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Alexandria Gazette Packet

CAMPS & SCHOOLS
PAGES, 18-19

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APRIL 26, 2018



Neighbors in Del Ray voice concern over medic unit removed from Firehouse 202.



Questioning Response Times

**Del Ray residents
upset over EMS
medic unit's removal.**

BY JAMES CULLUM
GAZETTE PACKET

In February, the Alexandria Fire Department pulled out its medic unit from Del Ray's historic Firehouse 202, located at 213 East Windsor Ave. and parked it at station 209 at 2800 Main Line Blvd. in Potomac Yard. Some Del Ray residents are concerned that the AFD did not properly notify them of the move, that the City Council has gone back on its word after pledging that the ambulance would stay after the firetruck was moved out to Potomac Yard in 2008 and that the 90-day pilot program to reduce service at Station 202 is ill-conceived.

"The mission of the Alexandria Fire Department is to provide service to the city as a whole," Fire Chief Robert Dubé said in a statement. "We use data analysis to assist us in this endeavor and to better serve the citizens of Alexandria. Our initial analysis showed we could improve our city-wide coverage without impacting the immediate area around Fire Station 202 - Del Ray by moving the medic unit to Fire Station 209 - Potomac Yard."

The department says that there has been an overall response time reduction in all areas covered by Fire Station 202, with first-responding units arriving in four minutes and 23 seconds after the move to Potomac Yard versus four minutes and 34 seconds prior to the move. Now instead of a medic unit, Station 202 has an EMS supervisor who can respond to emergencies before backup arrives. Additionally, a medic unit has also been placed at Fire Station 203 in the Beverly Hills neighborhood. Station 202 was built in 1926,

SEE DEL RAY, PAGE 28

All In On affordable housing.

BY VERNON MILES
AND DAN BRENDL
GAZETTE PACKET

Budgets aren't crafted overnight. They're year-long processes made up of hours and days of back-and-forth discussions. But occasionally there's one moment where the city's future is shaped by one conversation. An add/delete work session on Tuesday, April 24 was one such moment, and the ramifications could shape the city's budget and afford-

"I've said it a thousand times and I'll say it a thousand more, I'd fall on my sword for this issue."

— Councilman Willie Bailey

able housing plans for years to come.

On the table were two proposals, one from Vice Mayor Justin Wilson and another from Councilman Willie Bailey. The Wilson Plan created a new multi-year Capital Improvement Program project to

support Alexandria's affordable housing. The plan would provide a \$2.35 million increase in Affordable Housing funds in FY 2019, and set up a five-year phased project to reach the Housing Master Plan's

SEE AFFORDABLE, PAGE 28

Ready. Set. Click.

**Spring2Action raises
funds for local charities.**

BY JEANNE THEISMANN
GAZETTE PACKET

Spring2Action, Alexandria's citywide day of giving, kicked off at the stroke of midnight April 25 as hundreds of donors began opening their laptops and wallets for the 24-hour online giving campaign to benefit local nonprofit organizations.

Started in 2011 by ACT for Alexandria, last year's event raised

more than \$1.5 million, an increase of more than a quarter of a million dollars over the previous year.

"I am totally excited about this," said ACT for Alexandria president and CEO Heather Peeler about her first Spring2Action day. "We have about 150 nonprofits signed up to participate and many local businesses are sponsoring prizes throughout the day. This really is an all-hands-on-deck community

SEE READY. SET., PAGE 28

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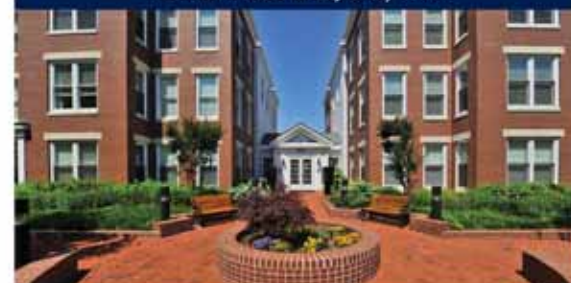
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A Day in the Life of Mayoral Opponents

Incumbent: Mayor Allison Silberberg

BY JAMES CULLUM
GAZETTE PACKET

Allison Silberberg had a busy day ahead of her. After an early morning tree-planting event was cancelled, she was picked up at around 8:30 a.m. at her Parkfairfax condo by volunteer Boyd Walker in his red Toyota Prius.

"I was answering emails this morning and time got away from me," Silberberg said as she got in the back seat of the car. "I don't clock in. I'm constantly... Not just on call, but doing. The calendar doesn't really capture it all."

That day, Saturday, April 7, was freezing cold, and Silberberg was scheduled appear at the campaign kickoff for Democratic U.S. Sen. Tim Kaine at Jefferson-Houston School, throw the ceremonial first pitch for the Alexandria Little League's 2018 season at Hammond Middle School, attend the funeral and reception of an Alexandria icon at the Basilica of St. Mary, speak at an event at the Mark Center Hilton, go door knocking, and finish the day with a concert by the Alexandria Symphony Orchestra.

If you don't know the 55-year-old Silberberg, who prefers to go by Allison instead of Madam Mayor in public, she is a writer and photographer, is single but occasionally dates, has few hobbies outside of her political life and greets city staff with hugs instead of handshakes. She was born and raised in Dallas, Texas, and received a bachelor's degree in international relations and history from American University and a master's degree in fine arts in playwriting from the University of California, Los Angeles. She's written for the Washington Post, the Dallas Morning News, authored a book in 2009 and even wrote an episode of "Mama's Family" back in 1989 entitled "Mama's Layaway Plan" — the same year that she moved to Alexandria. The mayorship is her only job, she drives a 20-year-



Mayor Allison Silberberg at a City Council meeting on Saturday, April 13.

old Acura and makes roughly \$30,000 a year.

"It's extremely difficult," she said. "If something goes wrong with the car, or I have to dip into some savings, then that's what I have to do, but I really lead a frugal life, because that's what's required when you're the mayor, and the royalties from 'Mama's Family' might only pay for my month for my Virginia Dominion Power bill."

At Jefferson-Houston, Silberberg, in a buttoned up dark pant suit, white blouse and a simple string of white pearls, took off her green wool coat and shook hands and talked for over 20 minutes before the arrival of Kaine, U.S. Sen. Mark Warner (D) and former Virginia Gov. Terry McAuliffe. But the clock was running, and as Walker ran out to get the car, Silberberg made her goodbyes and left the event before the arrival of the dignitaries.

Back in the car, Silberberg said that being the mayor is a full-time job, but that doesn't mean she wants to see a change in the city charter.

"The truth is that it is more than full time to be the mayor," she said. "It just is. For every event that I go to, for every issue that I tackle, there are many more issues — we're tackling so much every day — that's what it requires — full-on attention, and I'm very proud of my track record of leadership in these two years. During that time we have tackled many issues that have been festering for decades, and I'm committed to doing even more and that's why I'm running for reelection."

Silberberg's political career began when she was elected Alexandria's vice mayor in 2012, winning the most council votes and beating out longtime councilwoman and former Vice Mayor Del Pepper. Up to that point, she'd interned for Democratic Massachusetts Sen. Ted Kennedy, worked for Texas Sen. Lloyd M. Bentsen (D), volunteered as a speechwriter at the 1992 Democratic National Convention and for Vice President Al Gore in 1994 and for the Democratic National Committee's press office during the presidential candidacy of Mas

SEE INCUMBENT, PAGE 26

Challenger: Vice Mayor Justin Wilson

BY JAMES CULLUM
GAZETTE PACKET

Vice Mayor Justin Wilson doesn't get much sleep. When he's not raising a family, working as the senior director of vendor and contract management at Amtrak, attending public events, running 25 miles a week or running for mayor, he's attending council meetings and answering emails. The 39-year-old is a self-admitted social media addict, primarily on Facebook and Twitter, he's outraised and outspent funds against his incumbent opponent Mayor Allison Silberberg and usually gets to bed by 2 a.m. before waking up between 5:15 a.m. and 7 a.m. for a morning run and/or to take his daughter to school.

"I operate under very little sleep and I have for 15 years, if not longer," Wilson said. "I've been multitasking for years... The campaign adds basically a third full-time job. I'm out every night, usually two or three things. I used to try to go to a million different things every night, and I learned that that is not a good idea, because you're just showing up for 10 minutes. What is that about? It's about waving. I go for quality and not quantity now."

Saturday, April 14 was a busy day for Wilson, though no busier than average, starting off at an early morning ribbon cutting for the St. James Plaza affordable housing development in the city's Beauregard neighborhood, running a few errands, a five-hour City Council meeting, door knocking for hours on the city's West End and ending the day eating dinner at home with his family in Del Ray. He drinks too much Coca-Cola, he says, and his thinning hair is contrasted by youthful looks without the appearance of an ounce of fat.

"Why do I do what I do? You know, I think part of it is I see it in my kids. Every day I walk my daughter to school, and it's to make sure the community they grow up in is a



Vice Mayor Justin Wilson at the City Council public hearing on Saturday, April 14.

better one than I found it," he said. "I would say that the job of the mayor is to build coalitions on the council to move policy, and that is what I have always worked to do on the council — identify an approach that makes sense and work to build a coalition of at least four members ... to do things. That's what I enjoy. If you don't have relationships with your colleagues, you can't make that happen, you can't move policy."

Wilson drove his dark blue Prius over to St. James Plaza in a grayish-brown suit, white shirt and red checkered tie at 7:45 in the morning, and was greeted by affordable housing advocates, city staff and his colleagues on council, including Silberberg, who spoke at the event. After the speakers were finished, the ribbon was cut and photos taken, Wilson took a tour of the upstairs living accommodations with a crowd of other guests, and then took an individual tour of an early childhood space on the bottom floor complete with low sinks for children.

"I really enjoy this. Today's a perfect example. This project was something that we worked on, it was a divided vote, I'll have you know, and seeing the results of that project and families that are living there, seeing that early childhood space that will soon have 50 young kids, it gives me an enormous sense of satisfaction," he said. "Right now we're leaving a lot of money on the table. The state's early preschool initiative matches city funding, and right now we're not getting our full share of that, which is terribly frustrating."

After the event was a City Council meeting. Beforehand, Wilson walked to his cubby in City Hall, which is just around the corner from the mayor's office with its windows that look out on Market Square.

"It's very sexy," he joked. "I finally have at my day job a bigger office than here. It took me a while."

There were no sparks during the meeting, unlike on April 10, when Wilson proposed merging the Parker-Gray Historic District Board of Architectural Review and the Old Town BAR, igniting a bickering contest with the mayor that was broken up by

SEE CHALLENGER, PAGE 26



PHOTOS BY JAMES CULLUM/GAZETTE PACKET

Mayor Allison Silberberg talks with new Alexandria resident Bill Malkasian on Saturday, April 7.



Vice Mayor Justin Wilson talks with Myla Sisk, April 14.



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News

Robbing Peter to Pay Paul

Metro funding decision will stiffen competition between other regional transportation projects.

BY DAN BRENDL
GAZETTE PACKET

State-level action on April 18 will require Northern Virginia to divert some \$110 million over 5 years from other transportation projects, including potentially Alexandria's, for dedicated Metro funding.

State-level action on April 18 will require Northern Virginia to divert some \$110 million over 5 years from other transportation projects, including potentially Alexandria's, for dedicated Metro funding.

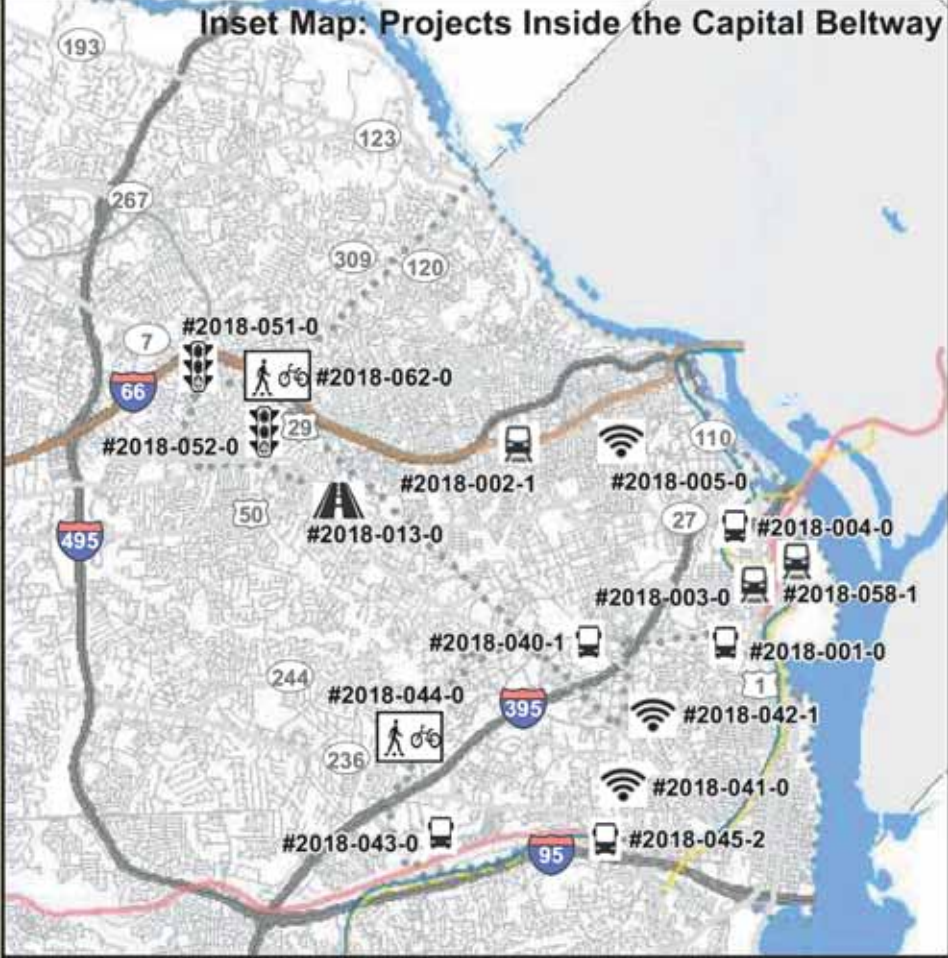
In March, the Virginia General Assembly adopted legislation requiring \$154 million in annual dedicated funding for the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA). This revenue stream, coupled with similar commitments from Maryland and the District of Columbia, will provide unprecedented funding to the ailing transit system, and so is widely lauded.

But the specific sourcing wasn't settled until last week, when the House of Delegates killed two of Gov. Ralph Northam's proposed amendments to the legislation (HB1539/SB856). The amendments would have raised certain taxes, only on Northern Virginians, to pay for part of the new dedicated revenue. No new taxes requires shunting funds instead from the Northern Virginia Transportation Authority (NVTa), which receives certain regional taxes and can issue bonds. NVTa allocates these funds through a competitive process to big transportation-related projects. These especially include bus and rail capacity projects inside the Beltway — for instance, recently, \$66 million for Alexandria's upcoming Potomac Yard Metrorail Station — and roadway capacity projects outside the Beltway.

"With the funding change, essentially [NVTa] will have to cut or delay some projects that might otherwise be funded," said NVTa spokesperson Sarah Camille Hipp. With Northam's amendments, NVTa would have had \$1.37 billion at its disposal for the period FY18-FY23; now it'll have an estimated \$1.26 billion. Ten regional jurisdictions, the Virginia Railway Express (VRE)

SEE ROBBING, PAGE 14

Inset Map: Projects Inside the Capital Beltway



Transportation-related infrastructure candidate projects, requesting a total of \$2.5 billion through FY23 from the Northern Virginia Transportation Authority (NVTa), are competing for \$1.3 billion in funds actually available. That figure is reduced from \$1.4 billion, as a result of recent action by the House of Delegates relating to dedicated funding for Metro. Alexandria has requested \$88 billion for 6 projects, principally bus rapid transit (BRT) in the West End.



PHOTOS CONTRIBUTED

George Washington's Mount Vernon Estate past president Curt Viebranz, second from left, receives medals from Sons of the American Revolution representatives Mike Elston, Don Baldwin and Ernest Coggins.

JROTC Cadets Honored

SAR also honors Viebranz, first responders.

The George Washington Chapter of the Sons of the American Revolution recognized two local JROTC cadets and two Alexandria Sheriff's Deputies at its April 14 meeting at the Belle Haven Country Club.

Cadet Captain Scarlett Reyes of Mount Vernon High School received the chapter Enhanced JROTC Medallion, a Bronze Medal and a check for \$300 for her entry in the chapter's annual outstanding cadet competition. In February, she received a medallion and a check for \$1,000 from the Virginia Society of the Sons of the American Revolution as its winner in the state competition.

Cadet Sergeant First Class Mason Lamphier of Lake Braddock Secondary School received an Enhanced JROTC Medallion, a Bronze Medal and a check for \$200 for his entry in the chapter's competition.

Sergeant Valarie Wright and Deputy Charlie Wright were awarded the SAR Heroism Medal for their efforts in rescuing a stabbing victim from an angry mob at the

peril of their own lives.

Guest speaker for the meeting was Curt Viebranz, past president of George Washington's Mount Vernon Estate. Viebranz received the SAR Silver Good Citizenship Medal and the chapter's Baldwin-Jones-Tabb medal in recognition of his support of the chapter and contributions to the presentation of American history during his tenure at the plantation. The awards were presented by Mike Elston, immediate past president of the Virginia Society of the SAR, and Ernest Coggins, president of the George Washington Chapter.

In addition, Coggins presented Virginia Society awards to a member of the Fairfax County Sheriff's Office and to an Alexandria firefighter/medic. Private first class Nicolas Barb of the Fairfax County Sheriff's Office received the Outstanding Law Enforcement Award, and Alexandria EMS firefighter/medic Kaandra Wilson received the Outstanding Emergency Medical Services Medal.

— JEANNE THEISMANN



JROTC cadets Scarlett Reyes and Mason Lamphier, center, are presented with Outstanding Cadet awards by the Sons of the American Revolution George Washington Chapter Awards Chair Jack Pitzer, left, and President Ernest Coggins April 14 at Belle Haven Country Club.

MWAA New Chief: Huchler

Former police deputy chief lands at airport.

BY VERNON MILES
GAZETTE PACKET

A dream that started with the TV shows Miami Vice and CHiPs has sent former Alexandria Police Deputy Chief David Huchler to the regional airport system. On April 20, Huchler officially assumed the role of police chief for the Metropolitan Washington Airports Authority (MWAA), the organization that oversees Reagan National Airport and Dulles International Airport.

"The last few weeks have been a whirlwind of introductions," said Huchler. "As a cop, I thought I knew all the acronyms. Then I came to MWAA. I've never been so thankful we only have 26 letters." Huchler, who had formerly been acting chief of the Alexandria Police Department before Chief Michael Brown was chosen for the job one year ago, said he grew up in a small town with television-fueled dreams of big city police work.

Huchler said he was drawn to the complexity of the job, with MWAA staff expected to do the work of a traditional police department while also running security for two of the largest targets in the country.

The management of MWAA said Huchler's experience in the DC region played a large role in their selection.

"We're excited that [Huchler] comes from local police," said John Potter, president and CEO of MWAA. "We rely on mutual aid. Those are relationships you have built up. We don't have to build [regional] bridges again."

"The mission here is a tall task," said Margaret McKeough, vice president and chief operating officer of MWAA. "Our mission is connecting the world; people and goods. Thank you for accepting that task."

Huchler said one of his priorities as the



PHOTO BY VERNON MILES

MWAA Police Chief David Huchler

new chief of police will be pushing his staff to also build positive relationships with regional law enforcement and governments. "Our jurisdiction sits over three counties," said Huchler. "[This job] requires good relations with local and federal partners. You have to be able to pick up the phone and call people by their first name. We're making sure our staff are out in the community making those connections."

Among those in attendance were several Alexandria Police officers and former Alexandria Police Chief Earl Cook.

"[Huchler] was going to be chief of police some place," said Cook. "So whoever chose him was going to get a wise, young, excellent leader. I feel better coming through the airport now. I know what he demands, I know the excellence of his standards. It's extremely important that he's still part of the [Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments]. It's important not to have lost that experience. I'm very happy for him and as a private citizen of this area."



VERNON MILES / GAZETTE PACKET

From left: Councilwoman Redella "Del" Pepper, Alexa Lopez, and Ken Lopez.

Marking Earth Day

During a proclamation celebrating Earth Day and Arbor Day at the April 11 City Council meeting, the council also took a moment to celebrate Alexa Lopez, a fourth grade student at Lyles-Crouch Traditional School and winner of the competition to pick an art design for the event.

Alexandria's Earth Day celebration will

be held on April 28 at Lenny Harris Memorial Fields at Braddock Park from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. The event will have educational exhibits, demonstrations, and hands on activities celebrating nature. The event will also host food trucks providing food and beverages for sale.

— VERNON MILES

PEOPLE

Dogs, Dogs, Everywhere

Paws for the People Dog Show to raise funds for food pantry.

BY SHIRLEY RUHE
GAZETTE PACKET

Dogs will be weaving, jumping and performing their best tricks at Paws for the People Dog Show on Saturday, May 19 to benefit Lazarus Food Pantry of Historic Christ Church Alexandria. The event will be held at Market Square in Old Town from 3-6 p.m.

Three rings will run concurrently where the Obedience competitors will compete in a beginner/novice AKC format. In the Agility ring, handlers will guide dogs through a timed series of obstacles including jumps, a tunnel and weave poles.

And if you look like your dog (or vice versa), there is a category for you in the Center Ring “Dog/Owner Look-Alike” along with Best Dog Couple, Most Unique Dog, Best Trick and Best Friend Forever. Winners of from each category will receive the Golden Bone Award and a chance to compete in Best of Show.

But everyone wins; at least if you’re a dog, since all entrants receive a gift card and a treat bag. Competition slots are limited and online registration can be found at <http://bit.ly/Paws4thePeople>. The grand winner will receive a gift basket valued at over \$200. All proceeds will benefit Lazarus Food Pantry. Their “pop-up grocery” is open every Thursday morning at Christ Church for City of Alexandria residents. Melanie Gray, director of Outreach and Mission, says about 10 percent of their clients are homeless but the rest are precariously housed and live on the edge. For a number of years this was the only food pantry in the city offering fresh produce, meat and dairy. In October of 2016, the West End Food Pantry at



Sheila Frazier sorts through the fresh produce donated to Lazarus Food Pantry by the Farmers' Market to find the best swiss chard for feeding her six children.

Church of the Resurrection on Beauregard Street opened their doors, allowing expansion to a wider geographical area.

Lazarus receives donations of fresh produce from the Farmers' Market as well as breads from local bakeries, and food from local citizens. In addition, their volunteers drive to Lorton early every Thursday morning to pick up preordered supplies from the Capital Area Food Bank. Last year Lazarus provided food for over 5,000 people. Lazarus also offers cooking demos to show the clients how to use what was donated that week. In the summer it may be swiss



Frolick Dogs is a canine sports club that offers dogs the opportunity to run the treadmill, race through the obstacle course and walk the balance beam along with having fun with each other.

chard-zucchini pasta and in the winter deer stew.

This event is sponsored by Frolick Dogs and Olde Towne School for Dogs. Frolick Dogs is a canine sports club that opened in 2014 as a different way to exercise dogs. It is structured with group play in the morning with exercise walks and then an individualized exercise routine complete with fitness coach. It includes treadmill, balls, hurdles and hoops to work on agility and balance. Olde Towne School for Dogs was established in 1975 by Carlos and Sandra Mejias in the heart of Old Town.



Lexie relaxes after trotting down the street off-leash in her second week of a two-week training course at Olde Towne School for Dogs.

Alexandria Artist To Exhibit at Smithsonian Craft Show

Wiwat Kamolpornwijit creates polymer clay jewelry.

BY ASHLEY CLAIRE SIMPSON
GAZETTE PACKET

From Thursday, April 26, through Sunday, April 29, some of the most recognized, skilled artisans from all over the country — including Alexandrian artist Wiwat Kamolpornwijit — will come together at the National Building Museum for the 36th Annual Smithsonian Craft Show.

For craft artists, being a part of this show is an honor among honors. Of more than 1,000 artists that applied this year, only 120 were invited to exhibit in the show, which is put on by the Smithsonian Women's Committee (SWC).

“This is not macramé and carved elves,

this is cool stuff,” said SWC President Cissel Gott Collins. “This year’s theme is ‘Asian Influence/American Design,’ and 12 mediums are represented: basketry, ceramics, decorative fiber, furniture, glass, jewelry, leather, metal, mixed media, paper, wearable art and wood.”

All proceeds from the Smithsonian Craft Show go toward the grants that the SWC awards to the 28 museums and research centers — including the National Zoo — that make up the Smithsonian Institution.

“SWC has been around for 52 years, and what we do is raise money to give grants to the Smithsonian,” Gott Collins said. “We’re essentially the fundraising arm of the Smithsonian. We usually receive around 75 grant requests every year and are able to fulfill around 25, which total between \$400,000 and \$500,000 a year, depending on how much we net from the two shows we do every year.”

The SWC is able to raise such substantial amounts of money because the prestige of the two shows they hold every year — the Smithsonian Craft Show every spring, and



Alexandrian artist Wiwat Kamolpornwijit.

their fall Craft2Wear show featuring jewelry and wear-ables — makes it easy to get sponsors and attendees on board.

“The Smithsonian craft show is like the Olympics for craft artists,” said Kamolpornwijit, one of the exhibitors in this year’s show. “It’s one of the best craft shows in the nation. I don’t remember how did I learn about the show in the first place, but it’s been one show I want to do at least once before I die.”

Kamolpornwijit creates polymer clay jewelry and will be putting his works on display for the first time ever at the Smithsonian Craft Show this weekend.

“It means a great deal to me,” Kamolpornwijit said. “I’ve always wanted to be a part of this show. It’s like getting a seal of approval on my shoulder. Making crafts is self-fulfilling in itself, but it’s still encouraging to get this kind of honor.”

Kamolpornwijit came to the United States in 1995 from his native country Thailand to attend graduate school, so this year’s theme, “Asian Influence/American Design”

SEE SMITHSONIAN, PAGE 30

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BY MIKE SALMON
GAZETTE PACKET

The Table Talk restaurant on Duke Street has a meatloaf dish that is their big seller even though it's an old school dish that has been around since they opened in 1975. Enter the internet and a new generation, and Table Talk is on the fence in a way. The Yates family, who own Table Talk, know where the new age of commerce is headed, but then there's the meatloaf and a couple of other dishes that are staples with many customers.

"We're trying to keep it at a happy medium," said Michelle Rigglesman, the manager at Table Talk. "It's like coming home to Grandma's house," she said. Roasted turkey comes in a close second, and it's the pancakes that tops the list in the mornings.

They are dabbling on Facebook and Instagram to keep up with the new marketing and with the times, but there is an old fan base, and meatloaf seems to have a stigma of old fashioned and has been the subject of many jokes involving mom's cooking. Even their website name is in internet captivity, where a new owner got the rights to it, and is trying to sell it back. "We're not buying it back from them," said Rigglesman.



PHOTOS BY MIKE SALMON/GAZETTE PACKET

Behind the bar, Michelle Rigglesman, right, and wait staff Kat McGowan are working to preserve the home-style restaurant.

Sometimes it's tough to keep with what has spelled success in the past, while looking to the new economy.

"The meatloaf is homemade, the biggest seller," reiterated wait staff Kat McGowan.

In 2015, Jeff Yates bought the place when there were rumors of it being sold to developers, but he died last February. The restaurant was left to his fiancée Connie Sofia, who is using social media as much as possible. Facebook, Instagram and Snapchats are part of her plan. "Everyone who follows us can see other families that have stopped

in to dine with us and they can comment on each other's pictures, it's just building bridges for Yates Table Talk," said Sofia. "We're expanding the lines of communication."

Although the Yates family owns Yates Corner, a gas station complex near Del Ray, and Yates Sunoco in Kingstowne, saving Table Talk was a mission of theirs. Jeff Yates "was a regular and did not want to see it be turned into a high rise or office building so as of June 2015 Yates Table Talk is here to stay," said Sofia. She also owns Old Town Auto Body and a nearby pizza restaurant.

Previously, Table Talk specialized in breakfast and lunch but opened for dinner

two years ago to expand business. "We are a family restaurant so we take pride in making our customers feel like they are coming home to family," Sofia said.

Everyone has a hand in boosting business at Table Talk. Waitress Amanda Koomson, a T.C. Williams High School alum, made up her own dessert she calls the Table Talk Delight. It's an oversized chocolate chip cookie, vanilla ice cream, caramel and chocolate syrup and strawberries. "I like desserts," she said.

One old timer in his 90s has been a regular since it opened, and greets everyone with a smile. "If a day goes that we don't see him, we call him," Sofia said.



The sign out front calms the nerves of Table Talk fans who thought development would swallow this old time restaurant on Duke Street.



PHOTOS BY KATIE WALLS

Flagship Store

Mid-Atlantic based shoe retailer Comfort One Shoes recently opened its new flagship store at 200 King St., formerly the home of iconic children's shop The Why Not, which closed in 2016. The 7,600 total sq. foot three-story building sits on a corner at King Street and S. Lee Street. The store will feature everyday comfort styles from casual athletics, flip flops, to walking shoes. Comfort One Shoes was founded in July of 1993 in Old Town Alexandria by Maurice Breton and has evolved into a family-owned and operated business with 130 employees.



As part of celebrating the new store and its 25th anniversary, the retailer exhibited replica Ruby Red slippers from the Smithsonian at an invite-only celebration on April 18.

Hotel Completes Redesign

Kimpton Lorien Hotel & Spa in Old Town Alexandria has completed a \$2.51 million redesign to the hotel's 107 guest rooms including 16 suites, signature outdoor terraces, hallway corridors, public areas, adjacent French brasserie BRABO, and 5,600 square feet of meeting, wedding, and event space.

Kimpton Lorien Hotel & Spa's newly revealed design blends Old Town Alexandria's classic architectural details with contemporary, sophisticated twists, subdued colors and a touch of whimsy with the help of design firms MONOGRAM at BBGM, that led the guest room, corridor and suite design concepts, and David Hill Design, which refreshed the living room and event space décor. A color palette of calming purples, copper, greys, blues and greens adds a relaxed flair. Furnishings with modern twists and tailored details adorn the reimagined spaces.

Arriving at the hotel, guests step off King Street into a brick courtyard that flows to the hotel's lobby, a blend of classic and contemporary with the city's familiar red brick



Kimpton Lorien Hotel & Spa

found in the flooring, juxtaposed with modern slate floors and a wall of artfully hand stacked slate. Past the oversized Queen Anne-style reception desk and cascading chandeliers, travelers can reunite and relax with friends and colleagues at the hotel's hosted daily wine hour in the newly redesigned living room.

As guests travel upstairs, hallway corridors with heritage-inspired wall detailing, colorfully patterned carpet reminiscent of clouds sparkling in the light and three-dimensional focal art guide guests to their quarters. For more information, visit www.lorienhotelandspa.com.

News

Point-in-Time Count Shows More Homeless in City

The 2018 Annual Point-in-Time (PIT) Count revealed 226 persons experiencing homelessness (i.e., unsheltered and in temporary shelter made available by homeless services providers) in the City of Alexandria:

- ❖ 29 Households with Adults and Children (31 adults and 53 children)

- ❖ 142 Singles (99 men, 42 women, and 1 transgender), including: 15 unsheltered singles and 57 chronically homeless singles.

The total number of persons identified as experiencing homelessness during the 2018 Count increased by 15 people from 2017, a seven percent increase overall. The annual enumeration, traditionally done on the last Wednesday of January, provides a one-night unduplicated “snapshot” of persons experiencing homelessness as defined by the U.S. Department of Housing & Urban Development.

The Partnership to Prevent and End Homelessness in the City of Alexandria, a public-private collaborative that serves as the local

Continuum of Care, conducted the City’s 2018 PIT Count on Wednesday, Jan. 24.

A Continuum of Care led team, comprised of local homeless service providers, Department of Community and Human Services (DCHS) staff, and volunteers, manually counted and surveyed persons who were unsheltered in teams.

PIT Count results help convey the scope of homelessness, identify and assess unmet needs and gaps in services, inform funding and other planning decisions, and evaluate progress made in preventing and ending homelessness. The Partnership to Prevent and End Homelessness will be discussing these numbers in detail at the Full Partnership Meeting on May 3, from 10 a.m.-11:30 a.m. in the Lee Center Auditorium, 1108 Jefferson St., Alexandria. Homelessness in Metropolitan Washington, the complete report of the Washington Metropolitan Council of Governments regional PIT Count results, will be posted on its website in the upcoming weeks.

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OPINION

Rebuilding All Year Long

But particularly in April.

BY BREANNE DRISCOLL
OUTREACH MANAGER
REBUILDING TOGETHER ALEXANDRIA

Rebuilding Together Alexandria was once known for a one-day repair blitz on the last Saturday of every April, National Rebuilding Day. As our local and national Rebuilding Together efforts have grown over 32 years, we have become more than just a one day event: we upgrade over 110 homes and community spaces every year. Our roots are still connected to the largest city-wide volunteer event day on April 28, when 700-plus worker-bees will be repairing homes and upgrading non-profit facilities that serve vulnerable individuals and families.

Getting an early start, last weekend nearly 30 Spectrum and Alexandria Police Department volunteers provided free repairs to the homes of long-term friends and Hume Springs neighbors.

Volunteers focused on repairs that made the homes safer, healthier, and more energy-efficient for the elderly homeowners, including replacing windows and storm doors, installing efficient lighting, weatherizing, installing a new fence, installing handheld showerheads

and grab bars, securing handrails and posts, and more. Volunteers also gave out 168 free Safe & Healthy Home kits that contained items to make one's home safer and healthier.

One of the homeowners that was helped last week is Rosa. And though she welcomed the volunteer help on April 14, March 4 is still her favorite day of any year. That's the day, back in 1970, when Rosa moved from Jamaica to the States, following many of her friends who had done so in the '60s. First living in Fairfax, Rosa and her husband moved to northwest DC after he joined her here in 1976.

Once in DC, Rosa started working at the Marriott on M Street NW in the kitchen and as a station attendant. Later she would become a supervisor for Marriott — a firm for whom she worked nearly 30 years. Shortly after moving to DC, Rosa transferred to the Crystal City Marriott and with her husband, rented a home in Alexandria — one large enough to house three of their seven children who decided to join them from Jamaica.

On her way to work one morning, waiting at the bus stop, Rosa met a woman from Trinidad and struck up a conversation about apartment renting. The woman encouraged Rosa to look into buying a home, something Rosa and her husband thought would be out of their financial reach. With some work and discipline, Rosa and her family bought a home in Hume Springs in 1978 — and paid \$248 a month for the mortgage. Though her husband passed away a few years ago, 84-year-old Rosa



Spectrum and Alexandria Police Department volunteers help repair.

still lives in her two-story row home with her daughter and granddaughter, with help from Rebuilding Together to maintain it.

Rebuilding Together Alexandria is an award-winning, mission-driven organization that creates healthy neighborhoods for Alexandria residents by maintaining affordable housing for low-income homeowners, revitalizing community spaces, and creating homeownership opportunities. Since 1986, more than 27,000 volunteers have worked on 2,137 projects, leveraging \$7.5 million worth of in-kind value to Alexandria. Rebuilding Together's work contributes to helping the city remain economically, socially and culturally diverse.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Different Missions

To the Editor:

At April 10's City Council legislative session, Justin Wilson and Paul Smedberg submitted a proposal to consolidate the Old and Historic Board of Architectural Review, established in 1946, with

the Parker-Gray Board of Architectural Review, created in 1984. The reason stated for the proposal during the meeting was that the docket of the Parker Gray BAR has been reduced because of administrative approvals and that this would reduce staff time necessary and increase efficiency.

The mayor spoke first saying that "These are two distinct enti-

ties," and that "it requires much more public input." Del Pepper said she was "not very enthusiastic" and needed "more input from stakeholders" and did not like that a "proposal was sprung on us."

I observed that no consideration in the discussion seemed to be given to the significant history of these two entities, the fact that they have different criteria, and have different missions to preserve structures from different eras. The Old and Historic was created to preserve Colonial history and sites related to George Washington and is overlapped by three National Register Districts. Parker-Gray is preserving primarily African American History and took until 2004 to establish a the Parker Gray National Register District.

I would have thought that council would have been more respectful of the progress the city has made in recognizing the contributions of African American history. It would have been much better to have had both BAR's and other historical organizations present and to hear from them the request to merge. It also would have been more reassuring to the public that this proposal's real goal was not dismantle institutions that protect

the architectural character of our neighborhoods.

Robert Ray
Candidate for City Council

Council's Failure

To the Editor:

Councilmember Bailey concludes his letter to the editor dated April 12 by asking the public for their ideas with regard to affordable housing in Alexandria. Does he not receive reports from the Alexandria Affordable Housing Advisory Committee, which meets monthly? What have they to say about meeting the city's goal for affordable housing? Are citizens in Alexandria really interested in creating more affordable housing in Alexandria?

It is broadly known that Councilmember Bailey already has a plan. He wants to raise the meals and hotel taxes. In other words he doesn't want the citizens of Alexandria to support affordable housing. He wants the visitors and tourists to do so. The problem is that

SEE LETTERS, PAGE 11



PHOTO BY GERI BALDWIN

Earth Day

Flowers of Spring along the curve of the 400 Block of Wilkes Street.

Alexandria
Gazette Packet

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An independent, locally owned weekly newspaper delivered to homes and businesses.

Published by
Local Media Connection LLC

1606 King Street
Alexandria, Virginia 22314

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A Connection Newspaper

The Alexandria Gazette Packet is distributed weekly to selected homes in the City of Alexandria. Any owners or occupants of premises that do not wish to receive the paper can notify the publisher by telephone at 703-778-9426 or by email to circulation@connectionnewspapers.com, and the distributor will be notified to discontinue service.



LETTERS

FROM PAGE 10

these taxes end up hurting exactly the same people he is trying to help. Others who have used an increase in meals taxes for this and other purposes find that the overall impact is a reduction in the tips for the restaurant workers, so they now have even less to pay for housing. The same applies to the hospitality industry. Higher hotel taxes lead to lower occupancy, which means a loss of jobs or a cut back in hours for the low income workers in these hotels. It also means less tips for the cleaning staff.

If the city desires to have a diverse population and a housing stock that covers low income as well as middle and upper income individuals, it needs to come up with the money to do so itself. Furthermore, it needs to better preserve existing structures that could be readily converted into affordable housing rather than allowing them to be demolished to create higher priced housing. The latter is definitely in their power, since they approve these projects. As an example, Councilmember Bailey, along with the rest of the City Council recently voted unanimously to permit the destruction

of the old Naval Reserve Association building on King Street (see photo) in favor of a luxury hotel. This would have been a great place for affordable housing. It is close to public transportation, shopping, and public spaces which ideally serve low income individuals.

Councilmember Bailey is not the only councilmember who says he wants more affordable housing but does not show the true conviction to make it happen. Most if not all of the councilmembers and the mayor are in the same category.

As you all know, the Democratic Primary is only about seven weeks away. This is your opportunity to express your interests by voting for candidates who are truly committed to your views and opinions. If you are indeed concerned about housing remaining affordable in the city, this is your chance to get rid of all of the existing council members and mayor. Vote June 12.

James J. Melton
Alexandria



The demolition of the old Naval Reserve Association building.

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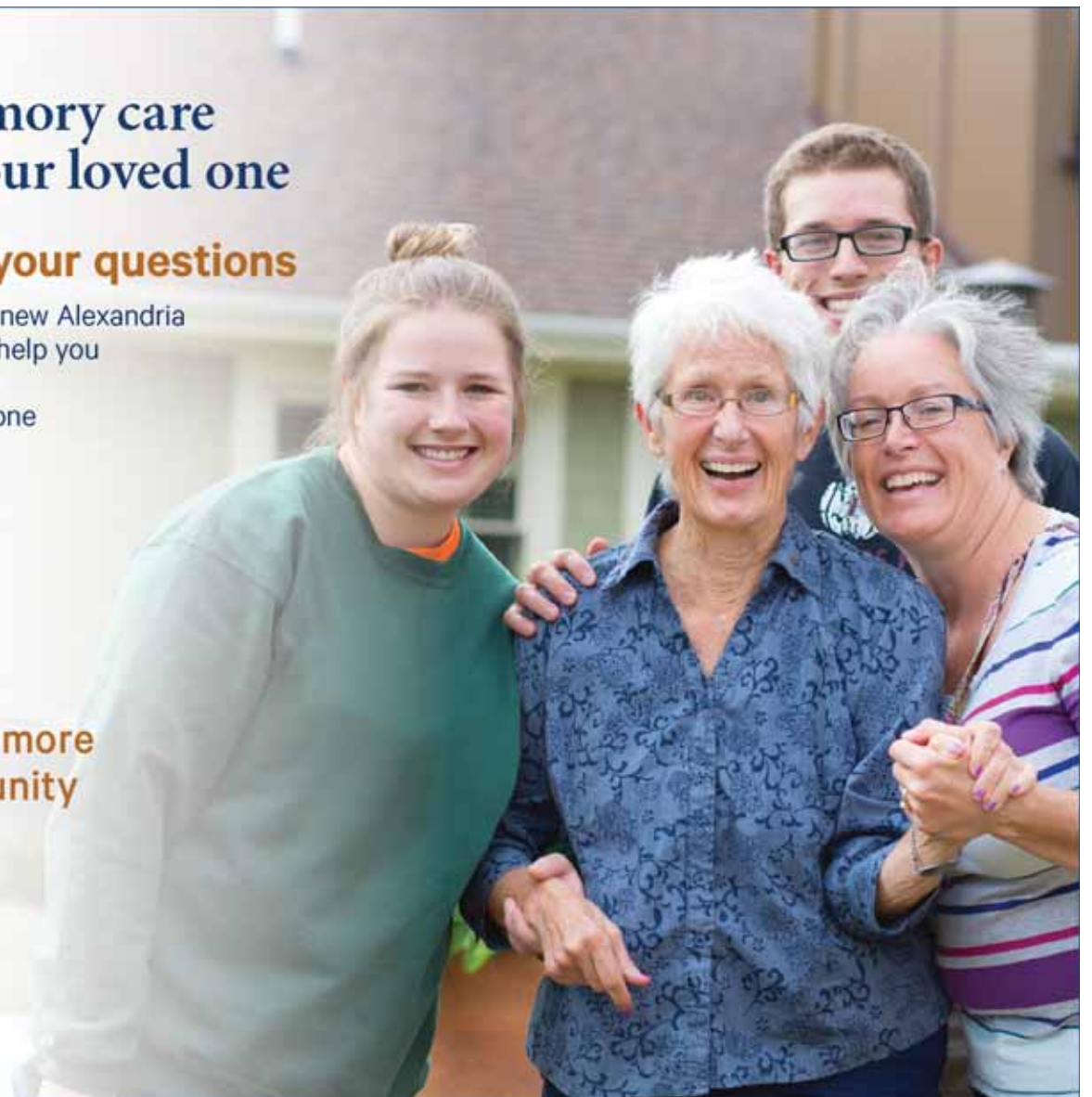
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From Estate to City

Runners pace themselves at GW Parkway Classic Ten Miler.

By Eden Brown
Gazette Packet

The GW Parkway Classic Ten Miler and 5K was celebrating its 34th anniversary on Sunday, April 22. Runners woke up to a bright red sky at around 6 a.m., and began the ten miler just outside Mount Vernon, the home of the nation's first president, at 8 a.m.

The GW Parkway Classic is a USATF (USA Track and Field) certified course that runs along the scenic George Washington Memorial Parkway. The Parkway Classic is a primary sponsor of the Boys and Girls Club of Alexandria. It is also a favorite among veterans' support groups, local charities and cancer fundraisers, and, because of its relatively flat course, those who are just getting back into running long distances.

Will Christian, 34, of Norfolk, came in first with a pace of 5:03 minutes per mile. Kieran O'Connor, of Arlington, 31, came in second, with a pace of 5:14, and Bryan Cook, of Durham, N.C., 24,



Joe Quintero, GM at "cafe 44 on the Potomac" prepares for the after race runners.

came in third with a pace of 5:17 minutes per mile.

In the 5K, Thomas Kelly, 28, of Washington D.C. came in first with a pace of 5:13. Travis Boltjes, 38, also of Washington came in second at 5:18, and Amber Hawkins, 22, of Burke, came in third with a pace of 5:43 per mile.

Jacqueline Gruendel, of Clifton, 43, and Lauren Edwards, of Arlington, 42, were the first women in the Ten Miler to cross the finish

line and came in 9 and 10, with a pace of 6:04 and 6:05 respectively.

Security along the route was tight. Park police, local police, and SWAT teams, were placed at regular intervals along the route. Hundreds of volunteers helped make the race a smoothly running event. Eugene Robinson and Patricia Foust were two volunteers on bag duty. They unloaded six trucks of personal belongings so runners could run without bags and



PHOTOS BY LAURA MAE SUDDER

This Parkway Classic sign made runners laugh.

sweatshirts. Robinson said a few years ago someone asked him if he was doing anything on a Saturday in April. They said there is always a need at the Parkway Classic race for marshals and other help. Robinson has been volunteering at the race ever since. His colleague Patricia Foust said she volunteers "because I just love people."

As always, the race's highlight was the people: runners were

friendly and courteous. Signs and supporters' encouragement along the route, particularly the children who held out their hand for "high fives" made the run a community affair. Runners were rewarded with breakfast tacos from District Taco and the standard post-run drink of choice, beer, if they ran fast enough to get it. The beer ran out around 10:30 a.m.; Port City Brewing Company attributed the shortage to the warm day.

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The first anniversary celebration of Alexandria-based store Home on Cameron will include a block party that is open to the public.

PHOTO BY
STACY ZARIN
GOLDBERG

Store's Anniversary Offers Block Party

Interior designers Todd Martz and Susan Nelson will celebrate the one-year anniversary of their home furnishing store, Home on Cameron with a block party on Thursday, April 26 from 5:30-8:30 p.m. at 315 Cameron St., Alexandria.

The event, which is open to the public, will include live music and light fare from Hank's Pasta Bar and Territory Food. Guests will have a chance to win an item from Home on Cameron's collection of upholstered furniture, custom din-

ing pieces, Nepal felt flowers, console and coffee tables by artisans from Virginia and Washington, D.C., local art, antiques, couture chandeliers, lamps, ceramics, wooden toys and dog items.

Also participating in the celebration are other local businesses including A Galerie Antiques Fine Art, Helen Olivia Flowers, Donna Lewis, Fit One Personal Training Studio, Gossypia and The Hive.

— MARILYN CAMPBELL

BULLETIN BOARD

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

ONGOING

Film Festival Call for Entries. The Alexandria Film Festival kicks off its 12th year with its annual Call for Entries now open. Filmmakers can enter short and feature-length films of any genre on two digital platforms: Filmfreeway.com and Withoutabox.com. Festival judges will evaluate films before selecting the best to bring to the city, for the three-day event Nov. 9-11. The program will feature more than 50 free and ticketed films — including many premieres — to delight, entertain, and inform area film enthusiasts. AMC Hoffman 22 Theater and Beatley Central Library will serve as venues for the festival.

THURSDAY/APRIL 26

Assessing Community Health. 6-8 p.m. at First Baptist Church, 2932 King Street, Alexandria. The Alexandria Health Department will host a kick-off meeting for a community health assessment process. In addition to introducing participants and describing the year-long process of assessing community health, the event aims to understand the main health concerns of

Alexandria's diverse residents. Free and open to the public; attendees are asked to register online. To register, visit alexandriava.gov/Health.

Public Meeting. 6:30-9 p.m. at Alexandria Renew Education Center & Meeting Space, 1800 Limerick St., Sixth Floor. In January 2018, the City of Alexandria and the Alexandria Redevelopment and Housing Authority (ARHA) began an effort to review and modernize their joint commitment requiring replacement of public housing and publicly-assisted units that are demolished or redeveloped. The meeting topic will be "Recommendations on Updated Resolution 830 Policy." Refreshments will be provided. The public is encouraged to participate by attending meetings and providing input during public discussion periods. Questions and comments will also be taken throughout the public consultation process. Visit www.alexandriava.gov/Housing.

Republican Women's Reception. 7 p.m. buffet reception; 7:45 p.m. program portion at The Lyceum, 201 S. Washington St., Alexandria. The

SEE BULLETIN, PAGE 21

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Shaping Future Through Transit

BY DAN BRENDEN
GAZETTE PACKET

Through a series of public forums, a regional transit agency seeks to put in formulating a new, bolder transit plan.

The agency is the federally mandated National Capital Region Transportation Planning Board (TPB), which includes representa-

tives from 26 state and local governments, as well as Metro. TPB writes the plans that big transportation-related projects must adhere to in order to be eligible for major public dollar allocations. In this way it serves as a kind of “gatekeeper,” said John Swanson, a transportation planner with the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (COG), which provides TPB’s staffing.

Should a vision shrink to meet fiscal constraints, or should funding grow into fulfilling a larger vision?

TPB’s current program, called the Financially Constrained Long-Range Transportation Plan (CLRPT), tends toward the former. It’s “not a wish list of projects,” but includes only “projects for which funding is ‘reasonably expected’ to be available” in the future.” Visu-

Transit agency seeks public input on major new planning initiative.

alize 2045 adds some element of the latter. In addition to some 500 funded projects of the sort in the CLRPT, it’ll include 500 or more that have been planned but not yet funded, or that are “aspirational.”

“The new long-range plan has things that we want to do more of. But we need to find the funding and, frankly, we need to find the political will to make these things happen,” said Swanson. The public forums seek to put “flesh on the bones of these initiatives. ... Do [residents] think that these are things that they want to see more of? Or do they have concerns about some of the initiatives, and some directions that they

don’t want us to go? We’d like to really explore with the public what these things look like, what they mean, what they could mean to their futures.”

Unfunded initiatives fall under seven headings:

♦ **Bring Jobs & Housing Closer Together:** “Our region doesn’t have enough housing for our expected growth,” according to a TPB presentation. TPB identifies 141 “regional activity centers,” six of which are in Alexandria, around which it wants to see residential density increase. This approach is “efficient,” making “good use of existing infrastructure” and

SEE TRANSIT, PAGE 15



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Robbing Peter

FROM PAGE 4

and NOVA Parks have put forward requests totaling \$2.5 billion for 60 candidate projects to compete for that diminished pot. The winnowing process, currently underway, will conclude on June 14.

Alexandria put forward six projects requesting a total of \$88 million in NVTA funds. The biggest is bus rapid transit (BRT) in the West End, requesting \$61 million. BRT lanes between Landmark Mall and the Pentagon compromise a major chunk of Alexandria’s long-term economic development plans.

“We’ll be OK for this year,” although “this has a significant impact on local jurisdictions,” said Mayor Allison Silberberg, Alexandria’s NVTA representative. While she applauds dedicated Metro funding in general, “it’s a shame” that sourcing through increased taxes didn’t pan out. She says the ultimate impact is unknown until NVTA makes its final decision.

Councilwoman Redella Pepper thinks the West End BRT is “really at risk.” While the city is covered for FY19, “I really, really worry” about subsequent years, she said. Pepper encourages Alexandrians to attend forums, such as the NVTA public hearing on May 10, in order to “put forward the Alexandria agenda.”

“Clearly the [Metro] funding bill will have significant impacts on NVTA funding and the West End Transitway [is] certainly threatened,” said Vice Mayor Justin Wilson. “We will work to identify ways to continue the progress on the project in light of the new funding reality.”

“If some projects don’t get funded at all, that hurts everyone and exacerbates traffic congestion

in and around Northern Virginia,” said Councilman Willie Bailey. “We will continue to fight to get money back in NVTA.”

Yon Lambert, Alexandria’s director of transportation and environmental services, is more upbeat, saying: “As of today it is not clear what the full impact of decreased available NVTA regional funds will do to the competitiveness of the West End Transitway. However, this project was previously a strong candidate for funding ... Staff is optimistic that it will remain a competitive project in the future, regardless of the overall level of funding.”

At this point, the Metro funding bill will become law, whether or not Northam signs it. Not signing it would constitute merely a “symbolic” gesture of disapproval, said Del. Mark Levine (D-45). While Northam could veto the bill, Levine thinks that’s highly unlikely and not in Northern Virginia’s best interest, as a veto would kill dedicated Metro funding in its entirety.

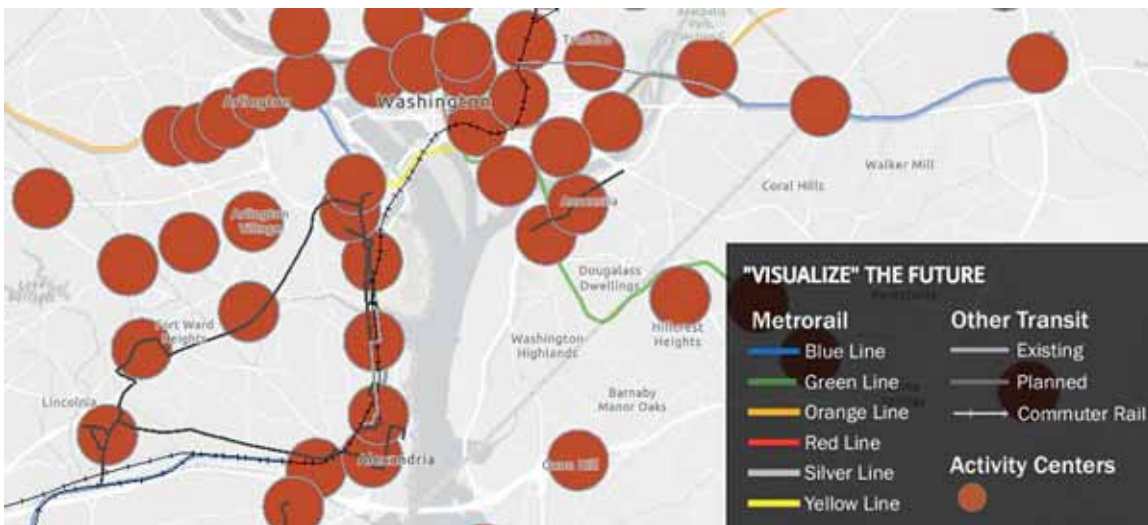
“The bill as drafted is better than no bill at all,” he said.

Though there exists “one more trap door that I hope the Governor takes,” Levine thinks Northam could raise the same taxes and appropriate to NVTA through the state’s budget process, which remains unfinished. This work-around could conceivably accomplish the same intent, just not through dedicated funding.

Levine says that not crimping NVTA’s funding would benefit the whole Commonwealth. Projects that don’t make the NVTA cut would probably go on to compete for statewide funds, where they might then elbow out downstate projects.

Find detailed information about all legislation online at lis.virginia.gov.

WWW.CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM



New forthcoming long-range regional transit plan, seeking public input, wants to tie together transit options, housing, jobs and jurisdictional funding and political will.

Shaping Future Through Transit

FROM PAGE 14

providing "opportunity for transit options," said Swanson. "It's probably the most powerful tool that we can use to reduce congestion."

❖ **Expand Bus Transit Regionwide:** Bus rapid transit (BRT) "would provide high-quality transit services that approach the speed of rail, but at a fraction of the cost to build," according to the presentation. "More transit would provide new travel options for scores of people who currently struggle to get to and from work."

❖ **Move More People on Metrorail:** Projects could include expanding more trains from six to eight cars; expanding and adding Metro stations; and adding a new inner loop between the Pentagon, Georgetown and Union Station. Stations in the metropolitan core account for 80 percent of all rail destinations and transfer points, so reducing congestion there would relieve congestion everywhere, including on roadways.

❖ **Provide More Telecommuting & Other Options for Commuting:** Projects could include employer incentives for telework; increased transit and carpool subsidies; and reduced parking subsidies.

❖ **Expand Express Highway Network:** More toll lanes would encourage carpooling and bus-riding. "Express lanes would expand economic opportunity, making it easier for commuters to know with certainty that they can get to work on time on a regular basis," according to the presentation. They're also the "most likely" means of generating sufficient revenue for road projects.

❖ **Improve Walk & Bike Access to Transit:** Projects would improve sidewalks, lighting, crossings and trails, especially to increase accessibility to mass transit.

❖ **Complete the National Capital Trail:** Projects would add or improve 21 miles of bicycle/pedestrian trails.

Many city plans and initiatives already accord well with Visualize 2045, says Yon Lambert, Alexandria's director of transportation & environmental services. "Alexandria is focusing on projects such as the Potomac Yard Metrorail Station ... and the West End Transitway because these projects support the city's goals and align with regional initiatives," he said. The city is "also committed to making investments in transportation technologies that improve road safety and traffic management."

Councilman Tim Lovain supports "focusing development around our Metro stations and always including affordable housing in that development," he said earlier this month. He also supports "improving pedestrian and bicycle access to our Metrorail stations."

Vice Mayor Justin Wilson said that Visualize 2045 "requires bold thinking across the region to make the recommendations reality, but it's important to get us thinking about what is possible."

Find materials at www.mwcog.org/visualize2045. Public forums closest to Alexandria are on Tuesday, May 1, 7-9 p.m., at COG (777 N. Capitol St. NE, Suite 300, Washington, D.C.); and Wednesday, May 2, 6:30-8:30 p.m., at the Arlington County Central Library (1015 N. Quincy St., Arlington).

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Stories Of Valor

With more than 60 honorees, the 2018 Valor Awards, presented by the Chamber of Commerce on April 19, were a record year for celebrating heroism and dedication among Alexandria's first responders. From rescuing citizens from a bridge's edge to stepping in to save another officer from an attack, the Valor Awards celebrated actions taken throughout 2017 that saved lives in Alexandria. Of particular note were the police officers and firefighters that responded to the June 14 shooting at Eugene Simpson Stadium Park where members of Congress were targeted.

— VERNON MILES



PHOTOS BY VERNON MILES / GAZETTE PACKET

Police officers and firefighters who responded to the shooting at Eugene Simpson Stadium Park on June 14, 2017.



Lt. Matthew Weinert (left) and K9 Officer Carlos Rolon with Zigzag. Not pictured: Detective Keith Burkholder. Officers pursued a murder suspect from Prince George's County to the parking lot of the Hilton hotel. Officers cornered the armed suspect before he could enter the hotel and were able to take him into custody. All were awarded Bronze Medals for their actions.



From left: Fire Chief Robert Dube, FF Daryoush Hematti, FF Travis Daniels, FF Ashley Whisonant, FF Joseph Porcelli. Not pictured: FF Eric Vafier and FF Joseph Beavan. These firefighters put themselves at risk as they worked through a home with hoarding conditions to rescue an adult female victim and an adult male victim from a burning building. Both civilians died as a result of their injuries, but the crew of Engine 209 and Truck 209 were awarded Life Saving Awards for their efforts.



Police Chief Michael Brown (left) with Officer Daniel Caniff. Canniff was off-duty in his apartment when a fire alarm was triggered, with smoke emanating from an apartment of an individual with an ongoing mental health issue. The subject fled when the fire department entered the apartment, and Caniff was able to pursue and subdue the subject without any police equipment.



Sheriff Dana Lawhorne (left) and Deputy Sheriff Myrna Juarez. Juarez was driving to work when she witness a motor vehicle crash. The only one on the scene, Juarez instructed passengers in stabilizing a wounded passenger while she attempted to stabilize him. The injured passenger did not survive, but for her actions Juarez received a Life Saving Award.



From left: Police Chief Michael Brown with Officer David Daniels, Officer Chuck Young, Officer John Brattelli, Officer Raymond Golden, Officer Steven Moffa. Officers responded to a shooting and were able to stabilize an injured man before using his information to locate and arrest the suspect in a shooting. Golden received a Life Saving Award, while the other officers received Certificates of Valor.

News



From left: Police Chief Michael Brown, Officer Michael Izzi, Officer Michael Matteson, Medic Remi Howell, Medic Brett Buehler, FF Karl Kappelman, Police Chief Robert Dube. Officers responded to a welfare check where they found a male subject lying on a couch repeatedly stabbing himself in the throat with a kitchen knife. Officers ran towards the subject and were able to take control of the knife. Officers began taking life-saving measures and were able to control hemorrhaging until medics arrived. The difficult medical procedure was successfully performed and the subject's life was saved, at which time a nearby deceased female was located and the case was classified as a homicide.



Sheriff Dana Lawhorne (left), Deputy Brian Wade (center), Deputy Gerald Wooden. Wade and Wooden found an inmate lying on his side with open and bloodshot eyes. A wire was found around his neck, and both deputies performed life-saving measures that ultimately rescued the inmate from an attempted suicide. Both received Life Saving Awards.



From left: Police Chief Michael Brown, Officer Reid Hudson, Officer Anthony LaRusso, Sergeant Daniel Gordon, Officer Bryson Norris, Officer Douglass Serven II. Not pictured: Sergeant Gregory Holden. Officers responded to a shooting at the Extended Day America Hotel. One woman was found in the parking lot, and two more gunshot victims were found inside in a bedroom. The male victim in the bedroom died, the female victim was paralyzed and the woman outside survived. All officers received Bronze Medals.

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PHOTOS BY VERNON MILES / GAZETTE PACKET

Fire Chief Robert Dube (left) with FF Jason Sharpe. Not pictured: FF Arash Hematti. Firefighters responded to a fire in a townhome where they learned from neighbors that a resident that had left the home had run back inside. Rushing inside the building, they located the woman lying on the kitchen floor and were able to remove her from the building and perform life support care. Hematti and Sharpe were awarded Life Saving Awards.



Police Chief Michael Brown (left) with Officer Richard Sandoval. Not pictured: Officer Suzanne Watts. Both officers were dispatched to a call about a disorderly male smashing car windows. On their arrival, Watts was attacked by the suspect. Watts was able to discharge her weapon to cease the attack despite a head wound. On arrival, Sandoval charged at the assailant and was able to subdue the assailant. Watts was awarded a silver medal, while Sandoval was awarded a Bronze Medal.



From left: Police Chief Michael Brown, Officer Westrick McIlvain, Officer Constance Kniesler, Officer Joel Hughes. Not pictured: Sergeant Jeff Stovall. Officers searched for a man who reportedly intended to kill himself by jumping off of a bridge. The suspect was contacted by cell phone but repeatedly hung up. However, the bridge in question was able to be determined and officers were able to find the suspect and talk him away from the railing. Stovall and Hughes received Life Saving Awards, while Kniesler and McIlvain received Certificates of Valor.

Affording Summer Camp

For families with a limited budget, paying for camp can be a challenge.

BY MARILYN CAMPBELL

One of the great pleasures of summer is going to camp. From kayaking and rock climbing to horseback riding and sail-ing, camp is a place where lifelong memories are created. A recent study by the non-profit, global policy think tank RAND Corporation shows that voluntary summer programs like camp have a significant, positive impact on low-income students during a time when they fall behind their wealthier peers both academically and socially.

Katie Crump, a case manager at Interfaith Works, a non-profit organization dedicated to helping the poor and underserved, says that the luxury of summer camp often eludes those who need it most.

"The opportunity of attending a real summer camp is a big thing for them. Unfortunately, this experience can be unattainable due to the high cost and finding transportation among other things," said Crump. "Attending summer camp affords kids a special and important experience that's all their own. It allows kids to be kids, something that is particularly vital for low-income children who are often forced to deal with the burdens of adulthood at a young age."

Despite the cost of summer camp, keeping children engaged during the stretch of



Children at Camp Invention create tracks for a self-driving robot. This camp has funding to sponsor low-income children this summer.

time between June and August when school is not in session is a critical part of their development, says Jerome Short, Ph.D., associate professor of psychology at George Mason University.

"Summer camps give opportunities for children to develop social, emotional, cognitive, and behavioral skills," he said. "Some

research shows that higher [socioeconomic status] children increase academic and behavioral skills over the summer and lower [socioeconomic status] children lose skills over the summer. Research shows that lower [socioeconomic status] children benefit from learning social and behavioral skills in different settings with new peers and

More

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<https://www.fsafeds.com/>

challenges to apply their skills." Even with limited

resources, summer camps can still be accessible, says Tom Rosenberg, president and CEO of the American Camp Association (ACA). "There is a camp for every budget," he said "[Most] ACA-accredited camps provide some form of scholarship assistance. Reach out to the camp directly to ask about specific financial aid and scholarship options."

The RAND study also showed that even though low-income students can lose up to two months of math and reading skills over the summer, high-quality summer programs can bridge that gap. Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) camps are an example of programs that can be effective, but possibly unaffordable for some families.

Wolftrap and Colvin Run elementary schools in Fairfax County will be the site of a non-profit STEM camp called Camp Invention. Organized by the National Inven

SEE AFFORDING, PAGE 19



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CAMPS & SCHOOLS

Affording Summer Camp

FROM PAGE 18

tors Hall of Fame (NIHF), the hands-on program is designed for children in kindergarten through sixth grade. Through activities like building robots and designing gadgets, campers get a sense of what it's like to be a physicist or engineer.

"The program has sponsors that provide funding that's used to help underrepresented kids attend the camps," said Ken Torisky, spokesman for National Inventors Hall of Fame. "The money is distributed to students by the school district."

Options for financial assistance for summer camp run the gamut from discounts for dependents of those serving in the military to camp funding offered by churches, synagogues, and civic organizations. "I would suggest to parents that they look into their child being sponsored by a local business to attend a camp or look into payment plan options at a camp that they are interested in attending," advised Stacie Gottlieb, director, Bullis Summer and Extended Day Programs in Potomac, Md.

While Bullis does not offer financial assistance for summer camp, Gottlieb says that there are discounts for early registration and registering for multiple weeks of camp.

Parents should check to see if a camp participates in U.S. government assistance programs, particularly those with income eligibility requirements, like Title XX, advises Rosenberg. While it might be too late for this summer, he encourages parents to explore Dependent Care Flexible Spending Accounts and a Child and Dependent Care tax credit through the FSA Feds


website: <https://www.fsafeds.com/>.

"I generally think lower income children benefit when they have access to the same opportunities as upper-income children and also gain cultural skills and knowledge important to upward mobility when

"Research shows that lower [socioeconomic status] children benefit from learning social and behavioral skills in different settings with new peers and challenges to apply their skills."

— **Jerome Short, Ph.D., associate professor of psychology at George Mason University.**

they have opportunity to interact with upper-income kids," said Amy L. Best, Ph.D., professor and chair, Department of Sociology and Anthropology at George Mason University. "I also think upper-income kids gain mightily when they have genuine interactions with kids from other class backgrounds. Because empathy, cross cultural understanding, and an ability to work in diverse groups are skills that this new century demands, having opportunities to hone those skills are of value for all involved."



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SCHOOLS

T.C. Williams Crew Hits Mid-Season Contests

The T.C. Williams crew team competed in two different regattas on Saturday, April 21, as rowers hit the season midpoint and continue to train their minds, muscles, and mojo for postseason regattas, including the Virginia State Championships in May and elite rowing events in Pennsylvania, New Jersey, and Ontario, Canada in the following weeks.

The TC Women returned to St. Andrews School in Delaware for Noxontown Regatta #4, featuring rowers from a few of the nation's elite rowing programs. The Titan Men were closer to home, competing against 32 high schools and over 250 boats in the Ted Phoenix Regatta on the Occoquan Reservoir.

Weather conditions at both locations were excellent, providing rowers with ideal opportunities to test their strengths and identify areas to improve during two-a-day practices as the season reaches its zenith.

At the Ted Phoenix, the TC Men's First 4+, composed of Senior rowers Stefanos Psaltis-Ivanis, Connor McGivern, Jake Souza, and Ian Willmore, and coxswain Michaela Gleeson, won their early afternoon heat over four other boats to secure a lane in the finals with a time of 5:32.30,

beating Mt. Vernon by 11 seconds and West Potomac by 14.

In their late afternoon final with sunny skies and a light breeze, for the first 1000 meters the TC Men evenly battled Forest Park and South County, which placed first and second, respectively, in their qualifying heats. For the last 500 meters, Gleeson raised the stroke rate and the Titans steadily gained the lead, finishing with a winning time of 5:27.10 and open water between their boat, South County (5:32.47), and Forest Park (5:36.60).

"We had a lot more time on the water this week" said Souza, "so it's nice to see the

hard work pay off." "It was nice to win this week," added Psaltis-Ivanis, "but we still have a lot of work to do before the state championship." The TC Men's Light 4+ placed third in their final behind Stuart and Forest Park with a time of 5:41.51. TC Men's 8-seat boats at the Ted Phoenix all "raced up" against more seasoned boats, preparing them for the stiff competition they will face in postseason contests.

In Delaware, the Titan Women's First 8 faced off against national powerhouses Merion Mercy and Kent to place third in their final with a time of 5:18.6. The Women's Second 8 placed second and only

1.2 seconds behind host St. Andrews with a time of 5:20.0, and 1.2 seconds ahead of third-place Kent.

Among junior boats, the Titan Women's Frosh 8A and 8B boats competed in the six-boat Frosh 8 category, securing first- and third-place finishes, respectively. The TC Women's Frosh 8A boat, composed of rowers Riley Bucholz, Libby Padilla, Mackenzie Allen, Kaitie Dennis, Wellesley Snyder, Grace Yokitis, Adrienne Carter, and Halle Reinholtz, and coxswain Caroline Miles, posted a winning time of 5:32.7, followed by Merion Mercy at 5:43.8, and TC teammates in the Frosh 8B at 5:46.2.

TC's Women's Novice rowing program brought three 8-seat boats to the party at St. Andrews, placing first, third, and fifth in their Women's Fifth/Novice race category. It was the first win of the season for Novice rowers Shevlin Jaffe, Taylor Motsinger, Ava Snyder, Nikki Harris, Ella Scontras, Maile Organek, Violet Knott, and Zoe Lutzker, and coxswain Maddy Glanz. They finished in 6:08.8. The Titan Women and Men are back together on April 28 for their final regular-season races at the Charlie Butt Regatta on the Potomac River near Georgetown.



TC Williams Men's First 4+ at the Ted Phoenix Regatta

PHOTO COURTESY OF PETE STRAMESE

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OBITUARY

Former U.S. Rep. Al Swift

Former U.S. Rep. Al Swift, an Emmy award-winning broadcaster who represented the 2nd Congressional District in Washington state, died April 20, 2018 of natural causes. An Alexandrian resident, he was 82 years old.



He was first elected to the U.S. House in 1978, succeeding Lloyd Meeds, for whom Swift served as top aide from 1965 to 1969. Swift won re-election to Congress seven times, retiring in 1994.

House Speaker Tom Foley often spoke of legislative "show horses and work horses" – Al was known as a work horse who more than held his own on the powerful Energy and Commerce Committee. Congressional Quarterly's Politics in America put it this way: "Patient, diligent and disdainful of publicity, he is one of the most impressive legislators to arrive in Congress in recent years."

In his first term, he drafted the Northwest Power Act, and in subsequent terms he helped to forge bipartisan Clean Air Act and Superfund legislation. As chair of the Transportation and Hazardous Materials Subcommittee, he worked to restore Amtrak service between Seattle and Vancouver, B.C., and promoted high-speed rail nationally through the Swift Rail Development Act of 1994. Rail safety and hazardous materials legislation were other priorities.

Swift also became Congress' ranking expert on election law. As chair of the House Elections Subcommittee, he authored and led the passage of the National Voter Registration Act of 1993, known as the "motor-voter" law, which expanded voter registration options nationwide. Accessible polling places and easier overseas voting were other legislative accomplishments.

He helped craft the Washington Wilderness Bill and did not neglect local issues such as easier border crossing, Elwha River fish restoration, land conservation, and many infrastructure improvements.

Allan Byron Swift was born Sept. 12, 1935, in Tacoma, Wash. Growing up in Tacoma, life revolved around the Methodist church, his younger brother Larry recalled.

"We grew up in a family with very clear standards, drawn from the Methodist Church. Our dad was a truck driver for Coca Cola and turned down a job driving for Heidelberg at twice the salary because our parents didn't think it would send the right message to us. Neither my brother nor I were believers in the conventional meaning, but the core values of our parents were central to Al's world view – compassion, a sense of justice and fairness – the kind of values that it takes for a society to live together peacefully."

Swift received a bachelor's degree from the Central Washington College of Education in 1957.

His first career was in broadcasting – first in radio, then as news director for KVOS-TV in Bellingham. He was known for his skills at oration and humorous storytelling, often with a cigar in hand, which served him well during his Congressional career.

"Al accomplished so much for Washington state during his career," said Gov. Jay Inslee. "On the environment, energy, and voting, but today I miss him for this: Al could tell a humorous tale and enjoy a laugh as well as anybody, anywhere."

"Al Swift was the first elected official I remember meeting as a kid," said U.S. Rep. Derek Kilmer (WA-6th District). "I was probably seven or eight years old and I remember him telling me a joke (the first of many in the nearly four decades since – the jokes got a bit more mature as I did). At 19, I interned in his office. Not only did he instill in me the value of public service, he taught me something I'll never forget. On the last day of the internship he invited me into his office and said 'I'm now going to teach you the most important lesson of this internship.' I keenly waited on the edge of my seat as he opened his desk drawer and said, 'I'm going to teach you how to light and smoke a cigar' (which was my first and last.)"

U.S. Rep. Rick Larsen (WA-2nd District), said he knew Swift first as his representative and later as a mentor and friend. "I will remember Al for his work on transportation, especially rail; for his efforts to increase access to the ballot box; but mostly for his gut-busting stories. When asking me which district I represent, people used to ask if I was in the 'Al Swift seat.' Even today, my answer is still a proud, 'Yes.'"

Swift was married to Paula (nee Jackson) for 56 years and they had two daughters, Amy and Lauri. Paula died in 2012. Just as Al was a mentor to many in politics, Paula was a dedicated teacher who made a lasting impression on many students.

After leaving Congress, Al and Paula chose to live in Alexandria, close to their two daughters and their families. The two were dedicated grandparents and loved traveling with family and friends. They made annual trips home to Washington state and, in recent years, Al would often be accompanied by one of his daughters. This past summer he made the trip with his granddaughter and great-grandson. Al wanted to show his great-grandson the tide flats near Bellingham Bay, where he once produced "Tidepool Critters" for KVOS TV. He is survived by his brother Larry Swift (Earlyse) and his daughters Amy (Dan) Donovan and Lauri Swift and three grandchildren and one great grandson.

Memorial services will be held on May 5, at 1 p.m. at Everly-Wheatley Funeral Home in Alexandria. The family is also planning a service in Washington state later in the summer.

Memorials are suggested to The Congressman Al Swift Scholarship Endowment. Gifts to the fund can be made at <https://foundation.wvu.edu/AlSwiftEndowment> or by check to the WWU Foundation, 516 High Street, MS-9034, Bellingham, WA 98225.

BULLETIN BOARD

FROM PAGE 13

Commonwealth Republican Women's Club (CRWC) will host Fox News contributor, bestselling author, and former Trump Administration official Dr. Sebastian Gorka. Visit www.alexandriacrwc.org.

SATURDAY/APRIL 28

Yard and Bake Sale. 8 a.m.-1 p.m. at St. James' Episcopal Church, 5614 Old Mill Road, Alexandria. Donations

are welcome at the church, from 10 a.m. -noon Monday-Friday. (No adult clothing, please.) Proceeds go to outreach missions for the church. Call 703-780-3081.

MONDAY/APRIL 30

Meet with the Mayor. 12 noon-3 p.m. At the Mayoral Office, City Hall, 301 King Street, Second Floor, Alexandria. Mayor Allison Silberberg will be hosting her monthly "Meet

with the Mayor." No appointment is required. It is first come, first served, and the Mayor will meet with each resident for 10 minutes about any issue or idea that they would like to discuss.

Budget Work Session #10: Final Add/Delete. 7 p.m. City Hall, Council Chamber, 301 King St., Alexandria. Contact City Clerk's Office, gloria.sitton@alexandriava.gov or call 703-746-4550.

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ENTERTAINMENT



Richard Isaacs (Lyman Sanderson, M.D.), Andy Izquierdo (Elwood P. Dowd), and Lindsey Doane (Ruth Kelly, R.N.) star in The Little Theatre of Alexandria's "Harvey."



Andy Izquierdo (Elwood P. Dowd) stars in The Little Theatre of Alexandria's "Harvey."



Catherine Gilbert (Myrtle Mae Simmons) and Rachael Hubbard (Veta Louise Simmons) star in The Little Theatre of Alexandria's "Harvey."

Timely Return of 'Harvey' Classic story centers on invisible 6-and-a-half-foot tall rabbit

BY STEVE HIBBARD

The Little Theatre of Alexandria is presenting "Harvey" now through May 12. Directed by Frank Pasqualino, and produced by Rachel Alberts and Bobbie Herbst, the story centers on "Harvey," an invisible 6-and-a-half-foot tall rabbit. When the main character Elwood starts introducing him to guests at a party, his sister can no longer tolerate his inebriated antics and worries about her family being exposed to this imaginary rabbit. However, after years of living with Elwood (and Harvey), she begins to start seeing him herself. It was made into the iconic 1950 film starring James Stewart.

Director Frank Pasqualino said what drew him to the play was the realization that maybe dreams or illusions are more important than we think they are. "I'm fascinated by the notion that Harvey is a real creature; experienced by at least three characters and the audience. So, is he, or is he not an illusion?" he said.

He said when playwright Mary Chase wrote the play in 1942, it was the height of WWII; a time when the harsh realities of war were being suffered by the whole country. "Everyone in the country was affected by the circumstance of the tumultuous times; much as we are now. Ms. Chase hoped when writing 'Harvey,' that she could bring laughter and respite to war-torn America. Her main character, Elwood, with his unflappable demeanor, his impeccable manners and the happy world he creates around him resonated with audiences in 1944 as they were looking for an escape from the insanity around them. I'm hoping we can get people laughing again; it's needed and it's necessary," he said.

Producer Rachel Alberts said the play represents, for her, the innocence and kindness that the world is lacking at the moment. "I was looking forward to creating something without rough edges. I love the dreaminess of Elwood, who appears to be out of touch

with reality, but this is really not the case, he just chooses to construct his own reality. And it's a lovely, gentle, kind reality. Something we all could use these days," she said.

She said what she was trying to accomplish was: "First, that some of these old chestnut plays are exactly what we, as an audience, need at times. And that they still have something to teach us. It's also really funny. Rehearsals were so fun — it was such a joy to be able to immerse ourselves in the silliness of this script," she said.

Andy Izquierdo plays the lead of Elwood P. Dowd, whom other characters refer to as peculiar, out of touch and crazy. "But in many ways, I think he represents what ev-

erybody strives to be: genuinely happy," he said. "He is always happy in the moment — whoever he's with — and he approaches every interaction with a sense of curiosity, fellowship and human connection. In truth, he is the most sane and aspirational character in the play — minus all of the time he spends in a bar, perhaps."

He added: "Elwood P. Dowd was so indelibly portrayed by Jimmy Stewart in the 1950 movie that one of the real challenges of the play has been to create a truly unique character. I could never and would never want to imitate that iconic performance — and Frank has been extremely supportive of the cast creating brand new characters in what is a classic play. Infusing this character with all of his quirkiness and misplaced optimism while making him a believable and genuine person has certainly been a challenge — but equally fun."

Tony Gilbert plays the role of Judge Omar Gaffney, a respected attorney in the community and represents the Dowd/Simmons family. "The more he tries to straighten

things out, the more Elwood (and Harvey) keep them moving in another path," he said. He added: "The biggest challenge for me is, as always, creating a believable character onstage that connects with all the thousands of other pieces of our production to give our audience the fullest experience of the script we are portraying to them," he said.

Patricia Smith plays the role of Betty Chumley, the cheerful wife of Dr. Chumley, who always tries to avoid conflict. "That's not easy when you're married to Willie, who is prone to lose his temper. She is also a bit gullible, and a bit of a flirt," she said.

She added: "One of the challenges in play-

tude and desires of his family," he said.

He said the challenge was to make this blue-collar worker a "likable wise guy" and to deliver his dialogue in just the exact right way so that it conveys exactly the message desired by the author. "Now, of course, every actor's goal is to deliver his dialogue as intended by the author, but in the case of E.J. Lofgren, he has just a few lines to make the point," he said.

Brendan Quinn plays the role of Wilson, the orderly/muscle of the mental hospital. "He wants to do a good job, but his lack of smarts, quick temper and attraction to Myrtle May all get in the way of that goal," he said.

Mary Jo Morgan plays the role of Mrs. Chauvenet, an old, wealthy friend of the family who is prominent in Denver society. "Veta is anxious to impress her because she wants her daughter Myrtle to be accepted by this group and Mrs. Chauvenet is used to being flattered — after all, she's worth it," she said.

She added: "For me the play is about family and the sacrifices that people learn to make for each other — it's easy to feel that family in 1944 and family in 2017 are vastly different, but I think family members — whatever we mean by that — are still making sacrifices big and small for their kin. I don't think there will be a dry eye in the house when Veta makes her sacrifice for Elwood."

Chuck Leonard is playing the role of Dr. Chumley, a psychiatrist at the top of his field who runs his own sanitarium, Chumley's Rest. "The character is self-assured, demanding, and in charge. His routine is thrown off by the visit from Veta Simmons who is trying to commit her brother Elwood P. Dowd," he said.

The Little Theatre of Alexandria is presenting "Harvey" now through May 12. Show times are Wednesdays through Saturdays at 8 p.m.; Sundays at 3 p.m. Tickets are \$19 and \$22. The venue is located at 600 Wolfe St., Alexandria. Visit www.thelittletheatre.com.

"I'm hoping we can get people laughing again; it's needed and it's necessary."

— Director Frank Pasqualino

ing Betty is making sure that everything she hears is news to her. Her entire encounter with Elwood must be brand new every time. She believes everything he tells her is the truth," she said.

Lindsey Doane plays the role of nurse Ruth Kelly. "When Veta shows up at the sanitarium to commit her brother for treatment, Ruth Kelly, the competent and poised head nurse, assumes the experience will be business as usual," she said. "Little does she know that an invisible white rabbit and his friend Elwood will shake up her routine at the sanitarium and enliven her love-hate relationship with an egotistical young doctor. Despite Miss Kelly's demanding job and long hours, she is remarkably genuine and eager to see the beauty in others."

David Featherston plays the role of the cabbie, E.J. Lofgren, the driver who doesn't make an entrance until the final scene in the play. "It is a very short part but very critical to the play in that my description of how the anticipated treatment for Elwood will actually affect him, changes the atti-

ENTERTAINMENT



High-fire stoneware hand painted woodpecker ware by Laura Nichols of Great Falls.



Raku-fired sculpted crackle-glazed polar bears by Heidi Schramm of Arlington.

'Beasts Beyond Boundaries'

Kiln Club artists highlight "Beasts Beyond Boundaries: Cultural Creature-centric Connections," corralling critters on gallery shelves. Hang with hip hippos and party with polar bears as artists express imagination in original sculpture. Looking for a little fleeting fun, artistry attracts insects like sweet bees, lovely ladybugs or an utterly beautiful butterfly. Go fishing for good fortune and catch a school of smelt, a plate of salmon or Maryland crabs. Plan to playfully eat kung pao from a kitty bowl and mu shu from a platter of mutt. Through April 29, daily 10 a.m.-6 p.m.; Thursdays until 9 p.m. at Scope Gallery, 105 North Union St., ground floor Studio 19 of the Torpedo Factory Art Center. Call 703-548-6288 or visit www.scopegallery.org.

CALENDAR

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

ONGOING

Art Exhibit: Beasts Beyond Boundaries. Through April 29, daily 10 a.m.-6 p.m.; Thursdays until 9 p.m. at Scope Gallery, 105 North Union St., ground floor Studio 19 of the Torpedo Factory Art Center. Kiln Club artists highlight "Beasts Beyond Boundaries: Cultural Creature-centric Connections," corralling critters on gallery shelves. Call 703-548-6288 or

visit www.scopegallery.org.

Art Exhibit: A Touch of Magic.

Through April 29, gallery hours at Del Ray Artisans Gallery, 2704 Mount Vernon Ave. Del Ray Artisans "A Touch of Magic" exhibit is inspired by the subtle, simple, complex, or bold magic that creates life's special moments, fulfilled dreams, rare experiences, and fosters the recognition of beauty. Opening Reception is Friday, April 6, 7-9 p.m. Visit www.DelRayArtisans.org.

"High School Musical." Through April 29 at George Washington Middle School auditorium, 1005 Mount Vernon Ave., Alexandria.

Tickets are \$5 at the door. Fridays at 7 p.m.; Saturdays at 1 p.m. and 7 p.m. Presented by the George Washington Middle School Theater Department. Visit www.acps.k12.va.us/Domain/10.

"I Did It My Way in Yiddish (in English)." Through April 29, 8 p.m. at MetroStage, 1201 N. Royal St., Alexandria. A play written and performed by Deb Filler, an internationally acclaimed Canadian/New Zealand Jewish comic, musician and writer. visit www.metrostage.org.

Alexandria Pop-Up Program

"Looking Up." Through May 1. At 104 South Union St., Alexandria. AEDP's Pop-Up ALX program is partnering with The Art League and the International Institute of Photography to bring an exhibition showcasing the artwork of girls from the City of Alexandria alongside the work of seminal female artists. The gallery will feature the photography of 10-year-old girls from the SOHO Old Town (a Space Of Her Own) outreach program juxtaposed with iconic photographs of groundbreaking women in the field. Visit www.theartleague.org.

Mount Vernon Farmers Market

Opens. Opens Wednesday, May 2, from 8 a.m.-noon at Sherwood Hall Regional Library, 2501 Sherwood Hall Lane, Alexandria. Every Wednesday (through Dec. 19), 15 local farmers and producers will sell fresh produce and fruits; meats; breads and pastries; honey, jams and jellies; dairy products and eggs; herbs; and more. Visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/farmersmarkets.

Art Exhibit A Study of Manhattan.

Through May 6, gallery hours at the Art League Gallery, 105 North Union St., Studio 21, in the Torpedo Factory. Paintings by Robert Gilbert: A Study of Manhattan: Power, Dominance, and Excitement. Visit www.theartleague.org or call 703-683-1780.

Art Exhibit: 2018 Emerging Artists.

Through May 20, daily 10 a.m.-6 p.m.; Thursday until 9 p.m. at Target Gallery at the Torpedo Factory, 105 North Union St., Studio

SEE CALENDAR, PAGE 24



Canine Cruises

Starting April 28 through to Oct. 26, Alexandria's doggy families can enjoy a 45-minute sightseeing trip on the Potomac. With 10 cruise dates available, all offer historic waterfront views with tasty treats for canine companions. Everyone is invited - with or without a furry friend - plus dogs ride free. Departing from Alexandria City Marina, ticket prices from \$18 for adults (aged 12+) and \$12 for children (aged 2-11). No charge for infants aged under 2. See www.potomacriverboatco.com/sightseeing-tours/canine-cruise.

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'Rebellion in the Heartland'

BY STEVE HIBBARD

Playwright Patricia Connelly will be presenting a reading of her play, "Rebellion in the Heartland," as part of Pipeline Playwrights' second-annual play reading series on Monday, April 30, at 7:30 p.m., at MetroStage in Alexandria.

In parallels to events involving Westboro Church of Kansas, Connelly said the play directed by Gabrielle Hoyt begins with a protest by a church group at a military funeral, led by one of its devoted members, Janet, who is also a lawyer for the church and daughter of its founder. The church teaches that America is doomed for condoning gay rights, gay marriage, adultery, fornication and sodomy. Their beliefs come from their own interpretation of the Bible.

"After picketing at one military funeral with signs that say things like 'God Hates Fags' and 'Thank God for Dead Soldiers' the mother of the dead soldier sues the church and its leader," she said. "The play focuses on Janet, an experienced and skilled trial lawyer, who begins to show cracks in her faith and questions the church's extreme tactics after she comes face to face with the mother of the slain soldier. She inexplicably feels compassion for her. Janet starts to see the world from a different perspective."

She continued: "Yet, she is torn because, as a lawyer, she believes in the importance



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

Playwright Patricia Connelly.

of the church's First Amendment rights and knows she is on the right side of the law. Ultimately, Janet must admit her doubts and decide how to fight for the First Amendment rights of her controversial clients, while staying true to her own beliefs."

She said she was inspired to write about the issue when she heard an interview with one of the lawyers in the Supreme Court Case of Snyder v. Phelps involving the Westboro Church of Kansas that pickets at military funerals. The Southern Poverty Law Center views the Westboro Church as a hate group.

"I began to think about how attorneys are often called upon to represent clients whose conduct and beliefs differ from their own and still find a way to vigorously represent those clients. Our constitution in fact guarantees the right to counsel in most criminal cases. With the Westboro Church Supreme Court case, the lawyers were not only members of the church, but they were children of the founder. I wondered what would have happened if those lawyers had personal misgivings or doubts about their faith or their tactics and, if so, how that would have played out, under those circumstances," she said.

Her main challenge was how to get beyond her bias against a group that would picket and display hate-filled signs at military funerals and funerals of gay men and women, she said. "In order to write about people with similar beliefs, albeit fictional characters, I wanted to understand the individuals who participate in groups with such extreme religious views and understand what would motivate them to use the tactics they use. I needed to understand them so I could find a way to create and present my characters in a sympathetic light," she said.

She said she hopes the play causes people to consider the personal issues for Janet — both as a lawyer and family member of the founder of the church — and what she risks

when she questions both family and religion.

"I also hope audiences begin to understand how difficult it is to balance and protect First Amendment rights when espoused by extremist groups that choose to exercise them in a manner that most people find shocking," she said.

Pipeline Playwrights is a group of women playwrights based in Northern Virginia, working together to support, present, and promote each other's work with the goal of moving their plays into the local and national theater pipeline. Each of the current Pipeline Playwrights — Jean Koppen, Ann Timmons, Nicole Burton, and Patricia Connelly — is presenting a reading of a new full-length play in the 2018 spring reading series at MetroStage.

Connelly is the founder of Thelma Theatre and is an award-winning playwright and director. Her plays have been presented at The Kennedy Center's Page-to-Stage Festival and have been produced in Washington, D.C., and New Mexico.

"Rebellion in the Heartland" will be presented on Monday, April 30, at 7:30 p.m., at MetroStage, located at 1201 North Royal St. in Alexandria. Suggested donation is \$10. After the reading, enjoy refreshments and informal conversation with the playwright and actors. For more information, visit <http://www.thelmatheatre.com>.

CALENDAR

FROM PAGE 23

2. Target Gallery, the contemporary exhibition space of the Torpedo Factory Art Center, introduces a new annual exhibition series featuring the work of emerging artists of the D.C., Maryland, and Virginia region. This inaugural year's exhibition features the work of Katie Barrie, Ronald Jackson, Hollis McCracken, and Holly Trout. Visit torpedofactory.org/partners/target-gallery.

THURSDAY/APRIL 26

Tour Historic Huntley. 1-2 p.m. at Historic Huntley, 6918 Harrison Lane, Alexandria. Cost is \$5. From a woman's point of view, learn the roles women played in Huntley's history and the dramatic changes in the lives of women since the house was built in 1825. Call 703-768-2525 or visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/historic-huntley.

Open House Block Party. 5:30-8:30 p.m. at 315 Cameron St., Alexandria. To mark the one-year anniversary of Home On Cameron. Enjoy light fare from local restaurants and shop Home on Cameron's collection of upholstered furniture including new private label sofas and chairs, custom dining pieces, Nepal felt flowers, console and coffee tables by D.C. and Virginia artisans, local art, antiques, couture chandeliers, lamps, ceramics and wooden toys and dog items. RSVP to rsvp@homeoncameron@gmail.com

Make an Offer. 6-9 p.m. at 4950-C Eisenhower Ave., Alexandria. Bring friends and family and enjoy a special evening of shopping. First time, one evening event — Eisenhower Consignment, Luxury Furniture & Art Reseller is accepting offers on entire showroom inventory including new arrivals. Visit eisenhowerconsignment.com.

APRIL 26-28

"Bye Bye Birdie." At Mount Vernon High School, Entrance 4, 8515 Old Mt. Vernon Road, Alexandria. Performances on April 26 and 27 at 7 p.m. and April 28 at 2 p.m. and 7 p.m. Tickets \$7/students and younger; \$8/FCPS Staff/Senior

Citizens/Military; and \$10/General Admission. Go to www.itickets.com/register/new/383894. Visit www.mvhs-theatrearts.com.

FRIDAY/APRIL 27

Film Screening: "Out of the Ring Still in the Fight." 7 p.m. at Charles Houston Recreation Center, 901 Wythe St., Alexandria. Film chronicles boxer and Alexandria native Anthony "Da Beast" Suggs' turbulent journey and path to redemption. Contact Anthony Suggs Sr. at 703-801-8191 or Charles Houston Recreation Center 703-746-5552.

FRIDAY-SATURDAY/APRIL 27-28

"Hairspray." At T.C. Williams High School. Show times are Friday, 7 p.m.; Saturday, 1 and 7 p.m. Visit www.acps.k12.va.us.

SATURDAY/APRIL 28

Rebuilding Together Alexandria. 7:45 a.m. Kick-off at First Baptist Church, 2932 King Street, Alexandria. Volunteers will provide free repairs and upgrades to low-income homeowners and their families on a national day of service with 100,000 volunteers nationwide focused on repairing homes, revitalizing communities, rebuilding lives. Visit www.rebuildingtogetheralex.org.

Walkathon for Youth. 8 a.m. at Fort Ward Park, 4301 W. Braddock Road, Alexandria. Project Discovery Walkathon with proceeds supporting Project Discovery Alexandria. Donations may be sent to the Youth Development Team at 123 N. Pitt St., Ste. 225, Alexandria, VA 22314, or made via the Project Discovery Walkathon donation page.

Fairfax Run for the Children. 8 a.m. at Fairfax County Courthouse Complex, 4110 Chain Bridge Road, Fairfax. Join Fairfax Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) for the 8th Annual 8K and 3K races. The superhero-themed race attracts nearly 1,000 runners and walkers, 250 volunteers, and raises almost \$85,000 each year to support Fairfax CASA's advocacy work with

abused and neglected children in the community. Participants can enjoy the after race celebration, including superhero meet and greets, a DJ, free food, face painting, kids' crafts, photo booth, and more. Visit www.fairfaxrunforthechildren.com/.

Native Plant Sale. 9 a.m.-2 p.m. at 1701 N. Quaker Lane parking lot, Alexandria. Largest native plant sale in D.C. metro area hosts 12 or more vendors from three states selling native perennials, shrubs, and trees for sun or shade. Admission is free. Call 571-232-0375 or visit www.NorthernAlexandriaNativePlantSale.org.

Alexandria Earth Day. 10 a.m.-2 p.m. at Harris Memorial Fields at Braddock Park, 1005 Mt. Vernon Ave., Alexandria. This family-friendly event includes the eighth annual Upcycling Showcase, where students from Alexandria schools will present unique fashion items based on the event theme, "Local Action, Global Impact." Enjoy tent talks on environmental topics, the presentation of the 10th annual Ellen Pickering Environmental Excellence Award, more than 60 environmental exhibits, music, giveaways, and more. Free. Call 703-746-5592 or visit alexandriava.gov/EarthDay for more.

Author Tesa Jones. 1-3 p.m. at Hooray for Books, 1555 King St., Alexandria. Author Tesa Jones will be signing her books, Reflection of Memories and Cobwebs of Time. From 4-5 p.m., Raya the Reading Therapy Dog will be available. Visit www.hooray4books.com.

Old Town Underground Experimental Film Program. 1:30-3:30 p.m. at The Athenaeum, 201 Prince Street, Alexandria. Free. An inaugural Old Town Underground Experimental Film Program featuring different types of experimental film, from slow contemplative stories to montage-y trips. Visit nvfaa.org.

History's Mysteries in the Vault. 3 p.m. at Ivy Hill Cemetery, 2823 King St., Alexandria. Historians Terry Gish and Wayne Kehoe return to the historic burial vault at Ivy Hill Cemetery for an exciting chapter of the Tales from the Vault series. Learn about the history of Memorial Day and Civil War Holidays — while sitting in the vault. Not for the faint of heart. RSVP to info@ihchps.org.

Book Launch. 3-5 p.m. at First Agape Baptist Community of Faith, 2423 Mt. Vernon Ave., Alexandria. For Rev. Dr. Donna Taylor's book, "Financial Empowerment in the African American Church." The book shares the interconnectedness between the knowledge of financial literacy as it relates to debt reduction and debt management principles that can be utilized in every facet of life. Visit www.revdrdonnataylor.com.

Classical Piano Concert. 6:30-10 p.m. at The Lyceum, 201 South Washington St., Alexandria. Pianists Elias Dagher, Jingxuan Zhang, Sasha Beresovsky. Featuring piano duos by Schumann and Schubert, works by Bach, Prokofiev, Mussorgsky. Organized by United Help Ukraine charitable organization unitedhelpukraine.org, email UnitedHelpUkraine@gmail.com. Tickets \$40 at the door, \$35 (\$20 seniors/veterans/students) in advance at pianistsforsoldiers2018.eventbrite.com/ Call 301-785-4316.

Concerts at Saint Luke's. 7:30 p.m. at St. Luke's Episcopal Church, 8009 Fort Hunt Road, Alexandria. Will bring a lively mix titled "Samba Surf." Michael Sheridan will return playing guitar and the accordion. A reception will follow. \$20/adult; \$15/senior; free to students 18 and under. Visit www.saintlukeschurch.net/events.

Sensory Friendly Golf. At 6625 S. Van Dorn St., Alexandria. Topgolf in Alexandria is celebrating World Autism Month by creating a sensory-friendly environment. Venue will have sensory-friendly modifications that include dimmed lights, low music and minimal staff. The ticket link to reserve a golf bay is at topgolf.com/us/promo/sensory-friendly-day/

SUNDAY/APRIL 29

Love Your Pet Day Block Party. 11 a.m.-2 p.m. at Roth and Colvin streets in the West End of Alexandria. Mayor Allison Silberberg and the Alexandria City Council proclaimed April 29 as the second annual Alexandria Love Your Pet

SEE CALENDAR, PAGE 25

ENTERTAINMENT

Pick Up a Picnic at Jackson 20

BY HOPE NELSON

Forget freeze warnings and sweaters: The picnic season is finally here. And amid all the world's plain sandwiches and lackluster spreads, Jackson 20 Chef James Hudson aims to improve your standard picnic basket with a new al fresco menu perfectly poised for lunch alongside the Potomac.

It all started with some bicycles. The Alexandrian hotel purchased some new bikes for guests to use, and Hudson started thinking outside the box — or restaurant, as the case may be — in terms of menu items to pair up with the new two-wheelers.

"They're really cute and really nice, and we wanted to provide something for our guests and the public at large something they could take down to the waterfront, to one of our local parks ... and have a nice day outside," Hudson said. "... We actually produced the menu right about the same time the bicycles came."

The picnic menu itself is teeming with al fresco favorites such as a take on chicken salad, turkey sandwiches and a fruit and cheese plate, as well as some not-quite-famous picnic items such as field pea hummus and a camembert-and-apple sandwich.

"Our hummus is really strong and always goes really, really well with anything. I wouldn't call it a

classic picnic basket item but I think in a modern sense it kind of is," Hudson said.

But some classics do shine through, too — including a chef favorite.

"My personal favorite of course is the chicken salad," Hudson said. "I just really think it has lots of nice fruits and nuts and isn't your average white chicken breast with mayonnaise."

The logistics of the menu are a bit more time-intensive than just popping into the restaurant for a meal.

"It's not a grab-and-go — we're requiring about 4 or 5 hours of advance notice," Hudson said. "We're customizing it to the specific order of the client, and that takes a little bit of time."

What customers will find as a final result is an already-packed basket filled with the results of their order — including a bottle of wine if they so choose, also available for purchase alongside the food. The baskets themselves fit conveniently within the baskets of the Alexandrian's new bicycles, making for easy transport.

"It's a great opportunity for a snack and hopefully a good possibility for outreach into the community as well," Hudson said.

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

APPETITE

CALENDAR

FROM PAGE 24

Day. A block party kick-off will be held in the Wholistic Hound Academy parking lot at 18 Roth St., hosted by celebrity vet Dr. Katy Nelson. Attendees will head along Roth and Colvin streets to interact with 40-plus businesses; children and leashed pets welcomed. Visit www.facebook.com/alexandrialoveyourpetday.

Contemporary Flute and Guitar Duo. 2 p.m. at The Athenaeum, 201 Prince Street, Alexandria. Free. Returning to the Athenaeum for a spring concert is MIN ~ Contemporary Flute and Guitar Duo. MIN is flutist Saïs Kamalidiin and guitarist, Rick Peralta. Visit nvfaa.org.

The President's Own Band. 2 p.m. at Rachel M. Schlesinger Concert Hall, Northern Virginia Community College, Alexandria Campus. Marine Band: Fair Winds and Following Seas, Assistant Director Major Michelle A. Rakers' Final Concert. Visit www.nvcc.edu.

Pohick Church Coffeehouse Fundraiser. 6-8 p.m. at 9301 Richmond Highway, Lorton. The Pohick Church Episcopal Youth Community will present an evening of entertainment, snacks, coffee and hot chocolate. Performers will include youth, adults and musicians. Proceeds go toward the Sr. High Summer Mission Trip to Ohio. Contact Youth Director Rusty Booth at 703-339-6572 or rusty@pohick.org.

Violinist Timothy Baker and Pianist Frank Conlon. 7 p.m. at The Lyceum, 201 South Washington St., Alexandria. Free. The program includes: Beethoven - Sonata for Violin and Piano in C Minor, Op. 30, No. 2; Franck - Sonata for Violin and Piano in A Major; Grieg - Sonata for Violin and Piano in C Minor, Op. 45; and Ravel - Tzigane, Rapsodie de Concert for Violin and Piano. Visit www.alexandriava.gov.

MONDAY/APRIL 30

Gardening in Containers, Window Boxes and Balconies. 7-8:30 p.m. at Barrett Library, 717 Queen St., Alexandria. Use containers in a sunny window or on a balcony or patio to grow flowers, foliage, herbs, and edibles. Learn what works best in these places and get tips for maintaining them in this climate. Free. Advance registration requested at mgmv.org. Call 703-228-6414 or email mgarlalex@gmail.com.

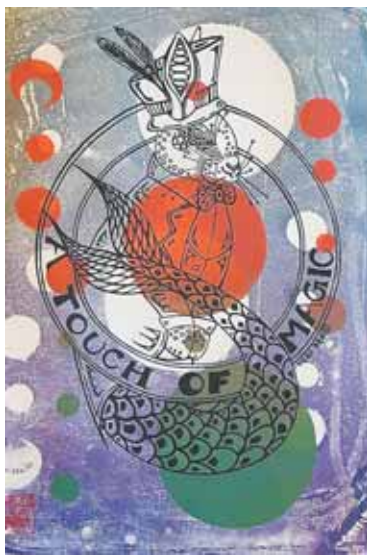
Sowing the Seeds of Victory: War Gardens in America. 7-8:30 p.m. at Burke Branch Library, 4701 Seminary Road. Provides an overview of home food production during World War I and describes how contemporary gardeners can grow the same crops in our gardens today. Free. Advance registration requested at mgmv.org. Call 703-228-6414 or email mgarlalex@gmail.com.

TUESDAY/MAY 1

Golf Clinic Registration Opens. At Pinecrest Golf Course, 6600 Little River Turnpike, Alexandria. Introduce 8-17-year-olds to the fundamentals of golf with one-hour junior clinics. Clinics are offered for \$15 each and run through August. Spring registration is now open; summer registration opens May 1, 2018. Space is limited. Visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/golf/junior.

WEDNESDAY/MAY 2

Mount Vernon Farmers Market Opens. 8 a.m.-noon at Sherwood Hall Regional Library, 2501 Sherwood Hall Lane, Alexandria. Every Wednesday (through December 19), 15 local farmers and producers will sell fresh produce and fruits; meats; breads and pastries; honey, jams and jellies; dairy products and eggs; herbs; and more. Visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/farmersmarkets.



"A Touch of Magic" by Veronica Barker-Barzel.

A Touch of Magic

Del Ray Artisans "A Touch of Magic" exhibit is inspired by the subtle, simple, complex, or bold magic that creates life's special moments, fulfilled dreams, rare experiences, and fosters the recognition of beauty. The art will be on display through April 29, gallery hours at Del Ray Artisans Gallery, 2704 Mount Vernon Ave. Visit www.DelRayArtisans.org.

THURSDAY/MAY 3

Ikebana Show Reception. 6:30-8 p.m. at the Art League, Studio 21, Torpedo Factory Art Center, 105 North Union Street, Alexandria. Visit www.theartleague.org or call 703-683-1780.



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Incumbent: Mayor Allison Silberberg

FROM PAGE 3

sachusetts Sen. John Kerry in 2004. Additionally, she was appointed to the Alexandria Economic Opportunities Commission in 2004, was named commission chair in 2010 — a position on which she served until her 2012 election. She also wrote opinion columns in the Washington Post about Alexandria's Martin Luther King, Jr. holiday in 2008 and the city's waterfront in 2011. She is the former president of the board of the Georgetown Senior Center, and, in 2014, was the treasurer for the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments.

At Hammond Middle School, Walker parked while Silberberg walked into the building and put on a blue Alexandria Little League shirt over her white blouse, grabbed a baseball mitt and warmed up by playing catch with 11-year-old R.J. Davis. After throwing Davis the first pitch minutes later, she took the microphone and spoke to an audience of more than 500 youths, parents, volunteers and city officials.

"Hello Alexandria Little League! I love baseball. Who's excited about the baseball season finally here?" Silberberg said and introduced Vice Mayor Justin Wilson, her political challenger in the upcoming June 12 primary.

"Opening day is one of the best days in my book."

Before leaving, Silberberg signed the baseball for Davis, who sat down and showed it to his friends. Back in the car, Silberberg said that she was an athletic child, and preferred tennis — a one-on-one sport that could be seen as an apt analogy for making it in local politics.

"In tennis you are playing against someone across the net, but I was also playing as part of a team, but if I didn't do my part, the team would not do well," she said.

Silberberg won the Democratic primary for mayor in 2015 by 312 votes in a three-way race between herself and two former mayors, Kerry Donley and then-incumbent Bill Euille, the city's first African American mayor who had run unopposed in a primary since his 2003 election. Silberberg then defeated Euille in November by over 7,000 votes when he ran as a write-in candidate. Her critics will say that she is extremely effective in building relationships in the com-



Mayor Allison Silberberg shakes hands before the campaign kickoff of U.S. Sen. Tim Kaine (D).



Mayor Allison Silberberg threw the first ceremonial pitch capping off Alexandria Little Leagues 2018 season, with 11-year-old player R.J. Davis.

munity, but not on the dais — leading to a number of 6-1 votes on which she's in the minority. And now, despite being the incumbent, it seems that Silberberg is the underdog once again, having raised \$70,763 for her mayoral reelection campaign with \$40,939 in on-hand cash as of March 31. Most of her campaign funds have been spent on campaign ads in newspapers, yard signs, mailers and other campaign literature. Wilson, on the other hand, has raised \$97,663, has \$63,082 cash on-hand and has spent his money on campaign consultants, campaign literature and advertisements in newspapers and online.

Former Alexandria City School Board Member Eileen Cassidy Rivera is Silberberg's campaign chair, and said that hundreds of the all-volunteer "Allison Brigade" are door knocking and campaigning for Silberberg.

"We're not using any of the donations we've received to pay anyone. We're using the funds to pay for messaging, through mailers, advertisements, things like that. We're in great shape," she said the following night at the Alexandria Democratic Committee Straw Poll (an unofficial poll in which Silberberg lost to Wilson). "We have every single precinct covered more than you can imagine."

Silberberg next arrived at the Basilica of St. Mary for the funeral of Pat Troy, an Alexandria legend and founder of the city's St. Patrick's Day Parade. The event was attended by hundreds. Immediately afterward, Silberberg was back in Walker's Prius on the way to the Mark Center Hilton at the other end of the city to speak at a religious event. The lightly attended event was for "My Gathering Place International," and Silberberg, who is Jewish and spoke without notes, was greeted warmly by the event host, pastor/evangelist LeaAnn Pendergrass.

"We can be a friend to someone in need, advise someone who is elderly and suffering, we can be a friend to someone who is in need of just listening because they are in trouble, someone who needs a second chance because they've fallen short — because any of us have made a mistake or have fallen on hard times," she said. "In 2008-09 millions of Americans lost jobs, their health care coverage, their home — people

SEE SILBERBERG, PAGE 27

Challenger: Vice Mayor Justin Wilson

FROM PAGE 3

Councilor Paul Smedberg. In one hour-long stretch during the Saturday meeting, Wilson jumped on and off Facebook Messenger over a dozen times, left the dais briefly and said that he can still pay attention to the proceedings.

"That's how I communicate with the public," he said. "I've learned that this community is busy. People don't pay attention to every little thing we do on council, and you have to get out and tell that story. That's the reason why I do my newsletter that goes out to 8,500 people every month, that's the reason why I answer every email personally and go back and forth with residents on Facebook and Twitter and email, and I try to engage with the community so that even if they don't agree with me they know what I stand for, what I do and how I'm working for them."

Wilson was born in Cheverly, Md., and moved to Fairfax County in the fourth grade. He later graduated from Robert E. Lee High School in the Alexandria portion of Fairfax County. He's a graduate of Virginia Commonwealth University with a degree in information systems, is a fellow of the Sorensen Institute for Political Leadership at the University of Virginia and has served on dozens of commissions and boards, including the Virginia Committee on Juvenile Justice, as deputy chair of the Alexandria Democratic Committee and on the Visit Alexandria Board of Governors. He was first elected to the City Council in a special election in 2007, lost his reelection bid two years later, won back a seat on council in 2012 and was elected vice mayor in 2015 — the same post that Mayor Allison Silberberg held before becoming mayor.

"When I lost in 2009, it was the best thing to ever happen to me in politics. It felt miserable, but I spent a fair amount of time with people around the community dissecting that loss and one of the things that people told me was that every decision that council makes is preordained," he said. "But the reality was that we were having disagreements in private and we were smoothing it all out."

Part of that was the leadership of former Mayor Bill Euille, one of Wilson's political mentors, who preferred to keep meetings rolling at an even clip. Euille has endorsed Wilson, and so has former Mayor Kerry



Alex Wilson, wife of Vice Mayor Justin Wilson, beekeeping outside their Del Ray home, April 14.



Vice Mayor Justin Wilson with his campaign manager Nate Salzman look at a map on the city's West End between door knocking, April 14.

Donley — both of whom lost to Silberberg in 2015. Wilson met Euille in 2001 after graduating from college and in 2003 became his campaign treasurer — a position Wilson maintained until his first campaign for council. He said that Euille taught him of the importance of being present in the community, and that the worst insult he could give someone is, "I just don't see them around."

"One of the things I took from that experience is that the public wants to see their public officials debating, see them disagreeing and are talked through," Wilson said. "In 2013, when I rejoined council, I have tried to ensure that the public knows where we stand, and if there is disagreement, those disagreements are aired so that the public understands what is making us tick and how we approach their public business. So does that mean we sometimes get into real arguments on the dais? Sure, but listen. If I didn't have a passion about these issues, what am I doing here?"

As of March 31, Wilson has raised \$97,663, has \$63,082 cash on-hand and has spent his money on campaign consultants, campaign literature and advertisements in newspapers and online. Silberberg has so far raised \$70,763 and has \$40,939 on hand.

After the meeting, Wilson picked up his dry cleaning and then went home to change into door knocking clothes, where his wife Alex was outside beekeeping with her friends, while inside were their children, Eli and Lena. Wilson and his wife met in college, and married in 2001 after graduating.

"We knew it was going to be a bit of a crazy time, but it's a finite period and he's certainly got his passion, so we're all doing what we can to keep everything going until June and then we'll see what happens," Alex said of the mayor's race while wearing a beekeeper's outfit, surrounded by hundreds if not thousands of bees.

Less than a week prior, Wilson announced a weekend goal of knocking on over 1,000 doors before soundly defeating Silberberg at the Alexandria Democratic Committee's unofficial straw poll by 143 votes to 77 votes, but such a result means little in a race that has been historically defined by thousands of votes. Plus, Silberberg lost the

SEE WILSON, PAGE 27

Silberberg

FROM PAGE 26

who did everything right and a lot of us in the country serve as a bridge over troubled waters for many.”

Next, it was back to Walker’s car and back to St. Mary’s for Pat Troy’s funeral reception. Silberberg also spoke at that event, danced with Troy’s cousin, Joseph Troy, and spent over a half hour saying goodbye before jumping back into the car to door knock in the city’s Beverly Hills neighborhood. During the ride, she was careful to not criticize Wilson, but said that he led the effort behind last year’s historic 5.7 cent tax hike, altered her ethics reform pledge for elected and city officials and uses too much time on the dais on social media.

Wilson

FROM PAGE 26

straw poll three years ago and then defeated two former mayors in the primary and later won the mayor’s race.

“It’s always a challenge to run against an incumbent. And she’s certainly a formidable candidate. The reason she’s an incumbent is because she won. But that’s not what I’m being asked about when we knock on doors. I’m asked about where are we going as a city and what’s my focus,” Wilson said. “We need to focus on our kids and addressing the early childhood education, student enrollment growth, sewers, sidewalks, facilities and development and how we work with developers to essentially advance those possibilities with public/private partnerships.”

Wilson then met up with his campaign manager Nate Salzman for door knocking on the city’s West End. Salzman, 26, has been on the job a little over a month, and said that his candidate’s visibility in the community will set him apart from his opponent.

“We’re going to get out and talk to more people. We’re going to get more people involved in our campaign. We had a huge weekend of action last Saturday and Sunday where we knocked on over 1,000 doors, had over 30 door knock shifts completed,” Salzman said. “So we’ve got a lot of excitement around the campaign. We’ve got people on the phones, knocking on doors. It’s simple. It’s not rocket science.”

Wilson said that his weakness is jumping the gun on problem solving.

“I’m a numbers guy, I’m analyti-

“I do think that we all need to be focused on the city’s business during the course of public meetings, and that’s what the people of our city deserve. I’m not posting on social media during the meetings,” she said. “The election is not really about me. It’s about all of us and moving our city forward together to make it an even better city. And our city is doing great. We are the number one travel destination in the country, the most romantic, the most well read ... During my two years as mayor, we have been moving at lightning speed forward on many fronts, regarding CSO [the city’s massive combined sewer system project], regarding schools, repaving roads and I put forward an ethics initiative that I think was bold, and I’m proud of it, but, of course, what passed was watered down, and the vice mayor led the effort

cal,” he said. “And I sometimes forget that there’s emotions behind some of these issues and I quickly say, ‘OK! Here’s what we’re going to do. We’re going to call this person, do this, do that,’ instead of saying, ‘OK, that stinks. Let’s talk about why this is a problem for you. I’d like to help you work through it.”

Wilson parked his car and walked out to the corner of Barrister Place and Van Dorn Street, where he took a picture of the road signs and Tweeted, “Liberated from the Council chamber. Now in the Polk precinct knocking on doors.”

One of the first people he spoke with was Myla Sisk, who said, “I saw your advertisement on Youtube. What are you going to do for us in the city?”

Wilson has been knocking on doors for over a month.

“This is my fifth campaign, and my first two I didn’t knock as much. One of the things I learned from that loss is that you have to ask people for the votes that you want. If you don’t ask them then you don’t get them,” Wilson said.

Wilson said he has no ambitions for an office higher than the mayor of Alexandria.

“I mean I don’t want the impact on my family. At least I’m in my bed at night, I see my kids every day. Someone who is running statewide or is on the Hill just can’t do that. Also, I don’t like fundraising,” he said. “I get more done in one week that affects the residents lives in this city on City Council than those folks do in a full session. That’s what I want. That’s what I enjoy.”

to water it down.”

After picking up a campaign aide, Walker dropped off his passengers and parked once again — this time on a residential street.

Silberberg knocked, and Bill Malkasian opened his door.



“Are you the mayor? I want to meet you. We just moved here a month ago. I’m Bill,” he said and shook her hand. “I just signed up to register my car for personal property taxes ... I’ll be happy to do what I can for your campaign.”

Silberberg door knocked for over an hour and then went home. She didn’t make it to the Alexandria Symphony Orchestra’s performance. She said that on average she works 16-18 hour days, and hasn’t thought about what she would do if she lost reelection.

“I believe strongly that we must continue to pursue thoughtful, appropriate development that fits in and is to scale and I will always fight to protect our neighborhoods and quality of life. Of course, I

believe that we must grow our commercial tax base, but do so in a balanced way with a staunch commitment to economic sustainability with fiscal responsibility,” she said. “There are differences between us [she and Wilson], of course, and there will be debates where those will come out.”

The first debate is on Wednesday, May 2 at the Mount Vernon Community School Auditorium from 7 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.

Public Hearings

Funding the Right Transportation Projects

You are invited to share comments on transportation projects that have been recommended for funding in the FY2019-2024 Six-Year Improvement Program (SYIP). Additionally, pursuant to §33.2-202, comments will be accepted for new projects valued in excess of \$25 million. The Commonwealth Transportation Board will take your comments into consideration as it develops the FY2019-2024 Six-Year Improvement Program. The program allocates public funds to highway, road, bridge, rail, bicycle, pedestrian and public transportation projects. All federally eligible projects in the SYIP will be included in the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program to document how Virginia will obligate its federal funds.

Meeting materials will be available at <http://www.ctb.virginia.gov/planning/springmeetings/default.asp> beginning April 16, 2018.

Public meetings begin at 4:00 p.m. in each of the locations except as noted below:
A formal comment period will be held at these meetings.

Monday, April 16, 2018 Hampton Roads - Hampton Roads Transportation Planning Organization, 723 Woodlake Drive Chesapeake, VA 23320	Thursday, April 19, 2018 Lynchburg - VDOT Lynchburg District Office Ramey Memorial Auditorium 4303 Campbell Avenue Lynchburg, VA 24501	Tuesday, April 24, 2018 Richmond - Hilton Garden Inn 800 Southpark Boulevard Colonial Heights, VA 23834
Monday, April 30, 2018* Northern Virginia - Northern Virginia District Office Potomac Conference Room 4975 Alliance Drive Fairfax, VA 22030 <i>*meeting begins at 5:30 p.m.</i>	Thursday, May 3, 2018 Staunton - Holiday Inn and Conference Center 152 Fairway Lane Staunton, VA 24402	Monday, May 7, 2018 Culpeper - Culpeper District Auditorium 1601 Orange Road Culpeper, VA 22701
Tuesday May 8, 2018 Fredericksburg - Germanna Community College Workforce and Technology Center 10000 Germanna Point Drive, Fredericksburg, VA 22408	Thursday, May 10, 2018 Salem - Holiday Inn Valley View 3315 Ordway Drive NW Roanoke, VA 24017	Monday, May 14, 2018 Bristol - Southwest Virginia Higher Education Center One Partnership Circle Abingdon, VA 24210

You can also submit your comments by email or mail by May 30, 2018:

For roads and highways: Six-YearProgram@VDOT.Virginia.gov, or Infrastructure Investment Director, Virginia Department of Transportation 1401 East Broad St., Richmond, VA 23219.

For rail and public transportation: DRPTPR@drpt.virginia.gov, Public Information Office, Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation 600 East Main Street, Suite 2102, Richmond VA, 23219.

The Commonwealth is committed to ensuring that no person is excluded from participation in, or denied the benefits of its services on the basis of race, color or national origin, as protected by Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. If you need further information on these policies or special assistance for persons with disabilities or limited English proficiency, please contact the Virginia Department of Transportation's Title VI Compliance Officer at 804-786-2730 or the Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation's Title VI Compliance Officer at 804-786-4440 (TTY users call 711).



PHOTOS BY JEANNE THEISMANN/GAZETTE PACKET

ACT for Alexandria CEO Heather Peeler, second from right, joins the Jen Walker McEneaney team at Stomping Ground Restaurant in Del Ray to kick off the Spring2Action community giving day April 25.

Ready. Set. Click.

FROM PAGE 1
effort.”

Local businesses were offering prizes and hosting Happy Hours to help raise funds for community charities. Vintage Mirage donated 10 percent of its sales on April 25 to the Alexandria Police Youth Camp while Today's Cargo made the same pledge to Rebuilding Together Alexandria.

The National Breast Center Foundation joined forces with a Space Of Her Own to host a Celebration of Women Open House at AR Workshop and Grant Thornton LLP matched all donations made to the veterans business incubator Capitol Post.

“Alexandria has an amazing, committed and generous donor base along with outstanding nonprofit organizations,” Peeler said. “If you really want to solve issues in a community those are all the ingredients you need to have in place.”

Peeler, who replaced longtime ACT president and CEO John Porter earlier this year, noted that funds raised per capita is higher than average in Alexandria.

“The idea of a giving day isn’t unique,” Peeler said. “But the way in which this community comes out to support nonprofits is unique. Our per capita for what we raise is higher than average, so I see so much



Del Ray resident Stephanie Kapsis, seated, gets some instruction from Jen Walker, right, and Sheila Sirois while making online donations at Stomping Ground Restaurant as part of the April 25 Spring2Action community giving day.

opportunity and potential here.”

Through 2017, Spring2Action has raised more than \$6.5 million for local charities. Totals for 2018 were not available at press time but can be found at www.Spring2Action.org.

Affordable Housing

FROM PAGE 1

200 unit annual preservation/production goal. The fiscal impact beyond the FY 2019 is yet to be determined.

The Bailey Plan would create dedicated funding in the CIP, with \$4.75 million set aside each year from FY 2019 through FY 2023.

Both plans would be funded by a five percent increase to the city’s meals tax.

In March, the Chamber of Commerce wrote to Mayor Allison Silberberg opposing the meals tax increase and encouraging “council to find a way to incorporate affordable housing into the city’s long-term planning and overall budget.”

The letter included a survey of chamber members on the issue. One respondent said: “The city should learn how to use our taxes more wisely and economically before we give them more money.”

Neither proposal included carving out funds by cutting, reducing or delaying existing line items.

COUNCILMAN Paul Smedberg argued for Wilson’s plan, saying that reviewing the affordable housing budget in each year’s CIP was more stable in the long term. Smedberg noted that affordable housing projects in the city are funded through various proposals, like the Church of the Resurrection project, which have varying levels of cost. Smedberg and Wilson argued that assigning a set amount of funding to affordable housing wasn’t an economically safe choice.

“The question around dedicated funds is a philosophical difference we’ve litigated up here in the past,” Wilson said.

The City Charter also allows the city manager to propose alterations to any tax in his or her proposed budget.

Wilson’s add/delete proposal would remove affordable

housing’s 0.6-cent dedicated real estate tax and increase the meals tax, for a net of \$2.35 million in FY 2019. He says council would ask City Manager Mark Jinks next year to bump up funding to meet the Housing Master Plan’s goals. He favors this approach in part because it “gives some real estate tax relief, which is obviously also a component of affordability.”

Wilson summed up the difference between the two proposals: “I’m proposing a stair-step, using what is essentially a real estate tax reduction in this year, as well as an increase in the dining tax, to get there. Councilman Bailey’s proposing a quicker ramp-up to get to that funding level.”

For others on the council, the needs of the city’s affordable housing crisis warranted a dramatic response.

“Truthfully, I don’t care how we get there,” said Bailey. “I’ve said it a thousand times and I’ll say it a thousand more, I’d fall on my sword for this issue.”

Bailey argued that all other issues in the city, from infrastructure to schools, were secondary to being able to afford a place to live in the city.

City Councilman John Chapman noted that affordable housing in the city was getting worse with time, not better. As market-rate affordable housing continues to decline, 2017 was the first year where the number of dedicated affordable housing units surpassed the number of affordable housing units available on the public market. Chapman reflected on speaking to a former member of the City Council and remembering their lamenting that there were actions that could have been taken at the time that would have kept the city out of its current dire straits, but that the council had been afraid of taking brash action.

Chapman thinks that new dedi
SEE AFFORDABLE, PAGE 29

Del Ray Residents Upset over EMS Medic Unit’s Removal

FROM PAGE 1

and in 1930 reportedly housed the first motorized ambulance in Alexandria.

Rod Kuckro, president of the Del Ray Citizens Association, hosted a meeting that included Dubé on April 16, and called the building the cornerstone of the community that serves a number of schools, families and an aging senior population. He said that the Del Ray firehouse received its first blow in 2008, when the plans for Potomac Yard were released and the streets were found to have a turning radius too sharp for emergency vehicles or trash trucks. A compro-

mise was reached when the developer proposed building a new firehouse in Potomac Yard, and council pledged that the EMS unit would stay in place.

“About 12 years ago, when the city moved the fire engine out to Potomac Yard, the City Council made a pledge to us that they would never move the ambulance to Potomac Yard, because it serves two schools, multiple daycare centers, some preschools and an aging population,” Kuckro said. “The community was not properly notified of this change, and any trust between the citizens association and the Fire Department has

been broken.”

Vice Mayor Justin Wilson said he looks forward to seeing the data presented to council after the conclusion of the pilot.

“A few years ago we adopted policies that give the fire chief the authority to position fire/EMS apparatus as he sees fit to maximize public safety. This was designed to get the politicians out of the business of deciding where apparatus are placed,” Wilson said.

Still, in 2008, the AFD in its Potomac Yard Station proposal, said that fire suppression units would move out of Station 202 that

year, and that Station 202 “would continue as a home for its EMS unit for at least the next five to eight years.”

Jay Johnson has been the president of the Alexandria Volunteer Fire Department since 1984. Most of his 25 volunteers operate out of Station 202, which he says is largely vacant now. He also refuted the AFD figures on response times.

“There’s no way that the figures are accurate. It’s just not possible to have a faster response from Potomac Yard than in Del Ray. It’s physics,” Johnson said. “I think

SEE EMS MEDIC, PAGE 29

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Legals

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

Title: Request for Qualifications No. 00000750, Multiple Roof Design Services.
Closing Date and Time: May 16, 2018, 4:00 p.m., prevailing local time.

A pre-proposal meeting shall be held on April 25, 2018 at 10:00 am EST in the Purchasing conference room located at 100 N. Pitt St., Suite 301 Alexandria, VA 22314

For general inquiries contact Randy Burns, CPPB, Purchasing Agent at randy.burns@alexandriava.gov.

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

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Legals

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

Announcements

NEWS

Affordable Housing

FROM PAGE 28

cated funding would constitute doing future councils a favor.

"The need does not fluctuate between less and more; it becomes more and then more and then more," he said. He wants to ensure the city has "money ready for the next project." By dedicating funding, "we are preparing the next council to do the best that they can as it relates to housing."

Neither proposal closes the present gap. A December memo from Jinks identified a \$66 million shortfall to meet the Housing Master Plan's goals by 2025. That works out to \$9.4 million per year on average, including FY 2019.

"Imagine being a child without a set address," said Councilwoman Redella "Del" Pepper. "It's demor-

alizing. It's a heck of a hard way to start out your life, and as a senior it's a hard way to end your life.

I don't care much for dedicated funds, but affordable housing issue is so terribly important that it's time to put our money where our mouth is. I think we need to go that route."

Nothing was voted on at the meeting, but even Wilson noted that the majority on the board seemed to favor the Bailey plan.

Find more details about council's options regarding the meals tax in Budget Memo #67, available online at www.alexandriava.gov/budget/info/FY19Memos. Final add/delete decisions will occur on Monday, April 30, 7 p.m. at city hall.

EMS Medic Unit

FROM PAGE 28

there definitely should be a medic unit, because you have a lot of kids and you have a lot of old people there ... Basically, you have two people, an EMS supervisor and a safety officer there. During the day they're not there. They're doing their administrative duties all over the city, so it's pretty empty during the day."

Kuckro created an online survey, which yielded a number of responses for and against the move.

"In 2017, my 2-year-old son stopped breathing," wrote a respondent.

"We live on W Bellefonte Ave, and the response time was less than 2 minutes. There's no way

this would have been the case if they had been coming from Potomac Yard.

My son died the following day, but after we were given the gift of being able to hold him and say goodbye, knowing we did everything possible to save his life. The EMTs that responded that day surely helped give us this gift."

But not all comments in the survey were against the AFD decision.

"Safety professionals should be allowed to determine how to cover the city and its residents best," wrote a respondent. "I trust the fire department to manage its own resources to the highest standards. There is no need for us to weigh in."

Absentee Voting Opens April 27

Absentee voting for Virginia's June 12 Democratic and Republican primary elections begins on Friday, April 27.

In Alexandria, the June 12 Democratic Primary is to nominate Democratic candidates for Alexandria

Mayor and City Council; the June 12 Republican Primary is to nominate a Republican candidate for U.S. Senate. All persons qualified to vote may request a ballot for either primary, however, they may not vote in both primaries.

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You Mean Tomorrow Tuesday?

By KENNETH B. LOURIE



Not that deadlines don't happen in the newspaper business; of course they do, every Tuesday for us weeklies. But when combined with my usual post-chemotherapy malaise, it is a bit more challenging. More so when the deadline is tightened up due to the nature of hitting and occasionally missing in-house communications, which is also not unreasonable given the multiple demands multi tasking imposes.

Compounding this task even more is that until I'm back to semi post-chemo normal, in the interim, I am not eating too much, not sleeping well, have low energy (related to the previous two deficiencies), my hands are shaky, my balance is off and I'm having some difficulty focusing. It's a good thing I'm sitting at a desk while attempting to write this column because operating any heavy machinery would definitely be out of the question. What I need to do is mind my own business.

Business which at the moment involves fending off my buff-colored male cat, Chino, as he angles to sit on my writing pad as I move him from left to right – and then right to left since he won't take "Chino, move!" for a directive. But if I know anything, other than what to expect post chemo, I also know what to expect from Chino – or any of the other cats we manage: independence, as any fellow cat owner knows. Unlike a "true and loyal dog," a cat, generally speaking, is not inclined to respond to your commands, well, too many of them, anyway. Nor are they likely to respond to any physical discipline and/or pushing/pulling/redirection. Invariably, if you push, they pull. If you pull, they push.

How Chino knows I'm not feeling well and on an unanticipated and abbreviated deadline, I'll never know. But rather than leave me to it, he'll interfere every way possible: nuzzling, nudging, leaning, rubbing, meowing, moving about and plopping down when all else fails. If you love cats as we do, this is their charm. If you don't love them and their antics, I can see how this kind of behavior can be very frustrating.

I mean, with all this activity, it's difficult to think about what I'm supposed to be doing when I'm so busy preventing things from getting done. I imagine Chino thinks he's doing me a favor, being so affectionate and so in the way. Maybe he thinks he's contributing to the creative process by sitting in the middle of my writing pad? In a way, maybe he is. He's forcing me to concentrate. Moreover, he's forcing me to focus on this most immediate task which, at the moment, has me fending him off with my left wrist while I'm scribbling prose with my right hand. Oddly enough, it might be working as I'm three-quarters finished with this column which 30 minutes ago was a weekend task until it became a today/Tuesday task.

Now if I didn't have a CT scan and lower abdomen MRI scheduled for Wednesday, I'd have a bit more time to sort out the details of writing this column. Unfortunately, post-chemo, mid-newspaper deadline and pre-scan is a triple threat which sometimes can impose its will. A 'will' which I take personally so I will persevere and complete this column with one final paragraph now that Chino has left my desk and likely ended up on some unoccupied couch to sleep; he's had a big day.

All kidding aside, if there's one behavior I need more than any other during these deadline triple threats, it's companionship. Because of Chino and our other four cats: Andrew, Sloane, Biscuit and Twinkle, I am never alone and always have someone to talk to who, occasionally talks back. Not that we understand one another, but it's giving and getting, and it's loving and affecting – me and my cancer; and everything in between.

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

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PEOPLE

Smithsonian

FROM PAGE 6

inevitably applies to his work.

Although he is now a full-time jewelry maker now, Kamalpornwijit is a trained engineer and research scientist.

"I always enjoyed making things with my hand as a child, but I didn't start jewelry until I began helping my friend with a project she was doing to raise funds for a temple," Kamalpornwijit said. "So, it wasn't for a passion at the beginning, but rather a commitment to a friend. I was more like a robot cranking out lots of different miniature flowers. After a while, I lost my interest, so I started to think about what I really want to make. I like to make things that are different, things that have dimension and things that have an interesting shape or connection. That's when my work started to evolve."

Pursuing his polymer passion has clearly paid off.

"Wiwat is in the 2018 Show because the jurors – Shoji Satake, Bruce Helander and Jane Milosch – identified his work as innovative, new and worthy of inclusion," Gott Collins said. "We at the SWC like his work for the same reasons, but also because it is fun and affordable."

Kamalpornwijit is not alone in feeling like he's achieved a new level of success with his acceptance to the Smithsonian Craft Show, an event that has grown remarkably since it debuted in 1983.

"Fortunately, through growth, it has maintained its quality and prestige," Gott Collins said. "Artists take great pride in being able to label their work, 'as seen at the SCS.' We also get artists who don't do any other shows, they just do galleries and private sales."

The Smithsonian Craft Show has something for everyone, even for younger generations of people who don't know too much about crafts, or the artists and the processes behind the art.

"Collectors come from all over the country," Gott Collins said. "We find that young people appreciate quality over quantity. They don't want to accumulate lots of stuff. Instead, they invest in experiences and high quality goods that represent those experiences. People who come to this show understand that this is an experience. You get to see the best of the best."

She added that it also doesn't hurt that Thursday night includes local mixologists who donate their time to make signature cocktails for attendees to enjoy as they take in the beauty of all the hand-selected and handmade crafts.

"The handmade craft is resurging," Gott Collins said. "With so much technology ruling our lives, and in many ways making it easier, people are appreciating the slow-cooked meal, the slower lifestyle, the value of something one-of-a-kind and made by hand rather than one that is the result of a machine. And, honestly, the event is just fun and the National Building Museum is exceptional. It is so worth the easy metro ride."

For more information on the Smithsonian Craft Show, and to purchase tickets, visit smithsoniancraftshow.org.

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