable Housing Project

FROM PAGE 1

sioners Thursday. The church plans to lease a large portion of its land to AHC, a non-profit developer, to build 113 apartments with rents for low-income families. Specifically, the units would be priced for 40-60 percent of the area median income (AMI), dipping into a particularly underserved economic stratum — only 2 percent of Alexandria's committed affordable housing stock serves households making 30-50 percent of AMI, according to the city's web site. The deal would cap rents at their designated levels of affordability for 65 years. The proceeds would also build a new, smaller church facility with lower overhead costs, helping to stabilize the congregation's finances.

The project narrowly survived the winnowing of the city's FY18 budget process. With Planning Commission's thumbs up, City Council will now consider the project for final approval at its Jan. 20 public hearing. With council's approval, Resurrection would apply for federal tax credits, a form of subsidy, in March. A city loan of up to \$9 million could leverage five times as much financing from other sources, including an estimated \$24 million in hoped-for tax credit equity. This leveraging makes Resurrection "a very significant project" for the city, Helen McIlvaine, Alexandria's housing director, told council at Tuesday's legislative meeting. Tax credits, which are competitive to obtain from the state agency that allocates them, would constitute over half of the necessary financing patchwork. To be competitive, the church needs a city-approved plan that keeps costs down.

"If it doesn't get the credits then the project's not going to happen," said Eric



The proposed site plan for an all-affordable housing development on the Episcopal Church of the Resurrection's West End property. City Council will consider the project for final approval on Jan. 20.

Keeler of the city's housing office. "Any additional cost that keeps being layered onto the project has a major detrimental impact."

Planning and Zoning's Sara Brandt-Vorel outlined for commissioners various "community benefits" that the project would provide: "almost 15 percent of the [800] affordable units identified [as an objective] in the Beauregard Small Area Plan; an enhanced streetscape along N. Beauregard [Street], with enlarged sidewalks, additional open space and a landscaped hillside with terraces ...; 45 percent open space across the site; the [at least partial] undergrounding of utilities along N. Beauregard Street ...; and a contribution to the Beauregard Implementation Fund for the development of public benefits identified in the Small Area Plan, such as the West End transitway," a planned bus service.

The project has also met opposition. Resi-

dents from Goodwin House, an Episcopal-affiliated retirement community adjacent to Resurrection, turned out to express their concerns. Several said they support the church's affordable housing mission in principle; they even think the retirees could benefit from proximity to the younger families who would largely occupy the new apartments. But they worry that the increased density of buildings and people in the current proposal will cause untenable and even unsafe traffic and parking congestion. They also worry that a rezoning of the church's property might open the door for future uses with undesirable outcomes.

"The need for organizations in Alexandria like Goodwin House ... is growing just as fast as the need for affordable housing," said Lindsay Hutter, chief strategy and marketing officer for Goodwin Housing, Inc. She cited the large number of retiring baby

boomers. "We are concerned that a decision could be made with regard to this proposed development that could provide relief to some of today's need for affordable housing at the expense of Goodwin House Alexandria's needs. That outcome would injure our future ability to provide senior housing."

A particular point of contention has been vehicular access. The current site plan includes separate, parallel driveways for the church and Goodwin House. Mary Lyman, chair of the Planning Commission, called this situation "ridiculous." Several commissioners encouraged the parties find a one-driveway compromise in time for final project approval. Commissioner Nathan Macek said: "We really do put the onus on neighbors to work with each other. And in this case, you're both of the same

faith tradition ... So these two groups, of all people, ought to be able to find a way to work together." Though some on the Planning Commission empathized with certain opposition concerns, they mostly dismissed worries about traffic safety and parking. They decided that the addition of affordable housing outweighs the downside risks. And time may prove certain concerns to have been overstated, some said.

Commissioner David Brown said in his closing remarks: "I feel like, in a way, in approving this project we are helping someone that's been on a long marathon get across the finish line. ... If this project had come along as a for-profit, multi-family unit building and tried to cram this much use onto this small site, I just can't imagine I would go along with it. But to me the fact that it's affordable housing takes it over the finish line."

Burst Pipes Close City and School Facilities

FROM PAGE 1

Two days later, on Jan 9, a water pipe burst at George Washington Middle School, closing the building for two days. A school press release said the school's aging infrastructure meant the building was particularly hard hit by the sudden freezing temperatures.

That same day, the city faced two water main breaks in the Chinquapin neighborhood, one at Janneys Lane & N. Quaker Lane, and another at Trinity

Drive. Nearly 200 residents and 29 local fire hydrants will be without service.

At the Jan. 9 City Council meeting, City Manager Mark Jinks warned that more breaks are likely on their way with rapid temperature fluctuation.

"That these are the only water pipe breaks is amazing given age of city pipes," said Jinks, knocking on the wooden dais as he spoke. "It's a sign of city repair work working well."

— VERNON MILES



Map of major water main breaks.

PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

NEWS

Police Investigate Home Invasion

The Alexandria Police Department is investigating a robbery that occurred inside residence in the 3800 block of Executive Avenue on Monday, Jan. 8, at approximately 12:51 a.m. Three men forced their way into an apartment and brandished several knives and a firearm. The suspects demanded money and the residents provided valuables.

While inside the apartment, one suspect unintentionally shot himself in the lower body. The three suspects then fled. The victims were not injured.

Police ask that anyone with information about this incident call Detective Matt Kramarik at 703-746-6650.

BULLETIN BOARD

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

WINTER SHELTER OPEN

The Alexandria Winter Shelter, located at 930 N. Henry St., is available for anyone experiencing homelessness or needing a warm, safe place to go. The shelter is open daily with regular hours from 7 p.m. to 7:30 a.m., through March 31. For more information about the Winter Shelter, call 703-548-7500. To learn more about the City's housing assistance and homeless services, and to download a list of community resources for the homeless and other persons in need, visit the City's Homeless

The following incidents were also reported by the Alexandria Police Department.

JAN. 8

The Alexandria Police Department is investigating a robbery in the 3800 block of Russell Road. Several suspects stole items from a teen. There were no injuries. ,

The Alexandria Police Department is investigating a robbery in the 3500 block of Mount Vernon Avenue. A male suspect brandished a firearm and stole items from another man. There were no injuries.

JAN. 7

The Alexandria Police Department is investigating a "shots fired" call in the 5300 block of Essex Court. There are no injuries.

JAN. 6

The Alexandria Police Department is investigating a commercial robbery in the 600 block of S Patrick Street. Several suspects damaged a small building with a vehicle then stole cash register before fleeing. There were no injuries.

Services page at www.alexandriava.gov/dchs.

MONDAY/JAN.15

City Offices Closed for Martin Luther King, Jr Day.

Community Program. 7:30 p.m., at Shiloh Baptist Church, 1401 Duke St. The City of Alexandria will honor the life and legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. in a community program, *Dr. King: His Voice, His Teachings, His Love for Humanity*, presented by the Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial Planning Committee, and will include welcome remarks by Mayor Allison Silberberg, a keynote address by veteran news anchor Maureen Bunyan, and music by the Commonwealth Baptist Church Choir.

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PEOPLE

Benner Reaches for Body-Mind Connection

Helping people deal with life's challenges.

BY SHIRLEY RUHE
THE CONNECTION

Mara Benner turns on the radio to calming background music and invites the client to lie down on the massage table in her Four Directions Wellness office on Mt. Vernon Avenue. She is beginning a one-hour Reiki session. Benner explains Reiki is one of the ancient healing techniques that she offers. "It is the process of being able to work with healing energy." Her brochure explains, "Reiki is an ancient Japanese healing modality that promotes homeostasis or the balancing of our innate healing energies with our bodies."

PEOPLE
AT WORK

Benner places a purple, lightly weighted blindfold over the client's eyes to block out the light so that he can enjoy deep relaxation. She places a warm blanket over the client. Benner's voice is soothing as she says, "Take a deep breath. Breathe out very slowly. Again." She explains, "I go to the feet first," as she places her hands gently on the client's feet. She brings the tension down to the feet by rubbing her hands from the knees down the patient's legs.

Benner says these techniques link body, mind, spirit and emotions to help you listen to your inner voice. She says, "We tend to dissociate these from each other." In order to provide this integrative approach, her own training has been extensive including

two years of seminary for the spiritual and study in China for Qigong. Benner explains before we had doctors, all cultures had an approach to healing. "They all get to the same place. It's about how to calm your mind. I am fascinated by the different techniques."

In addition to Reiki, Benner uses a variety of different techniques including meditation, reflexology, Yogic Chakra healing and coaching health life or spiritual. She says that most people are stuck in that "fight or flight" stage where the body tenses, "you know waiting for the next lion." The next phase is the 'rest and digest.' "What ancient modalities do is get the person to recognize when they are in this phase."

She says that in the D.C. area, "We are always go-go-go and our minds are always running. We are particularly stressed from the workplace." In addition, there is an increasingly massive amount of information for a person to absorb. Between 1950-70 information doubled. "Now it is every two years. The implication is that various jobs could become obsolete overnight. That is stressful."

Benner says most people come to her for coaching. Transitions in relationships, career, a specific health issue or loss of a loved one can be challenging. She uses the tech-



Mara Benner, president and founder of Four Directions Wellness on Mount Vernon Avenue, explains that she offers services to connect body, mind, spirit and emotions by addressing the whole person.



Mara Benner sits cross-legged in her office as she begins a meditation session by placing hands on a client's feet. This is one of many techniques to make people more mindful of the body-mind connection.

PHOTOS BY SHIRLEY RUHE/GAZETTE PACKET

nique that is best for that day. "It might be an hour of Reiki or meditation or they might want Chakra healing. Chakra identifies blockages of the energetic centers (or chakras) tied to specific organs and key parts of the body. Some people take only a couple of sessions and others take longer. "It depends on how well they are already in tune with themselves."

Benner moves to the client's shoulders, again placing her hands gently. She says a lot of people hold tension in their shoulders. "What do you feel?" The client feels a deep sense of relaxation and some tingling. Benner says some people are so relaxed they fall asleep.

Benner is affiliated with GW Center for Integrative Medicine where she trains medi-

cal students.

She says the hospital trend is to provide complementary and alternative medicine (CAM) such as acupuncture, Reiki, homeopathy, and energy healing therapies to treat the whole person. She added over 800 hospitals nationwide use Reiki, and patients report sleeping better as well as less pain in the short term.

Four Directions Wellness also offers Wellness 2018 Winter Classes and a complimentary meditation on the second and fourth Monday of the month. Benner was named Best in Business Rising Star by the Alexandria Chamber of Commerce in October.

People at Work is a weekly column featuring people in the community doing their jobs. Suggestions can be sent to Slrbc@aol.com.

Local Landmarks Inspire Author's First Novel

Legal thriller meets murder mystery.

BY LOGAN BOTTS
GAZETTE PACKET

Driving along George Washington Parkway, the same way many Northern Virginia commuters start their day, is how Mount Vernon resident John Wasowicz, found the inspiration for his first novel, "Daingerfield Island." "Daingerfield Island," a legal thriller meets murder mystery, is a story based on and inspired by local attractions and landmarks. Though many people might drive past and find Daingerfield Island an idyllic marina, Wasowicz mused about a darker reality and set the stage for his murderous novel.

In addition to his local surroundings, Wasowicz was inspired by his career when writing his novel. A graduate of Catholic University Law School, Wasowicz has been practicing law in Northern Virginia for over 30 years. Following a stint as a prosecutor in Arlington County, Wasowicz spent 15 years working for private practices or as a



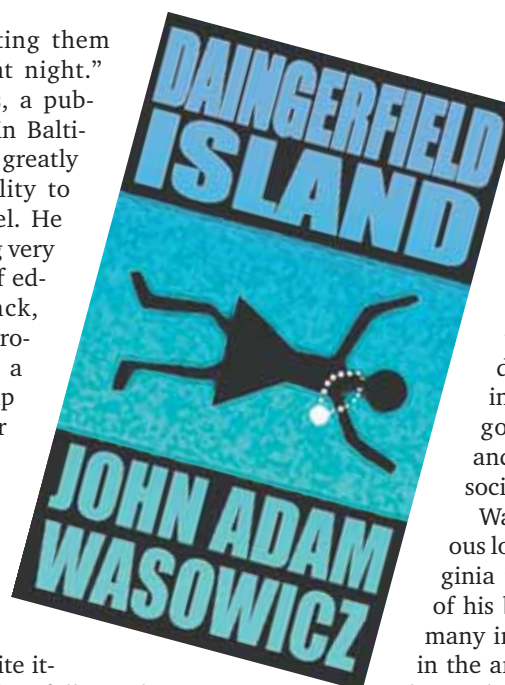
Wasowicz

solo practitioner in law offices in Arlington, Fairfax, and the City of Alexandria. Wasowicz has since returned to the public sector where he has been for the past 12 years. Inspiration for the book began when Wasowicz was a prosecutor. Ideas for fictional characters emerged from his time in the courtroom and examining numerous cases. Many of the characters are a fictitious blend of the figures Wasowicz encountered over his legal career. The behaviors of many attorneys he has encountered and the observations he has made had a major impact on the characterization of some of the key figures in "Daingerfield Island." Having the experience of standing before judges and juries contributed to the detail Wasowicz was able to infuse into his writing.

As for the writing itself, Wasowicz notes that when writing a book "you spend a lot of time by yourself taking the ideas that have been percolating in your head during

the day and putting them down on paper at night." Brickhouse Books, a publishing company in Baltimore contributed greatly to Wasowicz' ability to complete his novel. He cites them as being very helpful in terms of editing and feedback, claiming that the process of writing a book is truly a group effort. For Wasowicz, the process of writing a book was exciting. He said that the best part of writing is when "the story begins to write itself," and the author follows the path the story begins to make for itself.

Wasowicz wanted to incorporate a moral into his story by making it a reflection of life's constant balance between good and evil. His book is an acknowledgement of the



fact that the force of evil sometimes nears the strength of the good. Throughout his career Wasowicz has observed that hubris and arrogance are the root cause of most crime. He wanted to ensure that his story demonstrated the seemingly constant efforts of good forces to unmask and expose the evil in our society.

Wasowicz has visited various locations throughout Virginia to sign and sell copies of his book which are sold at many independent bookstores in the area. He is scheduled to be at The Old Town Shop in Alexandria on March 22. Wasowicz aspires to continue his journey as an author and his next book, which will feature characters from "Daingerfield Island," is set to be published later this year.

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It's going to hurt right here in Northern Virginia.

As this administration continues its persecution against immigrants, it will move to end protected status for more than 200,000 Salvadorans, tens of thousands of whom live among us as neighbors, coworkers, friends, business owners, homeowners.

These neighbors, Salvadorans who came here in the wake of terrible natural disaster and political unrest, have been living and working here legally since 2001 at least. Temporary Protected Status was given to approximately 217,000 Salvadoran immigrants living in the United States at the time of the disasters.

Their families have added almost as many U.S.-born children. They are intertwined with naturalized citizens and other legal residents from their country, with the withdrawal of protected status affecting a community far larger than the TPS recipients. These communities are concentrated, intensifying the overall impact, and more live here in the D.C. suburbs than anywhere else.

EDITORIAL

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

No Parking Problem, Really?

To the Editor:

Here are some common myths: George Washington had wooden teeth — and Alexandria doesn't have a parking problem.

On Jan. 20 the City Council will take up a proposal to reduce the requirement for city businesses to provide parking. It's just the latest in a series of misguided steps the city has taken to make it harder for residents and guests to find parking. The city's bases its proposal on two facts that are just as correct as the belief that George Washington had wooden teeth: that more people are relying on public transportation and that parking is underutilized in Alexandria.

According to a December 2017 Washington Post report, Metro reports ridership is not up, but down to 615,000 average weekday trips — about 135,000 fewer than 2009 peaks. Weekday bus ridership is similarly down 8 percent year-over-year, according to the latest statistics. So, despite our earnest desire for it to be otherwise, less people are using public transportation in our area than they did in 2009.

The other point the city uses to support the proposal to reduce parking are surveys they have done which point to underutilized parking garages and spaces in Alexandria. But, when you actually look at the survey you discover that most of the surveys looked at paid lots and spaces. So, the city discovered that garages that often charge over \$16 per day were underutilized. Shockingly it seems, people actually prefer not to pay for parking. So, instead of using paid spaces, guests to Old Town and other high use areas seek spaces in no-cost residential areas, not surveyed. Why

On average, Salvadoran TPS recipients have been in the U.S. for 21 years; one-third have mortgages. These are people who have had legal work permits, who suddenly will not be able to work legally here. Their mortgages, and the mortgages of people who depend on them, will be at risk. Removing the ability of recipients to work legally will increase the risk of foreclosure, with negative economic impact across communities.

Salvadorans with protected status pay sales and property taxes. The communities they live in will be damaged. Their children will be more at risk. Our economy will be damaged.

THE SALVADORAN IMMIGRANT population is most concentrated in the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area, where 165,000 El Salvador-born residents make up 2.9 percent of the population.

Salvadorans in the United States sent \$3.6 billion home to El Salvador in 2012, 16.5 percent of that country's GDP.

Virginia has nearly 45,000 El Salvadoran TPS residents, almost all in Northern Virginia, and

weren't the residential areas surveyed? Because we already know that answer — parking in Old Town is a nightmare.

Further the proposal doesn't take into account previously approved city decisions which will greatly affect parking in Old Town including closing the usually full lot across from Chadwick's at 201 The Strand to make way for the waterfront development, adding dozens of new townhomes and businesses in the area with city-approved parking reductions, and moving pay parking further and further into residential areas.

For the record, George Washington's dentures were made from human, and probably cow and horse teeth, ivory (possibly elephant), lead-tin alloy, copper alloy (possibly brass), and silver alloy. Let's be similarly accurate about Alexandria's true parking situation.

Thomas Spoehr
Alexandria

Council Vote Will Reveal Its Priorities

To the Editor:

Much has been written already in this paper and in other forums about the proposed development of four large houses on the property on Seminary Road known as the Karig Forest. We will try not to add unnecessarily to what has already been said by concerned neighbors, public-spirited fellow citizens of Alexandria and subject matter experts who have examined the question. However, we do want to add our voices to urge the City Council to remand this matter back to the Planning and Zoning Commission so that the important environmental consequences of the Karig For-

concentrated in particular neighborhoods. Arlington has identified just four census tracts with more than 1,000 Salvadoran residents each (two with more than 1,400). In 2015, the most common birthplace for the foreign-born residents of Virginia was El Salvador, accounting for 96,515 Virginia residents. Fairfax County in 2010 was home to 43,566 Salvadorans.

Analysis shows that when Salvadoran, Honduran, and Haitian workers with TPS are removed from the labor force, the United States will lose \$45.2 billion in gross domestic product (GDP) over the next decade, according to Immigrant Legal Resource Center. When TPS holders lose their work authorization, it will result in a \$6.9 billion reduction to Social Security and Medicare contributions over a decade, as calculated by the ILRC.

All of that shows why this will damage communities and the economy. It says nothing about the harm to families. But the harm is great.

— MARY KIMM

MKIMM@CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM

Sources: American Progress, Pew Hispanic, Center for Immigration Studies, U.S. Census, Immigrant Legal Resource Center, local government demographic data.

est development can be adequately considered and, hopefully, a proper plan to mitigate those consequences can be adopted.

We live in one of the homes immediately downstream of the steep slope on which the developer proposes to build one of the four homes (and potentially the largest of the four). We were present for the original Planning Commission hearing where the current plan was approved. We waited more than five hours for the opportunity to speak on this subject (which occurred sometime after midnight). Virtually all parties present that night (including all but one of the neighboring property owners as well as the developer) agreed that there was a better, more appropriate plan for siting the houses that would result in reduced environmental impact, less tree loss, and avoidance of undue construction on the potentially unstable slope at the south end of the property.

Nonetheless, because the developer was insisting on a decision that night, the Planning Commission brushed aside the legitimate concerns of downstream property owners (as well as the neighboring congregation of Temple Beth-El) and insisted on pushing through a less desirable plan to avoid any delay in getting the project built. Infuriatingly, when it became apparent that the developer's application was incomplete, the Planning Commission bent over backwards to approve the project while allowing the developer to supplement the record afterwards. The commission showed no such consideration for the citizens who were simply requesting that a more environmentally accommodating plan be approved instead, even if that might entail a short delay in processing the application.

We are among multiple neighboring property owners who have appealed the decision

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LETTERS

FROM PAGE 8

of the Planning Commission to the City Council. We urge the council to take a closer look at this project and, in particular, consider which is more important — woodenly applying bureaucratic rules to reach a result that did not have to happen — as the Planning Commission did — or taking affirmative actions to protect a uniquely valuable environmental resource while still meeting the long-run needs of the developer and the property owner. It seems to us the council faces an acid test of where its priorities truly lie.

Steve and Anne Reed
Alexandria

Enforce Parking For Handicapped

To the Editor:

In the past month twice I have had someone illegally park in the access aisle next to the handicap parking spot I was legally parked in. For the many, many citizens like myself in need of these spots due to a disability, some obvious, some invisible, this causes a lot of problems. For those who do not know where I'm referring to it's the striped area next to handicap parking spots.

Right now it's very cold outside, consider returning to your car to find you can't get in it due to the rudeness of someone who is illegally parked. It's illegal even if you have handicap tags to park there.

Add to that calling the police not once but four times before a parking officer responds, almost two hours later only to have the offender return at the same moment and be told by the parking officer "there's nothing that can be done." There are things that can be done.

In doing a search online, sadly the only thing Alexandria is known for as to handicap parking awareness is the controversy a while back about people with handicap tags paying to park.

Many other cities across the country have taken positive steps to address this very real problem. I'm wondering why Alexandria has not? The bottom line to me is the question: Is the City of Alexandria willing to do something to address this problem and if so what and when? If not, why not? Are the disabled citizens not an important part of the city?

Toni Popkin
Alexandria

More Than About Slavery

To the Editor:

This is in response to the letter

WWW.CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM

to the editor, dated Jan. 4, from Maryel Barry about the despair of seeing the wreath that was placed on the Appomattox Statue of the Confederate Soldier on Prince and South Washington Street during the holidays. Ms. Barry states: "This uniform honors slavery." Does she know the history of this statue? Does she know why the statue was erected? Perhaps she should talk with her daughter about the suffering all residents of Alexandria went through during the War of the States, including

not only the men, but also the wives and their children. Apparently many do not understand that this war was not only about slavery.

What better person to know than my grandmother who was born in Alexandria, and still living at age 103. She was a resident of Alexandria for 97 years, and is a retired member of the Alexandria Fire Department. She is quick to tell you including the mayor that her grandfather was a Confederate soldier who fought for his

state, not for slavery. He was one of many men who met at this exact location of Appomattox as they marched out of their beloved city. Because he chose to fight for his beloved state, he fought against brothers, one brother who never spoke to him again.

So many folks seem to forget that there were men who chose to fight alongside General Lee to protect their state values and principles. I would remind so many that these men suffered too. I would challenge all of you who are

bothered by Appomattox to find out the reasons behind the statue. You would get a much needed history lesson.

Therese DeSanto

Former resident of Alexandria

Challenging Times Ahead

To the Editor:

The ominous shadow the new Federal tax law looms over all of
SEE LETTERS, PAGE 11



CAREGIVER SUPPORT WORKSHOP: CONFESSIONS OF AN IMPERFECT CAREGIVER

Senior Services of Alexandria and AARP Virginia present the 2018 Speaker Series

Please join us on January 20 as Bobbi Carducci, the author of *Confessions of an Imperfect Caregiver*, talks about her journey as a caregiver. Her story is one of honesty that will resonate with caregivers.

There will be representatives from Insight Memory Care and Legacy Navigator talking about programs and resources for those serving as caregivers. Participants will be able to ask questions and get information on resources in the Alexandria and Northern Virginia areas.

Saturday, January 20, 2017 | 10 a.m. – noon

Registration opens at 9:30 a.m.

Immanuel Church on the Hill | 3606 Seminary Road | Alexandria, VA

Please RSVP online at seniorservicesalex.org or by calling

703-836 4414, ext. 110.

This workshop is free and open to the public with light refreshments.

The first 30 registrations will receive a free copy of *Confessions of an Imperfect Caregiver*.



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HISTORY

Laura Missouri Dorsey – A Special Teacher

BY CHAR MCCARGO BAH

After the Civil War ended, the Federal government helped Alexandria start two public schools in 1870 for colored citizens. One of the schools was Hallowell School for Colored Girls and the other school was Snowden School for Colored Boys.

One of the most popular teachers that came out of the Hallowell School was Laura Missouri Dorsey; she was born in 1879 in Alexandria. Clem Dorsey and Hannah Lyles were Laura's parents. Clem

THE OTHER ALEXANDRIA

migrated from Charles County, Md. and Hannah Lyles' family were freed-people-of-color prior to the Civil War in Alexandria. Laura and her sister Mary were educated at Hallowell School. Hallowell only offered their students education up to the seventh grade. After Laura completed her education at Hallowell School, she went to school in Washington, D.C. When she returned to Alexandria, she was unable to get a teaching job in Alexandria, so she applied to the Stafford, Virginia School System. She taught in Stafford for a few years until a position was available at Hallowell. Miss Dorsey taught at Hallowell School for Girls until a coed school for colored children was made available.

Parker-Gray School was the first public coed school for colored students in Alexandria. Miss Laura Dorsey was one of 10 teachers that was selected to teach at Parker-Gray School. Her reputation for excellence was impeccable by the time she arrived at Parker-Gray. Parents were eager for their children to be in Miss Dorsey's class. She taught first, second and third grades. She love teaching. Her kindness and gentle ways made her a favorite teacher in Parker-Gray School. Whenever one mentions her name in public, her former students that are still living would smile and reminisce about the years they were in her class.

Miss Dorsey was a dedicated teacher. She taught at Parker-Gray School from 1920-1949. She witnessed the growth of Parker-Gray going from an elementary school to a high school. Miss Dorsey retired from the Alexandria Public School system with 49-years of service; it was noted at her retirement party that she only missed one day from school in her 49-years of service.

Miss Dorsey came from a progressive family who believed in the value of high standards, civil responsibility and respect for others. She followed in the footsteps of her grandfather, the Rev. Richard H. Lyles who was born in 1834.

The Rev. Richard H. Lyles was literate, a pastor at Roberts Chapel Methodist Church (Roberts Memorial United Methodist



Laura Missouri Dorsey, sometime prior to 1920.

an automobile in Alexandria. Miss Dorsey became a teacher and property owner just like her grandfather.

She purchased land on Dec. 29, 1927 and her house was built on Jan. 17, 1928 at 319 North Alfred St. The house cost \$8,547. Laura and her sister, Mary Elizabeth Dorsey never married. They lived together until Mary's death in 1958. The house at 319 North Alfred St. stayed in the family until Miss Dorsey's cousin, Fayrene Lyles Richardson sold it in January 2016.

On March 16, 1968, Miss Dorsey died at the Beverly Nursing Home in Washington, D.C. It was reported that she was 88-years old but actually, she was 91. Miss Dorsey was a member of Roberts Memorial Methodist Church and a member of Esther Chapter of the Order of the Eastern Star. She is buried in Alexandria at the Presbyterian Cemetery.

Although, Miss Dorsey has been dead for almost 50 years, her former students still have fond memories of their elementary teacher. She was their special teacher.

Char McCargo Bah is a freelance writer, independent historian, genealogist and a Living Legend of Alexandria. You can visit her blog at <http://www.theotheralexandria.com> for more about "The Other Alexandria."

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OPINION

Caregiver Concerns

Workshop co-sponsored by Senior Services of Alexandria and AARP.

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Caregiving for a loved one can be one of the most difficult, complicated jobs you'll have, but can also be satisfying. It can happen in a blink of an eye with a sickness or an accident. You may start with having to provide a little more support, then it takes more time and you have to adjust your schedule and lifestyle. Whether you are in the role of a caregiver, or anticipating the need to take care of a loved one, it is not too soon to get information and resources that can help.

Senior Services of Alexandria and AARP Virginia are hosting a Caregiver Workshop from 10 a.m. to noon on Saturday, Jan. 20, at Immanuel Church on the Hill, 3606 Seminary Road in Alexandria. It is a free event, open to the public with light refreshments.

The session will kick off with Bobbi Carducci, author of "Confessions of an Imperfect Caregiver." Bobbi cared for her father-in law for several years. Their story was written in response to caregivers asking for a book that tells what it's really like to care for someone. She is now a caregiver advocate, blogger and trained support group leader. She will talk candidly about her experiences and about what caregivers need to know about Alzheimer's/dementia before and



after it strikes home.

Lindsay Vajpeyi, director of Education and Outreach at Insight Memory Care Center, will talk about their programs for people on this journey. Insight is a nonprofit adult day health and resource center providing specialized care, support, and education for individuals with Alzheimer's disease and other memory impairments, their families, caregivers, and the community. They have just expanded their programs to the Alexandria area.

Pete Shrock, Legacy Navigator's chief people officer, will wrap up the presentations discussing how caregivers are not alone in this journey.

Shrock cuts through academic language with a direct, hands-on approach to grief and stressful life transitions. Legacy Navigator services a broad range of services including managing paperwork and estate sales to financial and support services.

Attendees will be able to ask questions and talk to the presenters one-on-one after the program. Literature will be available as well as upcoming events that SSA and AARP are sponsoring. To register for the workshop call SSA at 703-836-4414, ext. 110 or go online at seniorservicesalex.org.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

FROM PAGE 9

Northern Virginia and many other places as well. The new rules do not allow much of the mortgage interest deductions and deductions for property taxes. The cost of owning a home just became more expensive and so, less desirable.

If we are homeowners, we will enter the New Year with less net worth than we had in 2017.

These deductions have supported American homeownership at least since the end of World War II. The world that most of us have experienced all our lives has changed and the changes will exist for the next three years under a national Republican government.

Our tax base will see a big drop similar to what happened after the Great Recession of 2008. If that weren't enough bad news, the Fed-

eral workforce has already contracted by hundreds of thousands in just one year with more to come. Neither our tax base nor our Northern Virginia economy is going to be expanding for the foreseeable future.

Here in Alexandria we are about to enter a local campaign season. Beware of any politician who wants to promise economic expansion. It's not happening. Instead we need a local government willing to economize, set priorities and approve only those capital improvements which are needed now. At the same time we need to support and protect as much as possible our lower income residents including immigrants.

Katy Cannady
Alexandria

SEE LETTERS, PAGE 16

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2018 Color of the Year: Ultra Violet

Mixed reactions from local tastemakers who offer design ideas.

BY MARILYN CAMPBELL

It's a moment that interior designers anticipate all year: the announcement of the Pantone Color of the Year. Ultra Violet is the selection for 2018, and local designers are giving it a mixed reception.

"Interiors have gone so neutral, I look forward to suggesting... Ultra Violet, a color [that] can bridge warm and cool gray neutrals," said Moira Denson, interior designer and assistant professor of Interior Design at Marymount University.

"There's nothing subtle about Ultra Violet. It's one-dimensional and difficult to decorate with, except in very small doses," said interior designer Annie Elliott of Annie Elliott Interiors and Bossy Color. "I find the color loud. 'Look at me!' It screams."

The selection by Pantone, the self-described global authority on color, is intended to be a harbinger of the hue that will be on trend in the coming year. The organization's color gurus spend about nine months observing trends in industries ranging from film and entertainment to art and fashion.

This year's pick can add a burst of vibrancy to a home's interior in impermanent ways, advises interior designer Cathleen Gruver of Gruver Cooley. "Some quick easy ways to use the color are adding throw pillows, which are relatively inexpensive and easy to trade out," she said. "Accent plates on a dining table are an option for those who may not want to commit in their home."

"Use this color in extremely small doses," added Elliott. "If you really love this color, I suggest using it as part of a larger pattern. Don't buy a solid purple pillow; choose a pretty floral that has some Ultra Violet in it."

For those with less trepidation about Ultra Violet, interior designer Sarah Glenn of Braswell Design + Build in Alexandria, said, "The powder room is a great place to incorporate deep colors in interesting ways. Install a graphic violet wallpaper behind a bright white pedestal sink, or paint the ceiling a high gloss violet to reflect the decorative lighting in the room."

Dark and dramatic cabinetry, which Glenn says is trending this year, offers an-



PHOTO COURTESY OF MOIRA DENSON

"Ultra violet sets a mood that allows all my landscapes to feel grounded," says artist Moira Denson, who is an assistant professor of Interior Design at Marymount University

other use for the Pantone pick. "Go bold and incorporate a deep violet island or base cabinets into a new kitchen," she said. "Incorporate a violet glass mosaic tile on your shower floor or as an accent stripe around tub walls. I especially love violet glass paired with the grey and taupe tones of

wooden white marble tile."

Some designers describe Ultra Violet as commanding, particularly when used inside a home. "This shade of purple is a powerful color and one that I would use as an accent," said interior designer Marika Meyer of Marika Meyer Interiors. "A little bit will go a long way. It is also a great color to pair with other colors, it is a very friendly complementary color."

"Good pairings include green and purple, a classic combination, but I've always liked red with purple," added Elliott. "Ultra Violet is a vivid color, so make sure you use equally strong colors with it so it doesn't dominate a palette."

Pair it with gold and yellow tones, suggests Denson, who is also an artist. "I paint skies all the time," she said. "It's what watercolorists do. To me, shades of the ultra-violet are the most pleasing sky. It works super well with what we traditionally think of skies: blue toned. It sets a mood that allows all my landscapes to feel grounded."

In announcing the selection, Laurie Pressman, vice president of the Pantone Color Institute described Ultra Violet as, "a blue-based purple that takes our awareness and potential to a higher level. Ultra Violet communicates originality, ingenuity and visionary thinking that points us toward the future."

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ENTERTAINMENT

ACCT Presents Dr. Seuss

Favorite characters come to life in “Seussical, Jr.”

BY STEVE HIBBARD

Aldersgate Church Community Theater (ACCT) in Alexandria is presenting “Seussical, Jr.” from Jan. 12 to 21. Horton the Elephant, the Cat in the Hat and all of the favorite Dr. Seuss characters spring to life onstage in this musical from Tony-winners Lynn Ahrens and Stephen Flaherty.

Transporting audiences from the Jungle of Nool to the Circus McGurkus, the Cat in the Hat narrates the story of Horton the Elephant, who discovers a speck of dust containing tiny people called the Whos. Horton must protect the Whos from a world of naysayers and dangers, and he must also guard an abandoned egg that’s been left in his care by the irresponsible Mayzie La Bird. Although Horton faces ridicule, danger and a trial, the intrepid Gertrude McFuzz never loses faith in him. Ultimately, the powers of friendship, loyalty, family and community are challenged and emerge triumphant.

Director Shelagh Roberts said this is the first time ACCT has staged “Seussical, Jr.” so it fits well into the family-friendly nature of Aldersgate Church Community Theater. “Everyone knows the famous Dr. Seuss characters, such as Horton the Elephant, the Cat in the Hat, and Gertrude McFuzz; and everyone knows the classic books such as ‘Oh The Thinks You Can Think’ and ‘Horton Hatches the Egg,’ but many people haven’t heard the amazing score that Lynn Ahrens and Stephen Flaherty created when they en-



The Aldersgate Church Community Theater cast of “Seussical, Jr.” in rehearsal.

PHOTO BY HOWARD SOROOS

visioned a musical based on the writings of Dr. Seuss,” she said.

She said the two most compelling reasons to stage it are the wonderful characters and the amazing songs from the show. “Most people know the characters and are excited to see them come to life, but the bigger surprise is just how fun, clever and moving the music is. It’s really impossible not to get excited when the entire ensemble comes out for the opening number — ‘Oh The Thinks You Can Think’ — or to resist being transported into the Jungle of Nool with the infectious number, ‘Biggest Blame Fool,’ or to keep a dry eye when our wonderful JoJo and Horton the Elephant are singing about being ‘Alone in the Universe.’ Every song is great, in my opinion. I love them all,” she said.

She said they were trying to share this creation of Lynn Ahrens and Stephen Flaherty which tackled the ambitious challenge of trying to capture in song the spirit and genius in Dr. Seuss’s writings and put it into one narrative that audiences can enjoy.

As far as challenges, there were 33 musi-

cal tracks in the junior version, and very little dialogue. “It’s most like ‘Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat’ in that way; it just rolls along, one song after another, and the songs represent many different musical stylings along the way,” she said.

She added: “We have an extremely accomplished music director in Heather Gifford who was able to expertly teach our young actors some pretty complicated musical arrangements in a short time. Fortunately, we also have a very dedicated choreographer in Michele Koros and she really stepped up to handle much of the movement required through the course of the show.”

“So our most important challenge is to present these different worlds as authentically and realistically as possible, and to convince the audience that all of these characters and environments are real and that they matter,” she said.

Charlie Ruppe plays the role of Horton the Elephant. “Horton has a very strong sense of what’s right and wrong, and he’s not afraid to stand up for what he believes

in even though the last thing he’d do would be to be rude to anyone,” he said.

He said he finds a dust speck with a whole town on it and is determined to save it. “Even being tormented by the other jungle creatures because he believes there are people on a dust speck, Horton has hope because he has found friendship in a tiny ‘who’ named Jojo that lives on his dust speck. Horton stays true to his character throughout the show, and in the end it pays off for him. Horton ends with all of the jungle behind him and his dust speck,” he said.

He said he hopes that everyone watching the show understands the parallels with the real world. “I think this show demonstrates how we should not only respect other people’s lives, but also those people’s ideas Seussical teaches its audience that ideas should be respected even if you don’t believe in them, and that just because a lot of people believe in something doesn’t mean it’s true,” he said.

Brett Medley plays the role of the Cat in

SEE “SEUSSICAL, JR.” PAGE 18

CALENDAR

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

ONGOING

“Interlude: Unfinished Works.”

Various times, through Jan. 21, at Target Gallery at the Torpedo Factory, 105 North Union St., Studio 2. Target Gallery, the contemporary exhibition space of the Torpedo Factory, spotlights the artistic process in Interlude: Unfinished Works. Art has been left unfinished, both intentionally and unintentionally, and creates a dialogue on what it means for art to be “finished.” Features 21 artists from across the globe, including nine artists from the region. Visit torpedofactory.org/partners/target-gallery.

“Déjà Vu,” Art Exhibit. Through Feb. 4, 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.

“Form and Void.” Various times through Feb. 25 at the Athenaeum, 201 Prince St. Ellyn Weiss’s work is guided by a commitment to environmental sustainability and scientific truth, and her sheer delight in working with materials to make art. Using tar, wire, liquid plastic, printing on acrylic, and large-scale drawing, Weiss’s creations are a reflection on survival and regeneration. Visit www.nvfaa.org or call 703-548-0035.

“Terracotta Warriors” in Market

Square. Through March 11, all day in Market Square, 301 King St. Two replicas of the famous “Terracotta Warriors.” Each replica stands six feet tall and weighs about 500 pounds, and will be on display through March 2018. Visit www.alexandriava.gov.

“Alexandrians Fight the Great War.” Various times at The Lyceum, Alexandria’s History Museum, 201 South Washington St. This new exhibition traces the experiences of local people during the first World War. The homes, hospitals, factories and shipyards of wartime Alexandria come back to life through the use of rare images, archival and modern-day video clips, quotes from participants, original objects including weapons, period music, and scale models. Call 703-746-4994

or visit www.alexandriahistory.org.

“Before the Spirits are Swept Away.”

Various times at the Alexandria Black History Museum, 902 Wythe St. This exhibition, featuring 20 of Sherry Sanabria’s African American historic site paintings, is made possible by the Sanabria family, who generously donated 23 of her paintings to the Alexandria Black History Museum. These paintings are part of Sanabria’s “Sites of Conscience” series, which has as its focus African American heritage, prisons, concentration camps, and mental hospitals. Free, but donations are appreciated. Call 703-746-4356.

THURSDAY/JAN. 11

Second Thursday Art Night. 6-9

p.m. at the Torpedo Factory, 105 North Union St. Second Thursday Art Nights feature after-hours receptions and open studios throughout the building’s three floors, as well as Torpedo Talks. Visit torpedofactory.org.

Meet the Artist. 6:30-8 p.m. at the The Art League, 105 North Union St. Sally Canzoneri’s “Lenticular Photographs,” combine DC’s past and present. Visit www.theartleague.org.

Local Author Thursdays. 7 p.m. at The Old Town Shop, 105 South Union St. Ralph Peluso, the featured author of the week will be talking about his book “512.” Visit theoldtownshop.com.

Native Plant Interactions. 7:30 - 9 p.m. at Green Spring Gardens, 4603 Green Spring Road. A talk by Charles



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ENTERTAINMENT

A Table for Pho

BY HOPE NELSON

Forget bomb cyclones and polar vortexes and single-digit windchills. The answer to our cold-weather problems can be found in a piping-hot bowl of pho, a Vietnamese delicacy akin to a noodle soup, layered with a hearty broth, vegetables and a choice of protein. Here are a couple of spots to get your fill.

Caphe Banh Mi, 407 Cameron St.

Walk past this tiny storefront in the shadow of City Hall on nearly any night of the week and you'll find a throng of customers waiting outside. In the cold, in the rain, in the heat of summer or even in the snow, the gaggle waits patiently (or, sometimes, not so patiently) for their turn inside the restaurant, a veritable shoebox of a café that churns out bowl after bowl of hot, flavorful pho.

Not to worry: Your wait will be rewarded. When you get a seat, order up your beverage of choice — a Vietnamese beer is always a winner — and then peruse the menu for your main course. At Caphe Banh Mi, pho is never a mistake, in any of its various forms. Concoct the perfect combination yourself, or let the good folks in the kitchen do it for you with one of the restaurant's specials.

An advantage to choosing your own pho adventure: You can put together precisely the proteins you want. From brisket to meatballs, skirt flank to filet mignon, choose three meat selections and await the final piping-hot result. Or go with "The Works," which is exactly how it sounds — more than half a dozen protein selections put together in one bowl.

Not into red meat? Not to worry. Chicken pho comes to your rescue. And vegetarians won't be left out, either; unlike many traditional pho shops, where beef broth is the only game in town, Caphe Banh Mi's vegetarian broth is a welcome change of pace, and the pho comes teeming with tofu, mushrooms, cauliflower, and carrots.

The Vietnamese eatery isn't a pho-only joint; the

menu is chock full of rice and vermicelli dishes, as well as banh mi sandwiches, all of which are worthy of space on the table.

Pho 33, 540 John Carlyle St.

Tucked away in the middle of the Carlyle district, well off the main drag, Pho 33 offers up plenty of pho options just waiting to be explored. The Zen-like décor is welcoming and lures customers to linger awhile — but as the restaurant has plenty of seating, that's usually OK, even during the busy lunch rush.

You can't say Pho 33 lacks a selection of pho choices. From the selection of three proteins to a chef-inspired bowl of brothy goodness, there is a plethora of options from which to choose. One of the more popular selections is an homage to its namesake, Pho 33. Chock full of eye of round and brisket, the soup is a meaty experience with plenty of noodles to balance things out.

Pho 33 also offers up several seafood varieties of the dish; the pho vongole is a clam-based version, and the seafood pho is a grab bag of various underwater proteins in a seafood broth, rather than the standard beef. Chicken lovers will also be at home at pho 33, as will vegetarians; the latter edition is served in a mushroom broth with plenty of veggies to keep things interesting.

The restaurant does a booming business at lunch, pulling from the Patent and Trade Office crowd as well as from the other neighboring businesses. Admittedly, the pho itself can be quite a commitment, but thankfully there are plenty of other selections should you wish to go with something a bit lighter. Pho 33's selection of banh mi sandwiches has something for everyone, from hard-core carnivores to vegans, and the rice and vermicelli platters offer a nice middle ground between a light bite and an enormous bowl of pho.

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

CALENDAR

Smith, to kick off the lecture series looking at the interactions and relationships in plant communities from the visible framework of our living world. Visit <http://vnps.org/potowmack/events/>.

FRIDAY/JAN. 12

Fixes for a Tired Garden. 2-3 p.m. at Green Spring Gardens, 4603 Green Spring Road. This do-over class will help you determine your needs and create a plan that matches your style. \$10. Call 703-642-5173 or visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/green-spring/.

Concert at Blessed Sacrament. 8 p.m. at Blessed Sacrament Catholic Church, 1427 W. Braddock Road. Free. Email mcushmac@comcast.net or call 703-548-1176.

SATURDAY/JAN. 13

Enslaved and Free Servants Lives. 9 a.m.-5 p.m. at The Lyceum, 201 S. Washington St. Explore the Lee-Fendall House from the perspectives of the enslaved and free African Americans who lived and worked in the home as domestic servants, both before and after the Civil War. \$8. Visit www.alexandriava.gov/Lyceum or call 703-838-4994.

Watercolor Workshop: Painting on Yupo. 9:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. at

Green Spring Gardens, 4603 Green Spring Road. Paint on slick plastic called yupo with in-structor Marni Maree. \$90. Visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/parktakes or call 703-642-5173.

Vive la Musique! Children's Concert. noon at The Lyceum, 201 S. Washington St. Local musician Achille will be singing popular children's French songs. \$5. Visit www.alexandriava.gov/Lyceum or call 703-838-4994.

SUNDAY/JAN. 14

Meet President James Madison. 1-4 p.m. at Gadsby's Tavern Museum, 134 N. Royal St. Guests will be greeted by a person from the past while journeying through the museum as part of a special second Sunday series. Visit www.alexandriava.gov/Lyceum or call 703-838-4994.

Puppy Training Seminar. 3 p.m. at Head to Tail Spa dog grooming, 430 Hume Ave. Dog grooming and a seminar by dog expert Jodi Goldberg. Call 703-400-4401.

Meet the Artist. 4-6 p.m. at The Athenaeum, 201 Prince St. Ellyn Weiss discusses Form and Void, her exhibit that will be on display from Jan. 11- Feb. 25. Visit www.nvfaa.org or call 703-548-0035.

MONDAY/JAN. 15

Jimmy Johns Service Appreciation. 11 a.m.-10 p.m. at Jimmy Johns, 5778 Dow Ave. Every 1st and 15th of the month all service personnel will receive 15 percent off there order when they present there ID or show up at our store in uniform. Services include all Military, EMT, Fire Dept, and Police Officers. Visit www.jimmyjohns.com.

TUESDAY/JAN. 16

Ancestry Lecture. 1-3 p.m. at Hollin Hall Senior Center, 1500 Shenandoah Road. Getting the Most Out of Ancestry.com: genealogist Sharon Cook MacInnes speaks on how to search the ancestry.com website's billions of records and family trees. Call 703-768-4101.

NOVA Community Chorus Auditions. 7 p.m. at the NVCC Alexandria campus, 5000 Dawes Ave. Rehearsals are held on Tuesday nights and begin on January 16, under the leadership of director Chad Steffey. Contact NOVA Alexandria Music Faculty member, Lisa Eckstein, at leckstein@nvcc.edu or 703-845-6252.

THURSDAY/JAN. 18

2018 Chairman's Reception. 6-9

ENTERTAINMENT

p.m. at Alexandria Renew Enterprises, 1800 Limerick St. The Alexandria Chamber of Commerce officially welcomes its 2018 Chairman of the Board, Gin Kinneman of Kinneman Insurance, at an evening reception at Alexandria Renew Enterprises. \$120 for Members | \$140 for Non-Members. Visit www.alexchamber.com/.

Meet the Author. 7 p.m. at The Athenaeum, 201 Prince St. Dwight S. Hughes discusses "A Confederate Biography: The Cruise of the CSS Shenandoah." \$15. Visit www.nvfaa.org or call 703-548-0035.

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/.

FRIDAY/JAN. 19

Winter Recital. 7 p.m. at St. Paul's Episcopal Church, 228 S Pitt St. Join three Alexandria Symphony Orchestra musicians who are sponsored by the ASO's Adopt a Chair program for an evening of music and conversation. Enjoy a variety of solos from the classical tradition by Amy Horn (horn), Barbara Brown (cello) and Sara Stern (flute), and stay to mingle with the musicians. A reception with California wines and refreshments will be held in Norton Hall (adjacent to the sanctuary) following the concert. Adults, \$35; student, 10; youth \$5. Visit www.alexsym.org or call 703-548-0885.

History by the Glass. 7-9 p.m. at Gadsby's Tavern Museum, 134 N. Royal St. Enjoy drinks at the tavern, which historically served a wide variety of beverages, and learn about the history behind them. This series continues Jan. 19 with the Hot Toddy, where this popular historic drink along with other hot beverages will be served. Cost is \$50 per person. Price includes two drink tickets and light hors d'oeuvres. Tickets can be purchased through alexandriava.gov/shop or by calling the Museum at 703-746-4242.

The Late Shift: Brand New Day. 7-11 p.m. at the Torpedo Factory, 105 North Union St. Welcome 2018 with the first Late Shift of the year. Warm up with an indoor art market, live performances, and pop-up activities throughout the building. Dance into the night with a free silent disco, in collaboration with the City of Alexandria's Mobile Art Lab. The evening will also feature pop-up demonstrations in the Grand Hall, DIY art making, a welcome reception for Winter 2018 Post-Graduate Resident, Lyric Prince, and a selfie station. Visit torpedofactory.org.

Community Dance. 7:30-9:30 p.m. at Hollin Hall Senior Center, 1500 Shenandoah Road. Third-Friday Community Dance with the Mount Vernon Swing Band. Live music conducted by Owen Hammett. Open to the community. \$4. Call 703-765-4573.

'80s All Night. 8 p.m. at Carlyle Club, 2050 Ballenger Ave. Come ready to dance for an "All '80s, All Night" flashback dance party. Before the dance party kicks off, there will be '80s classic videos being played during dinner and prizes will be given out for best dressed and "Name that Tune" winners. Call 703-548-8899 or visit thecarlyleclub.com.

SATURDAY/JAN. 20

Winter Tree Day. 10-11 a.m. at Green Spring Gardens, 4603 Green Spring Road. Take a walk in the woods to examine trees in their wintry state. Get to know some evergreens and learn how critters use trees as their homes during our coldest months. \$6. Visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/



parks/parktakes or call 703-642-5173.

Tea Tasting: A Tea for Each Continent. 10-11:30 a.m. at Green Spring Gardens, 4603 Green Spring Road. Sample teas from each of the seven continents of the world. \$25. Visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/parktakes or call 703-642-5173.

SUNDAY/JAN. 21

NOVA Community Chorus Auditions. 7 p.m. at the George Washington Masonic Memorial, 101 Callahan Drive. Contact Herb Levy at Herb@FocusMusic.org or 703-380-3151.

Celtic Duo, House of Hamill. 7 p.m. at George Washington's Masonic Temple, 101 Callahan Drive. Featuring Rose Baldino, fiddler, vocalist, and bandleader of Burning Bridget Cleary. Visit www.focusmusic.org.

On Kee. 8 p.m. at Carlyle Club, 2050 Ballenger Ave. On Kee has been providing smooth and jazzy live entertainment since 1993. \$25. Call 703-548-8899 or visit thecarlyleclub.com.

MONDAY/JAN. 22

Ballroom Dance Classes. 7-9 p.m. at The Athenaeum, 201 Prince St. Led by Gary Stephens, class focuses on the Fox Trot, Waltz, Tango, Swing, Salsa, Merengue, Rumba, Cha-Cha and Samba. Visit www.nvfaa.org or call 703-548-0035.

DEADLINE JAN. 26

Earth Day Artwork Student Competition. 6-9 p.m. at The theme of Earth Day 2018 is Local Action, Global Impact. Students are encouraged to create an artistic design of the role they play in protecting the Earth. The selected artwork will be printed on Earth Day t-shirts, reusable shopping bags, posters, fliers, and advertising to donors, as well as posted on the Alexandria Earth Day website. Visit www.alexandriava.gov/recreation/earthday or call 703-861-8705.

JAN. 26-FEB. 4

Alexandria Winter Restaurant Week. Various times in neighborhoods throughout Alexandria, including Old Town, Del Ray and the West End. \$35 three-course dinner or \$35 dinner for two; select locations offering lunch from \$10-20 per person. Visit www.AlexandriaRestaurantWeek.com.

JANUARY 27-MARCH 4

"Passages." Various times at Target Gallery at the Torpedo Factory, 105

Torpedo Talks

Ars Memoria in Early Law: Looking Beneath the Pictures – Ars memoria, the art of memory and organization. Jolande Goldberg (Studio 326) is a senior law classification specialist at the Library of Congress and a Torpedo Factory artist. At 8 p.m. during Second Thursday Art Night (Jan. 11), she shares an overview of law book illustrations and the Law Library of Congress's efforts to preserve this history. Torpedo Talks are part of monthly Second Thursday Art Nights, which features after-hours receptions and open studios throughout the building's three floors, 6-9 p.m. At the Torpedo Factory, 105 North Union St. Visit torpedofactory.org.

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS COLLECTION

Washington giving the laws to America, circa 1800.

North Union St., Studio 2. Target Gallery's next exhibition, Passages, explores the lasting effects migration has on cultural identity from the perspective of immigrants and immigrant families from across the global diaspora. The juror for this exhibition was Adriana Ospina, curator of the Permanent Collection and Education at the Art Museum of Americas. Visit torpedofactory.org/partners/target-gallery.

SUNDAY/JAN. 28

Pinewood Derby Workshop. 3-6 p.m. at Ace Hardware, 809 S. Washington St. Old Town Ace Hardware is hosting a series of pinewood derby workshops for local Cub Scouts. During select Sundays in January, the store will provide wood cuts, sandpaper, and work stations for scouts to prep their derby cars. The store asks that participating Scouts trace their car designs on their woodblocks prior to arriving at the workshops. The store kindly requests a \$1 donation per woodcut to benefit Boy Scouts of America and Children's National, our local Children's Miracle Network Hospital. Complimentary popcorn will be served during the event. Email amiller@acehardwaredc.com or call the store (Monday-Saturday, 8-8; Sunday, 10-6) at 703-566-7040.

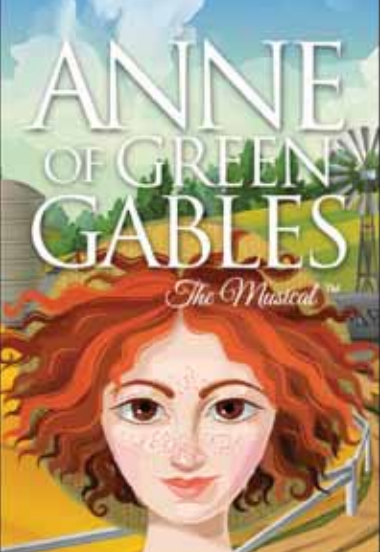
THURSDAY/FEB. 1

Alexandria Poetry Contest Entry Deadline. 5 p.m. at the City of Alexandria, The Office of the Arts, a division of the Department of Recreation. The "DASHing Words in Motion" poetry contest, topics edge on transportation, ideas might stem from The Alexandria Transit Company's DASH buses motto is "Keep Alexandria Moving." Call 703-746-5565 or email cheryllanne.colton@alexandriava.gov.

Blues Night with Meigs Hodge. 7 p.m. at The Athenaeum, 201 Prince St. Meigs Hodge explores Delta and Chicago styles through the music of Robert Johnson, Muddy Waters, and others; as well as contemporary standards and original compositions. \$10. Visit www.nvfaa.org.


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 wa-tercolor 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/parktakes or call 703-642-5173.



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PEOPLE

New CEO for ACT

Heather Peeler has been named president and CEO of ACT for Alexandria, succeeding John Porter, who last fall informed the board of his decision to pass the leadership torch.



Peeler

Peeler, who officially assumes her duties on Feb. 5, said, "The work of an organization like ACT has never been more important in terms of bringing people together to address our community's most critical needs. I am inspired by the example of John Porter's leadership, which allowed ACT to grow from an idea into the catalytic organization it is today. I look forward to building on that reputation and to working with donors, civic leaders and community partners to further strengthen ACT's impact and to ensure that Alexandria is a strong, vibrant community for all."

Peeler comes to ACT from Grantmakers for Effective Organizations (www.GEOfund.org), an organization dedicated to effective philanthropy and nonprofit success.

As vice president of member and partner engagement, she mobilized a national network of more than 5,000 grantmakers in adopting practices to make the greatest

impact on nonprofit performance. She previously served as chief strategy officer at the Corporation for National and Community Service and as managing director at Community Wealth Partners.

Her community involvement includes serving as chair of the Board of Fair Chance, an organization that builds the capacity of grassroots youth-serving organizations, and as a commissioner on the Washington, D.C. Commission on Out of School Time Grants and Youth Outcomes. Peeler holds a Bachelor's degree from Wellesley College in Wellesley, Mass. and earned her M.B.A. from The Anderson School at UCLA in Los Angeles, Calif.

West End Elementary Principal Named

Rachael Dischner has been appointed principal of the new West End Elementary School that will open in fall 2018.

Dischner is currently the principal of the new pre-K center at John Adams Elementary School, where she has been working with school administrators and ACPS facilities staff on the physical and instructional design of both the new pre-K



Dischner



Graduates from Criminal Justice Academy

Nine new Alexandria law enforcement officers – five police officers and four deputy sheriffs – graduated from the Northern Virginia Criminal Justice Training Academy on Dec. 19. Sheriff Dana Lawhorne, Police Chief Michael L. Brown, and members of their command and training staffs attended Session 137's graduation ceremony at George Mason University. From left are Chief Michael L. Brown, Officer Francisco San Miguel, Officer Gladys Corea, Officer Marcus Morsell, Officer Otis Jackson, Officer Emily Plisco, Deputy Kelly Allen, Deputy Lamar Gayle, Deputy Joshua Barnes, Deputy Sean Scalsky, and Sheriff Dana Lawhorne.

center and the new West End Elementary School.

Dischner was previously an assistant principal at Randolph Elementary School in Arlington Public Schools and a special education coordinator for Child Find in Arlington before her move into elementary education. She began her career as a special education teacher in Ventura County, Calif.

Dischner has a master's degree in educational leadership from George Mason Uni-

versity and a certificate in special education from California Lutheran University in Thousand Oaks, California. She also has postgraduate professional licenses in Administration and Supervision Pre-K -12, Early Childhood Special Education, Emotional Disturbance K-12, Intellectual Disabilities K-12 and Specific Learning Disabilities K-12.

The new school will be the first in ACPS since 2000.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

FROM PAGE 11

Remembrance Not Glorification

To the Editor:

In response to Maryel Barry's letter to the editor in the Jan. 4, 2018, issue about what to tell her African-American daughter about the Appomattox Statue at the intersection of Prince and S. Washington Streets, I suggest she tell her daughter the truth. The statue was erected to remember the Alexandrians who lost their lives in the Civil War. It was erected by their surviving comrades with the support of the Alexandria community and the names of the fallen are inscribed on the base. She might go on to explain to her child that it is a near universal desire of returning soldiers to remember their own and that, in essence, the statue represents that local generation's version of the Viet Nam Wall. Both are memorials of remembrance to those who are gone; neither memorial glorifies the specific war.

Sherry Hulfish Browne
Alexandria

Council: Follow Eco-city Goals

To the Editor:

Alexandria and City Council should be commended for adopting the goal of becoming an Eco-city. Many citizens and staff have spent years developing a comprehensive Environmental Action Plan with the sponsorship of Del Pepper and John Chapman.

The implementation of this plan, however, relies on all city staff and citizens to be creative and proactive and to use persuasion, education, and, lastly, legislation to enable the achievement of these goals.

Unfortunately, 2017 was not a good year for Alexandria's native tree canopy, natural world, and environment. City Council decreased funding for planting new trees, promising instead to focus on preserving the mature tree canopy. Unfortunately we are left with neither goal accomplished.

The story of the Karig Estates development proposal gives but one of many examples.

Although the Planning and Zoning staff recommended many helpful changes to the original application to develop a ravine with a wetland, springs and an intermittent stream that form the headwaters of Strawberry Run, they needlessly obstructed other amendments that would have made it even more environmentally sound. For over a year many concerned residents and organizations worked to improve the Karig Estates proposal and struggled against a complacent Planning and Zoning Department.

The developer, many citizens and organizations agreed to an amendment to the site plan to move all four houses closer to Seminary road, which would safeguard more of the intact forest and decrease runoff on the steepest and most unstable lot. This was a win-win compromise. At first the city staff stonewalled for several months, stating that requested changes could not possibly be made.

After concerned citizens hired a land use attorney to press the issue, P and Z agreed that there were several ways to interpret

the rules defining the proper setback from Seminary Road, allowing a setback of 57 feet instead of the original 104 feet. But then P and Z insisted that this would require the developer to start over with a new application instead of considering this an amendment to the site plan that he had already spent two years developing. The developer refused further unnecessary delay.

The city manager then suppressed the city's key expert in environmental matters from being present at the Nov. 9, 2017 Planning Commission hearing. This action effectively robbed proponents of improving the Karig Estates of any chance of a fair and impartial public hearing.

With none of the subject matter experts present at the hearing, the commissioners had no accurate answers to questions obviously best suited to those experts. The Planning Commission approved significant other amendments to the Karig Estates project with no discussion of the proposed amendment to move all four houses to a more ecologically appropriate location. This left little choice but to further appeal to City Council. That hearing is set for Jan. 20. We hope the city's experts in environmental matters will be invited to participate.

Council is being asked to remand the Karig Estates project back to Planning for serious amendments with the city's strongly stated environmental goals in mind.

This complacency for the city's environment and quality of life by Planning and Zoning, city manager, and ultimately City Council is deeply troubling and unacceptable. It is Council's responsibility to ensure that staff is thoroughly engaged and proactive in maintaining a balance between en-

vironmental conservation interests and development interests. Last year's events, and indeed many similar over recent years, have shown that not only do development interests far outweigh conservation ones in Alexandria but that there is an insufficient climate or appreciation for conservation among our public servants. We will never reach our goals as an Eco-city until these changes take place.

Environmentalists are working way too hard and spending too much money in Alexandria trying to do what their public service government is required to do as its daily function. Correcting the root of the problem is Council's responsibility — beginning with some education and persuasion in Planning and Zoning and the City Manager's Office. They should remand Karig Estates back to Planning with strong guidance before the trees and ecology of this property have been totally lost.

By Council taking the time to address these issues and take appropriate actions to change the focus of our city's employees, Alexandria's natural world could have an improved chance for a brighter, sustainable future.

Robert and Suzanne McLaughlin, Andrew Macdonald, Joan and Denis O'Toole, Wes and Margaret Teague, Dave Levy, Loren Needles, Bertha and Joe Braddock, Walter and Betsy Lohman, Nina and Robert Schwartz, Paul and Lynnette Goree, Janice Lachance, Pat and Lynn Tokarz, Cill Dara, John and Christina Lytle, Stuart Davis, Kathleen M. Burns, Robert and Nina Schwartz

Out of Crisis

FROM PAGE 3

Health collaborative, a subcommittee of Alexandria's Community Criminal Justice Board. Wixson says the group came together to identify ways to collaboratively help those with behavioral health disorders live law abiding, healthy, productive lives.

"We've seen the cracks between our systems close and, more importantly, we've seen countless cases of people with behavioral health disorders receive the care and treatment services they need to help them live law-abiding and productive lives in our city," said Wixson. "These efforts are truly a win/win for the criminal justice system, the behavioral health system, and for the individuals and families with whom we all work."

Wixson said national studies have shown that jails and prisons across the country are full of people with mental health and substance abuse disorders.

"People with behavioral health disorders are over-represented in the criminal justice system," said Wixson. "They often cycle in and out of mental health, substance abuse and criminal justice systems, are more costly to incarcerate than those without a behavioral health disorder, are more costly and time consuming for law enforcement officers, and can clog the court system. Often as a result of circumstances beyond their control, people with mental illness are more likely to be arrested; to be detained because they cannot post even very low bail; to be charged with more serious crimes; to have

stiffer penalties imposed; to spend two to five times longer in jail; and are at increased risk of returning to jail on a probation violation, as compared to probationers without a mental illness."

Wixson said there are measures law enforcement can take to keep those with mental health issues from winding up in jail. Wixson pointed to crisis intervention teams trained to handle someone dealing with a mental health crisis, assessment centers to provide behavioral assessments, and collaborative reentry programs all prevent incarceration and recidivism.

"Programs such as ... the new sentencing alternative program in the Commonwealth Attorney's Office are designed to bridge the gap between all of these systems, break the recidivistic cycle often experienced by people with behavioral health disorders, and help these persons live law-abiding and healthy, productive lives," said Wixson. "We are grateful for the thoughtful, problem-solving approach being used by the Commonwealth Attorney's Office to get to the core issues of why many people come to the attention of the criminal justice system in the first place. By helping people get the mental health and substance abuse treatment services they need, the Commonwealth Attorney's Office is helping to not only improve public safety outcomes, but they are helping improve the lives of many people in our city."

The program is expected to have participants by February 2018.

Announcements

We pay top \$ for STERLING,
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There will be a pre-Proposal conference for
this solicitation on January 19, 2018 at 10:00
a.m. in the Purchasing Conference Room
located at 100 N. Pitt St., Suite 301,
Alexandria, VA 22314.
Closing Date and Time: February 15, 2018,
4:00 p.m., prevailing local time.

For general inquiries contact Peter Tomaselli at
peter.tomaselli@alexandriava.gov.

The City of Alexandria reserves the right to reject
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Legals

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT FOR BALTIMORE COUNTY, MARYLAND

SANDRA PATRICIA BELTRAN MARIN)
Plaintiff,)
v.) Case No.: 03-C-16-010819
DAVID EZEQUIEL RODRIGUEZ BARRERA)
Defendant.)

NOTICE - ORDER OF PUBLICATION

The above plaintiff has filed a complaint entitled: Complaint for Custody and Request for Findings of Fact to Permit Minor's Application for Special Immigrant Juvenile Status, in which she is seeking custody of Keiry Gabriela Rodriguez Beltran and findings of fact to permit application for Special Immigrant Juvenile Status.

Notice is hereby issued by the Circuit for Baltimore County, that the relief sought in the aforementioned Complaint may be granted, unless cause be shown to the contrary. Defendant is to file a response to the Complaint on or before 2/8/2018. Failure to file the response within the time allowed may result in a judgment by default or the granting of the relief sought, provided a copy of this Notice be:

Published in some newspaper published in this county/city, once in each of three (3) successive weeks on or before 1/24/2018.

Julie L. Ensor

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Legals

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Litter Box Humor



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

We have five indoor cats: Biscuit, Chino, Twinkle, Sloan and Andrew, ranging in ages from 11+ years to 5+ years. We live in a two-story converted log cabin with approximately 1,750 square feet, closets not included. Closets in which you're bound to find cats, especially in the winter.

A few moths back, we contracted to have our two full bathrooms, one on each floor, renovated. Given that our house is over 250 years old, not likely a normal renovation. So far the renovation has taken months, as we were told, and as such, we wanted to employ some kind of strategy where we weren't constantly worrying about cats coming and going, sneaking outside, disappearing, and getting in the way of the workman and/or possibly suffering some kind of injury in the process. (Particularly true of Andrew and Biscuit who, uncharacteristic of many cats, are not the least bit put off by unknown people wandering about the house.)

And sure enough, after dinner on the first night FOLLOWING DEMOLITION, Andrew and his sister, Sloane, managed to break through some protective plastic surrounding the door blocking entrance to the upstairs bathroom where they managed to get into the house through an internal wall which had been torn down to the studs. It was their faint meowing which led to their discovery – in the downstairs attic above the kitchen. Their subsequent rescue confirmed that we would need to be extra vigilant to prevent further ado.

To secure the perimeter, we decided to segregate the cats on one side of the house on the first floor: including the kitchen, dining room and my office, with two sets of doors connecting to the living room and to the hall leading past the downstairs bathroom. This disconnect works perfectly because it prevents any escape and it enables the workman to walk in and out of the front door to ply their trade without needing any access to either of the three rooms where the cats are confined.

The cats food and water remains in its usual place in the kitchen. However there is one item (two actually) which has required a major move. You recall I said our cats are 'indoor,' right? And we're confining them to three rooms, right? Have I mentioned their litter boxes yet? Well, I am now.

Not a Herculean task by any means because once cats are shown their litter box's new location, they figure it out. But now their litter boxes which had previously been out of sight and sort of out of mind – one on each floor, have now been placed in two of the three rooms where they've been living most days and they are now most definitely in sight and on my mind.

One box was placed in the dining room where we rarely go at present since it's somewhat cluttered due to the renovation, and the other box was placed in my home office – which box seems to get the most use. (We sort of figured that the kitchen was out of the question.)

My office is approximately eight feet wide by 20 feet long, a space which separates the dining room from the outside wall. The litter box is on the floor at the far end of the room, not at all under foot, but neither out of sight nor out of smell. Where I sit, I am a well-positioned observer of the cats visits to their litter box.

As a consequence of this segregation - designed to secure their safety, and for the subsequent relocation of their litter boxes, in effect, I am now sharing a bathroom with five indoor cats.

All day long I am witness to their litter box proclivities; their arrival and departure, the sights, sounds and smells; their individual tendencies and habits, and of course, their comparative interest in visiting me on my desk before and/or after the paperwork is finished.

Soon we'll have to decide whether to return the boxes to their original location, and risk disrupting yet another new routine. Perhaps we'll leave well enough alone. After all, as any devoted cat owner knows: it's not about us, it's about them.

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

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ENTERTAINMENT

'Seussical, Jr.'

FROM PAGE 13

the Hat. "The Cat is probably the most rambunctious role I've ever played. He has an energy and a style that is hard to express. He is essentially in control of the show. Everything that happens is dictated by what he says and I think that's one of the reasons why he's so fun to embody as a character," he said.

He added: "Personally, I think what is most important for audiences to take away from this show is the way the show is written. The show is simply a combination of Dr. Seuss's works put into a musical and that's what makes it so interesting. There are many different themes and ideas that this show explores and I think audiences will react best to that."

Taegan Chirinos plays the role of Gertrude McFuzz, a sweet bird who only has one feather for a tail, which makes her very insecure with other birds, such as Mayzie who has tons of feathers. "She is in love with Horton and admires his big heart, but Horton never notices her because he's trying to save The Whos," she said.

She hopes people leave the theater feeling better about themselves. "Maybe you have a flaw that you don't like about yourself and it makes you feel less confident, like Gertrude and her small tail. No matter what, you should stay true to you and realize you don't need to change yourself and that you were born to be who you are. Everyone is different, we should embrace it," she said.

Zoe Caghin-Carlos plays the role of Mayzie La Bird, a party girl. "She is insecure and covers her insecurities by not thinking too much about things. She is also irresponsible and unreliable. Mayzie only wants you to have fun. At the same time, she is not mean and tries to help Gertrude to attract Horton's attention the way Mayzie knows — by 'improving' Gertrude's looks," she said.

She thinks the main message of the show is to not be afraid to be yourself, even when mean people are calling you crazy. "Even though the characters in the show are not real, the audiences will be able to recognize and relate to people in real life," she said.

Jack St. Pierre plays the role of JoJo, who likes to think a lot and has great ideas that usually get him into trouble. "It's the biggest role I have ever done. He's supposed to be a kid who gets in trouble a lot, and I find that fun to play," he said.

He added that for audience takeaways, he wants them to know "that it's great to be who you are."

Aldersgate Church Community Theater (ACCT) in Alexandria is presenting "Seussical, Jr." from Jan. 12 to 21. Show times are Fridays at 7:30 p.m.; Saturdays at 7:30 p.m.; Sunday at 2 p.m.; with matinees on Saturdays at 2 p.m.; also Monday, Jan. 15 at 2 p.m. and Thursday, Jan. 18 at 7:30 p.m. Tickets are \$12. The venue is located at 1301 Collingwood Road, Alexandria. Visit the website at www.acctonline.org.

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