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JANUARY 17, 2019

Schools Face Growing Costs

Growing enrollment, student and staff costs drive superintendent's budget.

BY DAN BRENDL
GAZETTE PACKET

The public schools' superintendent last week proposed a \$285 million FY 2020 operating budget, 4 percent over last year, driven especially by growing student enrollment and employee pay and benefits.

Roughly \$232 million would come from City Council, which exercises the power of the purse locally; \$48 million from the state; and \$6 million from drawing down on the school division's fund balance.

Superintendent Dr. Gregory C. Hutchings, Jr. also proposed a \$15 million grants-and-special-projects budget, which mostly uses state and federal funding; and an \$11 million school nutrition budget, which uses self-generated revenues. In total, the schools' FY 2020 the tri-

partite "combined funds budget," of which the operating budget comprises 92 percent, would weigh in at \$311 million.

Overall enrollment increased by 40 percent between FY 2009 and FY 2019, according to Hutchings' presentation to the School Board last Thursday, Jan. 10. Pre-kindergarten and elementary school enrollment increased by 42 percent; middle school by 52 percent; high school by 33 percent. The schools project division-wide enrollment

to increase by another 17 percent, for a total of 18,700 students, by FY 2028.

"What we have to remember when we are asking for certain services ... our kids are bringing some additional obstacles to the table." — Superintendent Dr. Gregory C. Hutchings, Jr.

are bringing some additional obstacles to the table," said

SEE PUBLIC SCHOOLS, PAGE 12



PHOTO BY JOHN BORDNER/GAZETTE PACKET

Vince Grecznaik, of the National Inventors Hall of Fame Museum in Alexandria, stands next to the museum's custom Ford Mustang Jan. 11 at the CES 2019 technology show in Las Vegas. The vehicle – a split-model car that merges a 1965 and 2015 model Mustang - demonstrates the progress of automotive design and technology over the course of 50 years. It is scheduled to return to its normal exhibit location inside the museum later this week.

CES 2019 Local companies exhibit at world's largest technology show.

BY JEANNE THEISMANN
GAZETTE PACKET

As self-driving vehicles were taking to the streets of Las Vegas, one local vehicle was getting some attention of its own during the recently concluded 2019 CES technology show. "This is a one-of-a-kind Ford Mustang," said

Vince Grecznaik of the Alexandria-based National Inventors Hall of Fame. "This custom split-model car demonstrates the progress of automotive design and technology over the course of 50 years and is a centerpiece of our museum inside the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office."

The NIHF collaborated with the USPTO, the

SEE SHOWCASE FOR, PAGE 4

Modest Pay, Good Benefits

A look city government employees' total compensation.

BY DAN BRENDL
GAZETTE PACKET

Overall, city government employees make less than the workforce at large, although their benefit packages add a lot of value. On average, city employees make \$69,400 per year, based on a roster of some 2,800 city employees obtained in September. That compares to about \$90,100 citywide and \$70,200 regionwide, according to the American Community Survey and Bureau of Labor

Statistics, respectively.

The city's compensation philosophy aims "to be competitive at a minimum with the average pay" of neighboring local governments.

For a rough comparison to the private sector regionwide, here's a sampling of annual wage averages from the Bureau of Labor Statistics:

- ❖ Chief executive: \$240,100
- ❖ Financial manager: \$166,000
- ❖ Human resources manager: \$148,800

SEE CITY COMPENSATION, PAGE 8

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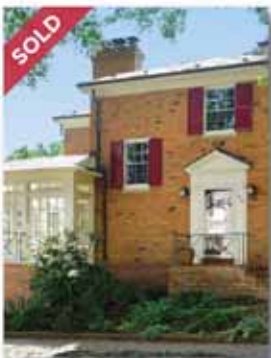
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NEWS

Diversity in Elected Bodies

A look at council, School Board members' economic interests.

BY DAN BRENDL
GAZETTE PACKET

“Diversity” features large in Alexandria’s political vernacular, both as a cel-

brated and sought after characteristic of the city’s population. For instance, Vice Mayor Elizabeth Bennett-Parker said at her installation that she’s proud to be among “the most diverse council ever elected,” emphasizing “race, gender and age.” But what about other characteristics, like wealth?

The Urban Institute, a research organization, deems the nation’s growing wealth inequality “greater and potentially more devastating than income inequality.”

Income contributes to wealth, but wealth means more than paycheck size. Wealth (or net worth) is the net of assets and debts. Many assets — such as savings, investments,

SEE ECONOMIC INTERESTS, PAGE 15

Last Name	First Name	Zip	Occupation (Other Than Office)	Spouse Married?	Spouse Occupation	Primary Residence Owned?	Primary Residence Assessment (Jan. 2018)	# Owned Securities \$5-50k	# Owned Securities \$50-250k	# Owned Securities > \$250k	Own or Interest in Business?	Own or Interest in Rental Property?	Own or Interest in Other Real Property?	Debts \$5-50k (Self or Immediate Family)?**	Debts > \$50k (Self or Immediate Family)?**
CITY COUNCIL															
Aguirre	Canek	22304	Community relations rep	Engaged	N/A	Yes (condo)	\$241,800	3	0	0	No	No	No	No	No
Bennett-Parker	Elizabeth	22301	Co-Dir, Together We Bake	Yes	Leg. Director	Yes (det house)	\$1,045,177	6	0	0	No	No	Yes (x1: family member's house, FL)	Yes (lender other than bank/CU)	No
Chapman	John	22314	FCPS, CEO tour company	Engaged	N/A	Yes (SD house)	\$403,303	1	0	0	Yes (< \$50k gross income)	No	No	Yes (bank/CU, credit card, lender other than bank/CU)	No
Jackson	Amy	22304	N/A	Yes	DoJ HR	Yes (det house)	\$826,218	2	0	0	No	Yes (x1: < \$50k gross income)	No	Yes (credit card)	No
Pepper	Del	22304	N/A	Yes	Retired M.D.	Yes (condo)	\$189,765	1	7	4	No	No	Yes (x3: VA, TX, NB)	Yes (car loan)	No
Seifeldein	Mo	22311	Attny; pres, Seifeldein & Assoc.	No	N/A	No (apt)	N/A	0	0	0	Yes (\$50-250k gross income)	No	No	No	No
Wilson	Justin	22305	Amtrak Sr. Dir	Yes	DoD Analyst	Yes (det house)	\$861,763	11	12	0	No	Yes (x1: < \$50k gross income)	No	No	No
SCHOOL BOARD															
Alderton	Meagan	22304	Realtor; special education specialist	Yes	ACPS Teacher	Yes (SD house)	\$450,518	2	0	0	Yes (< \$50k income)	No	No	Yes (cr card, bank/CU, lender other than bank/ CU, brokerage)	No
Anderson	Cindy	22302	Real Estate Mgmt	Yes	Dir, Burke & Herbert Bank; pres., project mgmt firm	Yes (det house)	\$1,026,444	0	0	2	Yes (> \$250k gross income)	Yes (x5: VA, DC, each < \$50k gross income)	No	Yes (credit card)	Yes (bank/CU)
Gentry	Ramee	22304	Museum exhibitions content mgr	Yes	Production Mgr	Yes (SD house)	\$628,684	0	0	0	No	No	No	Yes (credit card, bank/CU)	No
Greene	Jacinta	22305	Mtg Planner, Nat'l Parent Teacher Assoc	No	N/A	No (apt)	N/A	0	0	1	No	No	No	No	No
Lorber	Margaret	22301	N/A	Yes	Scientist, John Hopkins	Yes (det house)	\$970,303	0	0	0	No	Yes x1: (< \$50k gross income)	Yes (x1: vacation cabin)	No	No
Nolan	Veronica	22301	N/A	Yes	Consultant	Yes (det house)	\$1,205,015	0	0	0	Yes (< \$50k gross income)	No	No	No	No
Rief	Michelle	22305	NOVA adjunct	Yes	AFL-CIO program coordinator	Yes (townhs)	\$541,730	3	0	0	No	No	No	No	No
Suarez	Chris	22305	Attorney	Yes	N/A	Yes (townhs)	\$809,818	2	1	0	No	No	No	No	Yes (home loan)
Thornton	Heather	22304	Records examiner/an alyst	No	N/A	No (apt)	N/A	2	0	0	No	No	No	No	No
						AVERAGE	\$707,734	2.1	1.3	0.4					



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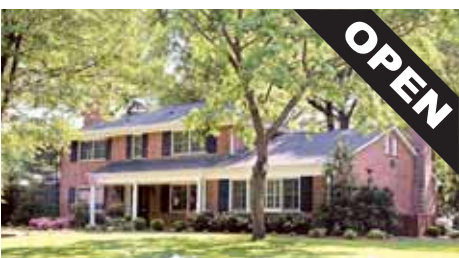
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News



Local entrepreneur Skip West in his MAXSA Innovations booth at CES 2019 in Las Vegas. West has been exhibiting at CES for 35 years.

Consumer Technology Association CEO Gary Shapiro, left, chats with John Cabeca of the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office Jan. 11 during CES 2019 in Las Vegas.

Showcase for Technology

FROM PAGE 1

National Science Foundation and the Small Business Administration to share space at the technology show, which attracts more than 188,000 industry attendees from around the world.

"By collaborating we have been able to showcase some start-ups that would otherwise not have the opportunity to be here," said John Cabeca of the USPTO.

With more than 4,500 exhibiting companies and exhibit space of more than 2.9 million net square feet, CES 2019 showcased the world's biggest companies in addition to hosting more than 1,200 startups at an area called the Eureka Park Marketplace. "[Artificial Intelligence] pervades the show," said Gary Shapiro, CEO of the Arlington-based Consumer Technology Association that runs CES. "Almost every major company is showing AI and applications that are just truly jaw-dropping."

Skip West, an Alexandria native and founder of MAXSA Innovations, has been exhibiting at CES for 35 years.

"I'm a small company," said West. "We don't have the big flashy displays. We have products that solve everyday problems. And my mother understands them."

CES is one of several trade shows that West attends each year and despite the cost, is worth the investment.

"Seeing the emerging technology here is really incredible," West added. "We do OK in sales but CES is more about the networking. I am able to get some great ideas for my next generation of products so it is totally worth it to be here."



The Bread Bot by the Wilkinson Baking Company is a fully automated bread-making machine that mixes, kneads, bakes and sells bread like a vending machine. The device is meant to be leased by retailers and groceries and can make 10 loaves of bread per hour.



Dubbed the "Nespresso for cocktails," Bartesian is a single serve, capsule-based cocktail machine and will be available in March.



The Hyundai Mobis deploys 3D game technology and camera sensors to increase safety for autonomous driving vehicles.



Barely bigger than a microwave the ultra-compact dishwasher "Bob" from French company Daan Tech cleans and dries dishes in 20 minutes using only three litres of water.

NEWS

'Amazon Town Hall: A Deeper Dive'

Our Revolution Arlington and Our Revolution Northern Virginia are cosponsoring "Amazon Town Hall: A Deeper Dive," a two-hour Town Hall forum Sunday, Jan. 20, 2-4 p.m., to address the questions and concerns citizens have about Amazon coming to Northern Virginia.

Elected officials from both Alexandria and Arlington have been invited, as well as groups interested in presenting on specific topics. It will start with 4-5 speakers who will lay the groundwork for the discussion, followed by a panel, moderated by Virginia NPR reporter Michael Lee Pope. At the end, 45 minutes will be devoted to questions

from the audience.

The forum will be held in the gymnasium at Charles Houston Rec Center, 901 Wythe St. See <https://www.facebook.com/events/2181521642109078/>

Confirmed speakers and panelists include state Sen. Adam Ebbin, Del. Mark Levine, Arlington County Board Chair Christian Dorsey, Del. Lee Carter, Our Revolution Arlington Steering Committee member Roshan Abraham, 31st Senate District Candidate Nicole Merlene, Neri Canahui, from the Carpenters Union, and Sandra J. Klassen, Our Revolution Northern Virginia chair.

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.

VICTIM SUPPORT SERVICES

Resources Available to Support Sexual Assault Victims. The City of Alexandria reminds the community of resources available for survivors of sexual assault and those supporting survivors. It is important for survivors to know that it is not their fault and help is available.

- ❖ In case of an emergency, and for life-threatening situations, always call 911.
- ❖ The City's Sexual Assault Center offers services including a 24/7 hotline at 703-683-7273, individual counseling, support groups, family support and information and referral services. Call the hotline to access these and additional services, or visit the website at alexandriava.gov/SexualViolence.

- ❖ Free presentations are also available on topics including prevention, awareness, healthy relationships, sexual harassment and bystander intervention. To schedule a presentation for a school, youth group, civic organization or other Alexandria group, call 703-746-3118.

LIBRARY

New Library Website. The Alexandria Library is pleased to unveil its redesigned website, now live at alexlibraryva.org. The new website is more user-centered, with a focus on the tools, resources and information that matter most to Alexandria Library users.

SEE BULLETIN, PAGE 7

SMITHSONIAN ASSOCIATES

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Physician John Whyte has become a popular Smithsonian Associates speaker in recent years, empowering audiences to be better advocates for their own health. With his trademark clarity and humor, Whyte explains how to sort through conflicting advice, sensational headlines, and short-lived fads to make yourself stronger, healthier, and better educated about your own body. Now Whyte gathers all his best advice in a one-day seminar, designed to guide you through a comprehensive look at critical aspects of personal health. Participants leave educated, engaged, and entertained and with new tools to approach the job of staying healthy.

Whyte, a board-certified internist and author of several books on health, is the chief medical officer at WebMD.



Tickets: \$80 Member / \$130 Non-Member

<https://smithsonianassociates.org/ticketing/tickets>



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PEOPLE

Harris Works to Empower ARHA Residents

Opening up the political process.

BY SHIRLEY RUHE
GAZETTE PACKET

Kevin Harris, president of the Alexandria Redevelopment and Housing Authority (ARHA) Resident Association (ARA) says one of the major goals they have achieved since he has been president has been to engage in the city's political process.

"For the first time we held forums before the City of Alexandria elections with the candidates for City Council and the School Board and later a town hall with the newly-elected mayor so that ARHA residents could express their concerns," he said. "We had a good turnout, about 100 residents, for the City Council forum. Residents were concerned about should the city have more affordable housing and Resolution 830 that made a commitment to replace housing. The agreement was one-to-one but what did that mean — the same number of units or exactly the same unit?"

Another issue was parking. He explains some ARHA (low income housing) properties are located across the street from houses with garages but their residents sometimes

choose to park on the street anyway, thus using up available spaces for ARHA residents. Another question asked of the candidates was: "Did you knock on the doors of ARHA residents." Sometimes the answer was yes, sometimes no.

Harris said that one of the things residents expressed in the School Board forum was confusion about the grading system for elementary school students that didn't allow parents to gauge their children's progress. In addition, they questioned why African-American students were suspended three times more often than other students and asked for the reasons for the disparity rates. Parents also indicated African-American students were more likely identified for remedial classes than chosen for TAG.

Harris says one of his goals is to empower residents civically and financially to help them get jobs. "At some point I'd like to see ARHA residents on the City Council and School Board. We're working on that." He says it's a two-way street "because the city is also coming to us to get our participation."

Harris says his job is to kind of oversee all of the different ARHA properties and to come up with vision and strategies and help it happen. He points out that ARHA has the greatest concentration of any property company in the city with 16-18 properties and over 1,500 households. For the first time there is now a volunteer tenant representative at each ARHA site who helps spread



Kevin Harris, president of Alexandria Redevelopment and Housing Authority Resident Association.

the word about flu shots, special programs and job opportunities available to residents and to connect with the community through participation in local events.

Part of the vision is to develop programs for children as well as scholarships and training and to work on resident business development. "We work on job opportunities through Section 3 which says that to greatest extent possible you go to residents first to offer jobs if you are getting money

from HUD."

Another part of the job is acting as a liaison fielding resident concerns that can't get resolved. "I can 'cut to the chase' because I know all of the case workers and officers. I do a lot of advocacy."

"I would like to see the lives of residents to be better, their quality of life." He continued, "I also want to see their voices reflected so that people hear them. There have been times when people were speaking for them but we didn't speak for ourselves."

President of ARA is a volunteer job "where I spend many hours" when he's not running his Hoop Life business which provides basketball services such as camps, clinics, classes and after-school programs for the City of Alexandria, the Springfield Youth Club and Annandale. Harris said, "I am an ARHA resident so I can empathize with the situations of people who live here. I want to make things better for people than when I came in. ARA was established in 2010 to provide input to the agency on the needs of residents and to determine how residents can become engaged in their community as part of ARHA's development of a long-term Strategic Plan."

"If you see the opportunity to make things better and you have the capacity to bring change, it doesn't make sense to just stand by. Bringing everything together and making a difference is important. Getting things done — it's a matter of seasons and times being right, the stars aligning."

PHOTO BY SHIRLEY RUHE/THE GAZETTE

Bulova Appointed Director Of the Office of Historic Alexandria.

Gretchen M. Bulova was appointed director of the Office of Historic Alexandria (OHA), effective Jan. 12.

Bulova served as acting director of OHA since the retirement of her predecessor on Nov. 30, 2018. She was appointed OHA's first deputy director in 2015, following more than 20 years of service with the city. She joined Alexandria in 1991 as a part-time collections manager for the Gadsby's Tavern Museum, left for two years to work as a curator of ceramics and glass for the Daughters of the American Revolution Museum in Washington, D.C., and returned in 1995 to become the city's records administrator and archivist. Bulova became assistant director of Gadsby's Tavern in 1995, served as that museum's director from 1996 to 2015, and also became director of the Stabler-Leadbeater Apothecary Museum when the site was donated to the city in 2006.



Bulova

In 2012, OHA became only the third municipal museum system in Virginia and the eighth in the United States to be accredited by the American Alliance of Museums (AAM), an effort Bulova coordinated.

Since becoming acting director, she has overseen the award-winning conservation of three historic ships discovered at the Robinson Landing construction site and the city's partnership with the Northern Virginia Urban League to operate the Freedom House Museum.

Bulova holds a master's degree in museum studies from The George Washington University and a bachelor's degree in anthropology and classical studies from the College of William & Mary.

She is president of the Virginia Association of Museums, president of the Historic House Museum Consortium of Washington, D.C., and a former chair of the Fairfax County History Commission.

Bulova is a longtime peer reviewer for AAM's accreditation programs and is the author or curator of more than 50 publications, exhibitions, and lectures.

Wilson Receives State Award Spotlight on Career and Technical Education.

T.C. Williams High School Teacher Kimberly Wilson has been named the 2019 Virginia Career and Technical Education (CTE) Teacher of the Year for inspiring others to love the work of education.

The early childhood education program coordinator has set up more than a hundred placements in internships and field assignments, and full-time jobs for those who have earned their Childhood Development Associate Credential through her class.

Wilson received the award at the Virginia Association for Career and Technical Education last weekend at a time when CTE is becoming more recognized as a critical part of high school programming at T.C. Williams.

While a few years ago, CTE was associated with auto shop, it is now connected to careers that go way beyond the basic offerings. Last summer ACPS launched the

Health Sciences Academy, in partnership with The George Washington University, that offers students the opportunity to earn 18 college credits before they leave high school.

In the fall, ACPS announced a partnership with Virginia Tech where students take courses in the tech field linked to VT's Innovation Campus as part of Amazon's arrival to the D.C. area.

As the early childhood education program coordinator for co-op and dual enrollment, Wilson puts student teachers through internship programs and offers them the chance to participate in programs where they can gain hands-on, real-life experience that extends their learning beyond the classroom.

Wilson helps students learn how to conduct research and solve problems, communicate effectively, think critically and manage their time. She also leverages relationships she's formed in her 27 years of teaching with community organizations, colleges and universities to create opportunities for students.



Wilson

PEOPLE

TC Students Earn Foundation Scholarships

T.C. Williams High School seniors Denay Taylor, recipient of a Posse Foundation Scholarship to Bucknell University, and Jeffrey Lopez Henao, recipient of a Posse Foundation Scholarship to Lafayette College, will receive full-tuition, four-year leadership scholarships.

Both Taylor and Lopez Henao worked with The Scholarship Fund of Alexandria and T.C. Williams counselors and staff to apply for and prepare for the Posse Foundation application and selection process. The students were selected from nearly 20,000 applicants across the country.

Taylor has lived in Alexandria for 10 years and will be the first generation in her family to pursue a college degree. She has been a leader at T.C. Williams serving as class president for the Class of 2019, running track for

four years and serving as a section leader, playing piccolo, in the Titan Marching Band. She has also helped plan and host the "Dance for All Ages" in Alexandria, a dance held to celebrate Alexandria's senior population.

Lopez Henao has been an Alexandria resident for 5 years and will be the first in his family to attend college. He has been active in all things theater at T.C. Williams appearing in drama productions, including the recent production of "Noises Off," along with outside productions in the local area. He plans to study psychology and social work at Lafayette.

The Posse Foundation is a national initiative, with chapters in major cities like Atlanta, Boston, Miami, New Orleans, New York City, and Washington, D.C., Posse hopes to make college accessible and inspire diverse leaders.



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

T.C. Williams seniors Jeffrey Lopez Henao (left) and Denay Taylor were awarded full-tuition college scholarships during the Posse Foundation ceremony at the Lincoln Theater in D.C. on Wednesday, Jan. 9.

BULLETIN BOARD

FROM PAGE 5

THURSDAY/JAN. 17

Community Open House. 6-8 p.m. in Room 2000 of City Hall, 301 King St. The community is invited to an informal open house to learn about a proposed Zoning Ordinance text amendment for a new residential zone that incentivizes the preservation of long-term housing affordability. All material provided at the open house will be posted on the project webpage along with information related to the Strategy implementation. Visit www.alexandriava.gov/Planning.

Email questions to Radhika.Mohan@alexandriava.gov or call 703-746-3850.

Public Hearing. 7 p.m. at the Charles Houston Recreation Center, 901 Wythe St. The Park and Recreation Commission will hold a public hearing on the Natural Resource Management Plan (NRMP) which represents the City's development of a strategic course of action for preserving, protecting, and sustainability in managing Alexandria's natural resources and native biodiversity. Following the public hearing, the Commission will hold its regular monthly meeting.

Visit www.alexandriava.gov/recreation/info/default.aspx?id=106918, email bob.williams@alexandriava.gov or call 703-746-4688.

THURSDAY/JAN. 24

Alexandria GOP Women's Meeting. 7 p.m. social; 7:30 program at 3600 Wheeler Ave., Community Room. The Commonwealth Republican Women's Club (CRWC) monthly meeting will feature Kendra Martello (Chair) and Liz Johnson (Commissioner) from Alexandria's Commission for Women discussing the recently-released

Status of Women Report. Visit www.alexandriacrwc.org for more.

SATURDAY/JAN. 26

Community Workshop. 10 a.m.-2 p.m. at Hermitage Northern Virginia, 5000 Fairbanks Ave. A Community Workshop will be held to work with the community to further develop potential refinements to the 2009 Landmark Van Dorn Corridor Plan as it relates to the Landmark Mall site. Visit alexandriava.gov/Landmark for information about how to watch/participate online in real time or RSVP for the workshop.

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City Compensation: Modest Pay, Good Benefits

FROM PAGE 1

- ❖ Budget analyst: \$98,000
- ❖ Network and computer systems administrator: \$101,700
- ❖ Civil or environmental engineer: \$98,000

- ❖ Lawyer: \$178,000
 - ❖ Computer programmer: \$99,400
- Here are some rules of thumb that estimate the value, on top of salary, of city-paid benefits (FICA, health, pension, disability, life insurance), according to city spokesper-

- son Craig Fifer:
- ❖ General schedule employees: add 36 percent,
 - ❖ Sheriff's deputies and medics: add 53 percent,
 - ❖ Fire and police: add 74 percent.

These averages don't apply uniformly to every employee. A given compensation package depends on variables specific to the individual.

SEE MODEST PAY, PAGE 12

City Government Salaries Over 100,000

JOB TITLE ANNUAL PAY (ROUNDED)

CITY MANAGER	\$277,800
CITY ATTORNEY	\$260,300
MEDICAL SUPERVISOR	\$250,000
SR CLINICAL PSYCHIATRIST x2	\$220,000
COMMONWEALTH ATTORNEY	\$202,500
CLINICAL PSYCHIATRIST	\$202,100
SHERIFF	\$197,500
CLINICAL PSYCHIATRIST	\$194,400
DEPUTY CITY MANAGER x3	\$193,600
FIRE CHIEF	\$184,400
MH/HR/SA EXEC DIR & CS DIR	\$184,400
POLICE CHIEF	\$179,800
RECREATION DIRECTOR	\$177,000
CHIEF HUMAN RESOURCES OFFICER	\$174,500
LIBRARY DIRECTOR	\$172,300
FINANCE DIRECTOR	\$170,400
OFFICE OF MGT & BUDGT DIRECTOR	\$170,400
PLANNING & ZONING DIRECTOR	\$170,400
TRANSPORTATION & ENVI DIRECTOR	\$170,400
CHIEF INFORMATION OFFICER/ITS	\$169,200
COMMUNICATIONS DIRECTOR	\$165,800
SPECIAL CITY ARCHITECT	\$165,800
DIR-DEPT PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION	\$165,100
DIRECTOR CODE ADMINISTRATION	\$165,100
OFFICE OF HOUSING DIRECTOR	\$165,100
EMERGENCY COMMUNICATIONS DIR	\$164,000
GENERAL SERVICES DIRECTOR	\$163,800
PUBLIC DEFENDER	\$162,300
CHIEF DEP COMMONWEALTH'S ATTY	\$159,300
CLERK OF THE CIRCUIT COURT	\$159,000
OFFICE HUMAN RIGHTS DIRECTOR	\$157,500
CHIEF DEPUTY CITY ATTORNEY	\$155,700
ATC GENERAL MGR	\$154,500
DEPUTY TES ENVIRON QUALITY DIR	\$152,900
DEPUTY SHERIFF - CHIEF x3	\$152,700
DEPUTY INFO TECH SRVS DIRECTOR	\$151,100
DPY DIR-PROJECT IMPLEMENTAT	\$150,700
ASSISTANT FIRE CHIEF	\$149,600
DEPUTY GENERAL SERVICES DIR x2	\$149,400
ASST DIRECTOR OF FIN-REAL ESTA	\$149,100
DEPUTY FIRE CHIEF	\$148,900
POLICE CAPTAIN	\$148,800
ASST ADULT SERVICES DIRECTOR	\$148,700
ASSISTANT FIRE CHIEF	\$148,100
POLICE CAPTAIN	\$147,400
DEPUTY DIR OF FINANCE	\$146,100
CHIEF PERFORMANCE OFFICER	\$145,800
DEPUTY DIR RECR/PARKS/NAT RES x2	\$145,700
DEPUTY FIRE CHIEF	\$145,500
ASSISTANT CITY ATTORNEY V x3	\$144,500
DEP DIRECTOR OFC HISTORIC ALEX	\$143,900
DEPUTY TES OPERATIONS DIR	\$142,800
DEPUTY FIRE CHIEF	\$142,300
DEPUTY PLANNING & ZONING DIR	\$142,300
FIRE BATTALION CHIEF x2	\$141,800
DEPUTY COMMONWEALTH'S ATTORNEY	\$141,700
ASST CHILDREN & FAMILIES DIR	\$140,000
DEP DIR/TES ROW & DEVELOP SRV	\$139,800
DEPUTY DIR TES TRANS & TRNST	\$139,800
ASSISTANT FIRE MARSHAL	\$138,500
DEPUTY SHERIFF - CAPTAIN x4	\$138,500
POLICE CAPTAIN x6	\$137,700
APPLICATIONS DIVISIO CHIEF	\$137,600
DEPUTY EXTENDED CARE SRVS DIR	\$137,600
ITS-ENTERPRISE SUPPORT DIV CHF	\$137,600
ASST DIRECTOR OF FIN-REVENUE	\$137,500
DEPUTY FIRE CHIEF	\$136,000
ASST DIRECTOR OF FIN-TREASURY	\$135,500
FIRE BATTALION CHIEF	\$135,500
DEPUTY SHERIFF - CAPTAIN	\$135,400
DEPUTY CULTURAL ARTS DIRECTOR	\$134,900
JUVENILE & DOMESTI REL CRT DIR	\$134,000
ASST DIR, CTR FOR OPERATIONS	\$133,800
ASST ECONOMIC SUPPORT DIRECTOR	\$132,700
ASSISTANT FIRE MARSHAL	\$132,300
DEP ACUTE & EMERG SRVS DIR	\$131,500
DIV CHF INFRA & NETWORK MGMT	\$131,500
TECHNO/DATA/ANALYSIS DIV CHF	\$131,400
DEPUTY EMERGENCY COMM DIRECTOR	\$130,400
ASST HUMAN RESOURCES DIRECTOR	\$129,900
DEPUTY FIRE CHIEF	\$129,900
POLICE CAPTAIN	\$128,600
BEHAVIORAL DIVISION CHIEF	\$128,500
FIRE BATTALION CHIEF	\$126,600
ACCOUNTING DIV COMPTROLLER	\$125,900
ADMINISTRATIVE SRVS DIV CHIEF	\$125,200
ASST DIR PLANNING ZONING	\$125,200
CITY ARCHITECT	\$125,200
CONSTRUCTION DIVISION CHIEF	\$125,200
COURT ADMINISTRATOR	\$125,200

JOB TITLE ANNUAL PAY (ROUNDED)

DESIGN DIVISION CHIEF	\$125,200
ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY DIV CHF	\$125,200
FIRE PROTECTION SYSTEMS SPRV	\$125,200
PERMIT CENTER DIVISION CHIEF	\$125,200
PLANNING & ZONING DIV CHIEF x2	\$125,200
RECREATION DIVISION CHIEF x3	\$125,200
SOLID WASTE DIVISION CHIEF	\$125,200
TRANSPORTATION DIVISION CHIEF	\$125,200
FIRE BATTALION CHIEF x3	\$123,700
EMS OPERATONS MANAGER	\$123,600
CITY CLERK & CLERK OF COUNCIL	\$123,400
ASSISTANT CITY ATTORNEY V	\$123,200
ADMINISTRATIVE SRVS DIV CHIEF	\$122,400
ASST ACUTE CARE EMERG SRVS DIR	\$122,400
ASST EXTENDED CARE SRVS DIR	\$122,400
DIV CHF/CAPITAL IMPROVE PROJTS	\$122,400
ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY DIV CHF	\$122,400
FISCAL OFFICER III	\$121,500
MGR/INFO TECH SECURITY	\$120,100
LEGISLATIVE DIRECTOR	\$120,000
ADMINISTRATIVE SRVS DIV CHIEF	\$119,600
FISCAL OFFICER III	\$119,600
RECREATION DIVISION CHIEF	\$119,600
TRAFFIC OPERATIONS DIV CHF	\$119,600
POLICE LIEUTENANT x11	\$119,300
CAPITAL PROJECTS MANAGER	\$119,200
CIVIL ENGINEER IV	\$119,200
COMPUTER PROGRAMMER ANALYST IV x3	\$119,200
CUST. ENGAGEMENT CENTER MGR.	\$119,200
DATABASE ADMINISTRATOR II x3	\$119,200
ENVIRONMENTAL PROGRAM MANAGER	\$119,200
HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGER II x4	\$119,200
LANDLORD/TENANT RLTN DIV CHIEF	\$119,200
PRINCIPAL PLANNER x4	\$119,200
TELECOMMUNICATIONS PROGRAM MGR	\$119,200
FIRE BATTALION CHIEF x2	\$118,200
ASSISTANT CITY ATTORNEY IV	\$117,400
DEPUTY LIBRARY DIRECTOR	\$117,300
DEPUTY PUBLIC DEFENDER	\$117,300
FIRE CAPTAIN x8	\$117,000
PURCHASING AGENT	\$117,000
ADMINISTRATIVE SRVS DIV CHIEF	\$116,900
DIV CHF, ORG DEV & EQUITY	\$116,900
POLICE LIEUTENANT	\$116,600
CAPITAL PROJECTS MANAGER	\$116,500
ENERGY MANAGER	\$116,500
HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGER II	\$116,500
MENTAL HEALTH TEAM SUPERVISOR	\$116,500
ASST DIR OFFICE MGT & BUDGET	\$115,700
ASST COMMONWEALTH'S ATTY V	\$115,100
FIRE CAPTAIN	\$114,400
ADMINISTRATIVE SRVS DIV CHIEF	\$114,300
DEPUTY SHERIFF - LIEUTENANT x3	\$114,300
EARLY CHILDHOOD DIVISION CHIEF	\$114,300
EMS CAPTAIN x2	\$114,300
FISCAL OFFICER III x2	\$114,300
MAINTENANCE DIVISION CHIEF	\$114,300
RECREATION DIVISION CHIEF	\$114,300
TRANSIT SERVICES DIV CHIEF	\$114,300
POLICE LIEUTENANT	\$114,000
ASST PUBLIC DEFENDER ATTY IV	\$113,900
COMPUTER PROGRAMMER ANALYST IV x2	\$113,900
DOMEST & SEXUAL VIOLEN DIV CHF	\$113,900
FLEET SERVICES DIVISION CHIEF	\$113,900
NETWORK ENGINEER III x2	\$113,900
PRINCIPAL PLANNER	\$113,900
PROPERTY MAINT CODE DIV CHF	\$113,900
ADMIN SRVCS MGR x2	\$113,500
ASSISTANT TO THE CITY MANAGER	\$113,500
CIVIL ENGINEER III	\$113,500
DATABASE ADMINISTRATOR I	\$113,500
LONG-TERM CARE SERVICES COOR	\$113,500
PHARMACIST II	\$113,500
PLANS EXAMINER IV	\$113,500
RADIO SYSTEM MANAGER	\$113,500
RETIREMENT ADMINISTRATOR	\$112,700
FAMILY SERVICES SUPRV/CHIEF	\$112,100
FIRE CAPTAIN x4	\$111,800
ADMINISTRATIVE SRVS DIV CHIEF	\$111,700
DEPUTY FIRE MARSHAL III	\$111,700
EMS CAPTAIN	\$111,700
FISCAL OFFICER III x2	\$111,700
RESEARCH & EVALUATION DIV CHF	\$111,700
TRANSPORTATION DIVISION CHIEF	\$111,700
CIVIL ENGINEER IV x2	\$111,400
FACILITY OPERATIONS MANAGER	\$111,400
ITS DIVISION CHIEF	\$111,400
MENTAL HEALTH TEAM SUPERVISOR x2	\$111,400
NETWORK ENGINEER III x2	\$111,400
POLICE LIEUTENANT	\$111,400

JOB TITLE ANNUAL PAY (ROUNDED)

PRINCIPAL PLANNER	\$111,400
CIVIL ENGINEER III	\$111,000
FAMILY SERVICES SUPERVISOR x2	\$111,000
ASSISTANT CITY ATTORNEY IV	\$109,600
FIRE CAPTAIN	\$109,300
ADMINISTRATIVE SRVS DIV CHIEF x2	\$109,200
ASST EXTENDED CARE SRVS DIR	\$109,200
EMS CAPTAIN x2	\$109,200
CIVIL ENGINEER IV x5	\$108,900
COMPUTER PROGRAMMER ANALYST IV	\$108,900
COURT SERVICES DIRECTOR	\$108,900
MENTAL HEALTH TEAM SUPERVISOR x3	\$108,900
NETWORK ENGINEER III	\$108,900
POLICE LIEUTENANT	\$108,900
PRINCIPAL GIS ANALYST	\$108,900
CIVIL ENGINEER III	\$108,500
DATABASE ADMINISTRATOR I	\$108,500
FAMILY SERVICES SUPERVISOR x3	\$108,500
NURSE PRACTITIONER SUPERVISOR	\$108,500
PLANS EXAMINER IV x2	\$108,500
AGING-ADULT SRVCS DIV CHF	\$108,400
ALTERNATIVE PROGRAMS MANAGER	\$108,100
PLANS EXAMINER III	\$108,100
PROGRAM ANALYST SUPERVISORY	\$108,100
DEPUTY SHERIFF - LIEUTENANT	\$106,700
DIV CHF, INMATE SRV ALT PROG	\$106,700
DIV CHF/PLANS REVIEW SRVCS	\$106,700
EMS CAPTAIN	\$106,700
FISCAL OFFICER III	\$106,700
PLANNING & ZONING DIV CHIEF	\$106,700
COMPUTER PROGRAMMER ANALYST IV	\$106,400
ENVIRONMENTAL PROGRAM MANAGER x2	\$106,400
HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGER II x2	\$106,400
HUMAN RESOURCES TRN DIV CHIEF	\$106,400
MENTAL HEALTH TEAM SUPERVISOR x4	\$106,400
NETWORK ENGINEER III	\$106,400
PRINCIPAL PLANNER x3	\$106,400
CIVIL ENGINEER III	\$106,100
COMPUTER PROGRAMMER ANALYT III	\$106,100
FAMILY SERVICES SUPERVISOR x3	\$106,100
FIRE LIEUTENANT x5	\$106,100
DEPUTY SHERIFF - SERGEANT	\$106,000
ASST COMMONWEALTH'S ATTY IV x2	\$105,900
FINANCIAL RPTING/BANK REC SPRV x2	\$105,700
INTERNAL AUDITOR III	\$105,700
THERAPIST SUPERVISOR	\$105,700
FIRE CAPTAIN	\$104,400
ASST COMMNTY SUPRPT PRG	\$104,300
DEPUTY SHERIFF - LIEUTENANT	\$104,300
GENERAL REGISTRAR	\$104,300
RECREATION DIVISION CHIEF	\$104,300
CITY ARCHAEOLOGIST	\$104,000
MENTAL HEALTH TEAM SUPERVISOR x3	\$104,000
PRINCIPAL GIS ANALYST	\$104,000
PRINCIPAL PLANNER x5	\$104,000
CIVIL ENGINEER III	\$103,700
COMPUTER PROGRAMMER ANALYT III	\$103,700
DAY SUPPORT SERVICES COOR	\$103,700
PROJECT MANAGER	\$103,700
DEPUTY SHERIFF - SERGEANT x4	\$103,600
CONTRACT SPECIALIST SUPERVISOR	\$103,300
COMMUNICATION CONTENT DEVELOPE	\$103,000
COMPUTER PROGRAMMER ANALYST II x3	\$103,000
FISCAL OFFICER II x2	\$103,000
MUSEUM DIRECTOR x2	\$103,000
POLICE SERGEANT x14	\$103,000
PSYCHIATRIC NURSE	\$103,000
SENIOR THERAPIST x4	\$103,000
TELECOMMUNICATIONS PRGM/ANALYS	\$103,000
WATCH OFFICER	\$103,000
FIRE CAPTAIN x6	\$102,100
ADMINISTRATIVE SRVS DIV CHIEF	\$102,000
DEPUTY SHERIFF - LIEUTENANT	\$102,000
ENTERPRISE BUSINESS SYS ANALYS	\$102,000
HUMAN SERVICES PROGRAM MANAGER	\$102,000
DATABASE ADMINISTRATOR II	\$101,700
PRINCIPAL PLANNER	\$101,700
CIVIL ENGINEER III x2	\$101,300
DATABASE ADMINISTRATOR I	\$101,300
DAY SUPPORT SERVICES COOR	\$101,300
DEPUTY SHERIFF - SERGEANT x2	\$101,300
RESIDENTIAL PROGRAM MANAGER	\$101,300
ASST COMMONWEALTH'S ATTY III	\$101,200
GANG PREVENTION & INTERV COOR	\$101,000
INFORMATION OFFICER	\$101,000
THERAPIST SUPERVISOR	\$101,000
COMPUTER PROGRAMMER ANALYST II x2	\$100,700
SENIOR THERAPIST	\$100,700
COURT SERVICES I SUPERVISOR x2	\$100,600



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OPINION

Pay Attention, State Legislature Not Gridlocked

Thousands of bills considered over 45 days could have a big impact on your life, for better or for worse.

A week is already completed in the short (45-day) session of the Virginia General Assembly, and so many important things are in the works, in danger of happening or not happening, that no one can have a clear view of it all.

An example: The Senate Courts of Justice Committee voted for a bill 8-6 that would bar the execution of people with serious mental illnesses. Possibly you didn't realize that it is

EDITORIAL legal to execute someone with serious mental illness, because it makes no sense. But this bill failed last year.

Another success for the moment: increasing the minimum wage to \$15 over several years also cleared Senate committee.

Do you know who your Virginia delegate and senator are? Every resident of Virginia gets one of each. Enter your address here: <https://whosmy.virginiageneralassembly.gov/> to find out all of your representatives, plus contact information. Call and tell them, or leave a message, about what matters to you. Send an email. Connect to them on Facebook and watch for live Q&A sessions.

Here you can search legislation by bill number or keyword, find video and streaming: <https://virginiageneralassembly.gov/>

Last week's editorial, a long legislative wish list, <http://www.connectionnewspapers.com/news/2019/jan/08/opinion-editorial-wish-list-things-session-general/> still omitted many important actions, despite its length. One in particular made it into some editions and not oth-

ers: To establish equal rights for LGBT Virginians, especially in housing and public employment.

Here are a few more important items:

The Virginia State Conference NAACP Criminal Justice Committee supports the passage of the following bills that are up for debate in this legislative session:

❖ HB 1651 - Raises grand larceny limit from \$500 to \$750 (Del Hayes)

❖ HB 1642 - Increases data collection on use of solitary confinement (Del Hope)

❖ SB 1013 - Repeals suspension of drivers licences for not paying fines (Sen Stanley; Del Kory)

❖ SB 1053 and HB 1745 - Makes juvenile offenders sentenced to life automatically eligible for parole after serving 25 years. (Sen Marsden; Del Lindsey)

❖ HB 2616 - Raises the minimum age a child can be tried as an adult from 14 to 16 (Del Guzman) (And this is still far too low.)

❖ SB 1551, HB 1685, HB 1873 and HB 1688 - Limits the scope of what School Resource Officers can get involved, prohibits students from being charged with disorderly conduct, and mandates data collection of use of force against students. (Sen Surovell, Del Schuyler T. VanValkenburg, Del Bourne; Del Mullin)

❖ SB 997 - Decriminalizes simple marijuana possession. (Sen Ebbin)

❖ SB 1008 - Bans mechanical devices designed to increase rate of bullets firing. (Sen Ebbin)

❖ SB 1013 - Repeals the requirement that

the driver's license of a person convicted of any violation of the law who fails or refuses to provide payment of fines be suspended. (Sen Stanley)

❖ SB 1034 - Prohibits any person who is not a licensed firearms dealer from purchasing more than one handgun in a 30-day period. (Sen Locke)

❖ HB 1991 - Labels violent hate groups as domestic terrorists (Del Price)

❖ HB 2472 - Adds gender, disability, gender identity, and sexual orientation to the categories of victims whose intentional selection for a hate crime results in a higher criminal penalty for the offense. (Del. Kenneth R. Plum)

House Courts of Justice members: Robert B. Bell (chairman), Leftwich (vice chair), Kilgore, Gilbert, L.R. Adams, J.L. Campbell, Collins, Miyares, Ransone, R.R. Campbell, Watts, Toscano, Herring, Hope, Mullin, Bourne, Simon, Carroll Foy.

Senate Courts of Justice members:

Obenshain (chairman), Saslaw, Norment, Howell, Lucas, Edwards, McDougale, Stuart, Stanley, Reeves, Chafin, Deeds, Sturtevant, Petersen, and Peake.

Find contact information <https://virginiageneralassembly.gov/>

See our website www.ConnectionNewspapers.com for many stories from the General Assembly from the Capital News Service, written by journalism students from VCU.

— MARY KIMM

MKIMM@CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Thank You To Nonprofits

To the Editor:

We, like many Alexandria residents, try to give generously to Alexandria's nonprofits. Most organizations send us thank you letters for our support.

We appreciate these letters, or phone calls, particularly if they relate, in enthusiastic, passionate ways, the impact of our gifts in real, human terms. How the organization is using this money to make lives better in a specific way. And, in so doing, make Alexandria an even better place to live so that all our residents are able to lead good lives.

But the thank you also needs to go the other way — from donors to our nonprofits. Thank you, Alexandria nonprofits, for being our arms and legs to change the world. While you cannot make lives better without our support, we also can't reach our hopes and dreams of making the

world, and specifically Alexandria, a better place without you, on the ground, doing the hard work of creating and implementing programs that help people in their daily lives.

Our heartfelt thank you to all Alexandria's nonprofits for helping us change the world!

Louise and Mike Kenny
Alexandria

Limits to Congestion?

To the Editor:

Housing affordability is the new clarion cry for public and private sector problem-solvers. The impending invasion of the Amazonians has galvanized them like never before. Where-oh-where will these well-paid Amazonians live if there's not enough affordable housing for them in Alexandria?

No one seems to appreciate that the Amazonians may not want to reside in Alexandria. But for those that do, why does their choice have to trigger worry that our housing stock is affordable? If housing is too expensive, the only sure fire way to reduce its cost is to increase supply.

Since Alexandria is space constrained, high rises are the best option to maximize the number of people per square foot. But since most people don't want to live in a high rise, should Alexandria encourage their construction by relaxing its zoning?

The lack of affordable housing in Alexandria is a condition for which there is no satisfying solution. It affects a fair number of city employees as well. Many simply cannot afford to live in Alexandria. I commend those who have posited how they would solve this vexing problem.

However, of the solutions I've read, they
SEE LETTERS, PAGE 13



PHOTO BY HAL HARDWAY

Snapshot Sunday morning, Jan. 13. The National Weather Services reported 8-10 inches of snow fell in the region.

Alexandria Gazette Packet

www.AlexandriaGazette.com

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Four Hundred Years and Counting ...

BY ADAM EBBIN
STATE SENATE (D-30)



The annual General Assembly session is well underway. What began in a Jamestown church in 1619 as a six-day meeting of the House of Burgesses, comprised of 22 white British male settlers, has evolved into the modern Virginia House of Delegates and Virginia Senate that is meeting currently for its 46-day “short” session. The issues have vastly changed but history is still being made.

Eileen Filler-Corn of Fairfax, the new Democratic Leader in the House, is the first woman to lead on either side of the aisle in either body. Charniele Herring of Alexandria continues in her role as the House Caucus Chair and Mamie Locke of Hampton remains the Senate Democratic Caucus Chair. This is also the first year that the Commonwealth’s voters elected three women (all Democrats) to the U.S. House of Representatives. At no time in Virginia’s history have women held more power than today.

This session marks Virginia’s chance to become the 38th (and final) state to ratify the Equal Rights Amendment to the US Constitution. I was honored to speak on and vote for ratification as a member of the Privileges and Elections Committee, and will do the same when it heads to the Senate floor. The Burgesses certainly did not even conceive of the fundamental equality of women and minorities and would have flabbergasted that we will be considering sports and casino gambling in this year. After all, it was in 1619 when Burgesses outlawed games of chance with the penalty of a 10 shilling fine — one shilling would go to the man who caught the gambler and the rest to “charitable and pious causes.” Other 1619 legislation required every settler to plant six mulberry trees.

Flash forward 400 years and we are considering non-partisan redistricting, how best to allocate \$1.2 billion in prospective additional revenue and the fairest way to fund transportation improvements in Southwest Virginia. We’ll also be considering the governor’s incentive plan for Amazon to locate one of its HQ2 sites in Arlington and for Virginia Tech to locate a \$1 billion-plus Innovation Campus in Alexandria which will grow the tech talent pipeline to attract high-wage 21st Century jobs to Virginia.

I’ve introduced 25 pieces of legislation on

a variety of topics ranging from marijuana decriminalization and domestic violence protections to campaign finance reform and e-cigarette taxation. My constitutional amendment to allow Virginia’s Governor to seek election to a second consecutive four-year term passed the Senate Privileges and Elections Committee 8-6, and 6 of 6 of my bills heard on Monday in the Senate Courts of Justice and General laws committee are moving on. The bills include legislation to codify non-discrimination protections for LGBT people in public employment (passed 11-3) and housing (passed 13-1). Bills to stop the destructive cycle of debt caused by license suspension for non-driving related offenses (passed 13-0 with one abstention) and for the non-payment of court costs and fees (passed 14 to 0) advanced to the Senate Finance Committee for consideration.

The process to consider the governor’s amendments to the existing biennial budget has begun as members also introduce amendments. I’ve introduced several with an eye to modernizing our election systems and one to provide some funding for the Task Force Commemorating the Centennial Anniversary of Women’s Right to Vote, on which I serve. The Centennial will occur in 2020 and I believe the state should be observing it with a museum exhibit, traveling exhibits for different regions, lectures, pub-

lications and a school curriculum as well.

Though the past of our state is complex, and its legacies are often mired in injustice, I am confident that our future is bright, and the history of tomorrow will be that of progress and inclusion. It is an honor to be a small part of building this path forward. I hope you’ll be able to join me at one of my four town hall meetings to help me best represent the people of the 30th District in this duty:

❖ Mount Vernon: Saturday, Jan. 19, 9:30-11:15 a.m. at Walt Whitman Middle School (2500 Parkers Lane), with Senator Surovell and Delegate Krizek.

❖ Lee District: Saturday, Jan. 19, noon-2 p.m. at Hayfield Elementary School (7633 Telegraph Road), with Senators Barker and Surovell and Delegates Mark Sickles and Paul Krizek.

❖ Alexandria: Saturday, Jan. 26, 10:30 a.m.-noon at Minnie Howard School Campus (3801 W Braddock Road) with Del. Mark Levine

❖ Arlington: Saturday, Jan. 26, 2-3:30 p.m. at the Walter Reed Community Center (2909 16th Street South) with Del. Alfonso Lopez

In case of severe weather please visit adamebbin.com or my twitter account @adamebbin for updates.

It remains my honor to serve the people of the 30th Senate District.

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COMMERCIAL LEASING

*

PROPERTY MANAGEMENT

*

DEVELOPMENT

Public Schools Face Growing Costs

FROM PAGE 1
Hutchings.

Regionally, Alexandria has absorbed a disproportionate share of English learners and students eligible for subsidized meals (a proxy measure of poverty), who require additional services and costs. Enrollment for these subgroups in Alexandria grew by 21 percent and 8 percent between FY 2015 and FY 2019.

English learners comprise 32 percent of Alexandria's student body in FY 2019, according to the FY 2019 Washington Area Boards of Education Guide, an annual publication. That's the highest proportion among 10 regional jurisdictions, and nearly double the 19 percent share in both Arlington and Fairfax.

Students eligible for subsidized meals comprise 59 percent on average in Alexandria, although that proportion varies drastically from school to school. It ranged in FY 2018 from less than 20 percent at Lyles Crouch to nearly 90 percent at William Ramsay, the city's easternmost and westernmost elementary schools, respectively. Alexandria's overall proportion of free and reduced price meal students is the third highest in the region, and again double the 29 percent share in Arlington and Fairfax.

The state provides disproportionately low funding for these subgroups. According to the budget proposal document: "Virginia views Alexandria as a wealthy community in comparison to other jurisdictions in the state. When the State determines the amount of funding it will provide to ACPS [Alexandria City Public Schools], it takes into consideration this wealth factor ... and adjusts allocations down, based on the calculation of financial resources available in the City. As a result, the State provides ACPS with less direct aid support on a per pupil basis than other Virginia school divisions."

About 87 percent of the proposed operating budget would go toward employee salaries and benefits. That includes a proposed full step (pay grade) salary increase and a one percent market rate adjustment. But Hutchings would adjust health care benefits by increasing deductibles, copays for specialist visits, and contribution percentages for certain employees. These recommendations would make Alexandria's health benefits align more closely with Arlington's.

"Right now, we have a zero de-

ductible for our employees, which is really not heard of in, not just school systems, but in businesses and organizations across the country. That's why they [insurers] label us as 'platinum plus,'" said Hutchings.

Alexandria's teachers currently receive the third highest total compensation package of 10 regional jurisdictions, behind Montgomery and Arlington, according to a staff presentation to the School Board in November.

The proposed budget would add a net 4.5 full time equivalent positions, bringing the total payroll to 2,590. Custodial positions, most of which would be outsourced, would shrink the most. Major staff additions would include a variety of both "core" and "enrichment and elective" instructors. New positions would also include a substance abuse counselor to help address "a rise with some [student] substance abuse," indicated in student surveys, said Hutchings; special education professionals; and facilities-related professionals, including an in-house HVAC project manager. New operations and maintenance staff would help the schools shift from a "reactive mode" to a "proactive mode," such as by ensuring "preventative maintenance plans" and "quality assurances," said Hutchings.

The proposed budget would impose a new a seven-year cycle of textbook replacement.

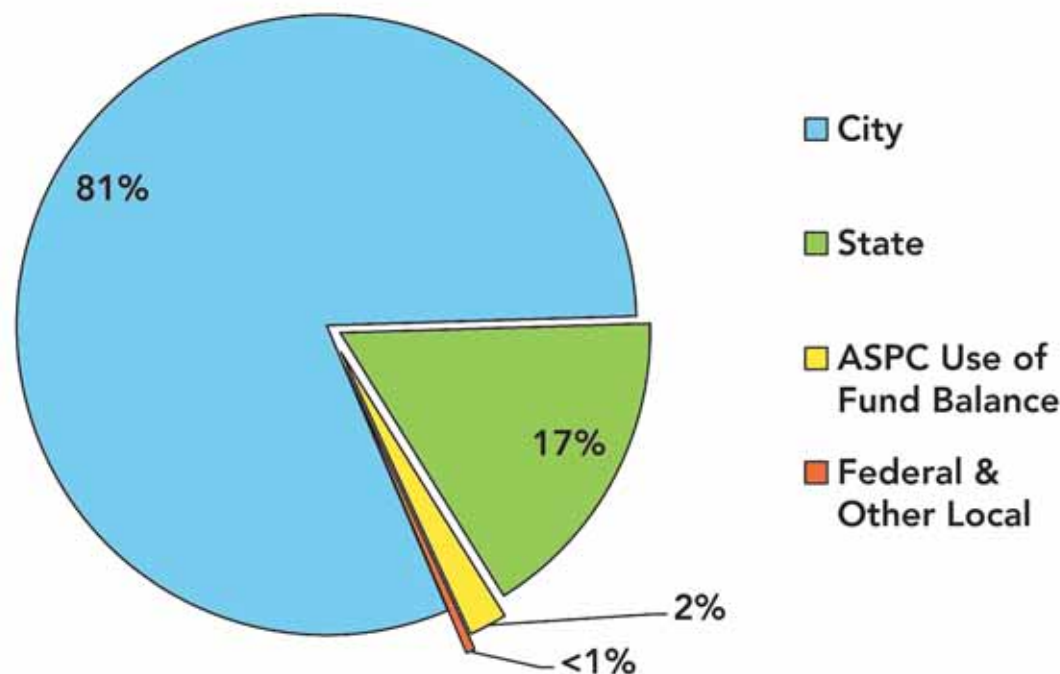
This would include over \$6 million for phased replacement through FY 2026 of current textbooks, and thereafter \$1 million in annual incremental savings for the next cycle.

This year's proposed use of \$6 million in fund balances to close budget gaps would be the third and largest such drawdown in five years, since FY 2016.

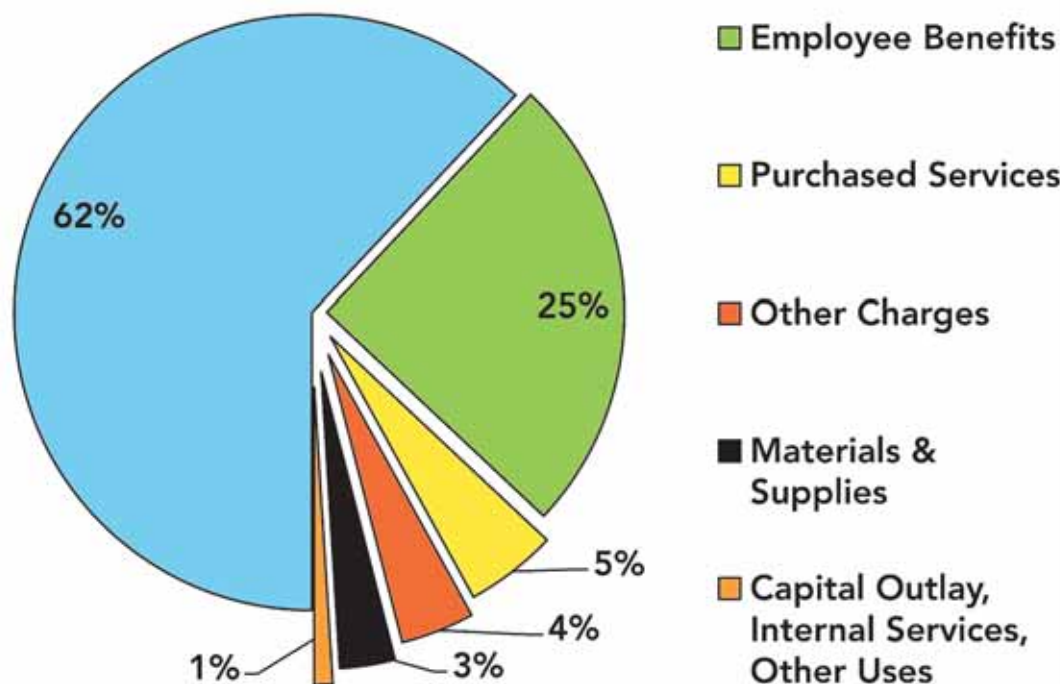
According to the budget proposal document, fund balance serves "to support the following year's budget (currently limited to no more than two percent of proposed operating expenditures). The remainder is held as a cushion against extraordinary circumstances that might cause significant, one-time increases in expenditures or decreases in revenue."

The School Board will discuss the proposed operating and other budgets at work session scheduled for the next three Thursdays, Jan. 17, 24 and 31. The public may weigh in at the public hearing on Thursday, Feb. 7, or by contacting the School Board using the online form at www.acps.k12.va.us/domain/853. The School Board will adopted the combined funds budget on Thursday, Feb. 21. Find budget materials at www.acps.k12.va.us/budget.

ACPS FY 2020 Operating Budget Revenues



ACPS FY 2020 Operating Budget Expenditures



Modest Pay, Good Benefits

FROM PAGE 8

In particular, the city's health insurance contributions vary widely, depending on the chosen plan (if any) and the number of people covered.

According to Frank Shafroth of George Mason University's Center for State and Local Government Leadership: "In general, Alexandria is — and tries to be — competitive with regard to health and retirement benefits to neighboring

jurisdictions in Virginia." Comparing benefits between the public and private sector is difficult. Nationwide, private industry paid workers 43 percent on top of salary for benefits, according to recent figures from the Bureau of Labor Statistics. But the bureau cautions against direct comparison between the public and private sectors because contribution percentages differ between occupation types, which in turn differ between sectors.

Learn more about city compensation at www.alexandriava.gov/6436.

HISTORY

Esther Chapter #23: Over 100 Years of Service

BY CHAR MCCARGO BAH

On Sept. 6, 1909, there were two important events that took place that caught the eye of the African Americans in Alexandria. One event was that a telegram by two explorers, Robert Peary and Matthew Henson, arrived on Sept. 6 stating they had discovered the North Pole five months earlier. The other was a local event – the Grand Chapter of the Order of the Eastern Star of Virginia issued by Grand Worthy Patron, Dr. H.L. Harris and Grand Worthy Matron, Fannie C. Wilkerson, of Petersburg, Va. with

THE OTHER ALEXANDRIA

other officers issued a Charter to Esther Chapter #23 of Alexandria, Va. The title of Worthy Matron is the highest office

in the Chapter for a woman after she serves in that position, and Worthy Patron is the highest office in the Chapter for a man after he serves in that position.

The year before the Charter, 20 people were initiated for benevolent assistance in the City of Alexandria on Thanksgiving Day. They were initiated by the Order of the Eastern Star by members of the Grand Chapter of the State of Virginia, Prince Hall Affiliation. The Grand Chapter gave the name of Esther Chapter #23 which laid the groundwork for their Charter on Sept. 6, 1909. This Chapter provided assistance to the African American community in Alexandria with food during Thanksgiving, clothes, food and gifts during the Christmas holiday. Through-



PHOTO COURTESY OF DEBORAH FORD-NELSON

First row, from left, Pamela Moore, Aquila Biddle, Lillian Williams, Josephine Ford, Michelle Baldwin, Annette Fletcher, Rosie Ford; second row, Deborah Nelson, Linda Payton, Barbara Williams, Omeara Banks; third row, Lisa Logan, LaVerne Lewis, Shirley Ross, Lenore Biddle, Lorrie Smith, Tom Robinson, Joseph Parker (not picture).

out the year, they assisted the African Americans in their time of need and during natu-

ral disasters.

Today, more than a century later, Esther

Chapter #23 continues its community services under its leaders, Worthy Matron, Aquila Biddle and Worthy Patron, Tom Robinson. One of the rules in being an Eastern Star member is that they must have a male relative that is a member of the Masonic Lodge Prince Hall Affiliation. Throughout the years, this Chapter has had several family members who held membership at the same time. In the 1920s, Laura Dorsey and her sister, Mary Dorsey were members. Laura Dorsey was a well-known teacher at Parker-Gray School and Mary Dorsey had multi-careers as a domestic and hair-dresser.

Presently, Mrs. Josephine Ford and her three daughters, Pamela Ford-Moore, Deborah Ford-Nelson and Rosie Ford are members of Esther Chapter #23. There are 32 members but three of them are Charter members who hold the longest membership in this Chapter: Laverne V. Lewis has been a member for over 50 years; Josephine Ford has been a member for 45 years; and Lillian Williams has been a member for 43 years.

The Esther Chapter #23 Prince Hall Affiliation is the oldest chapter in Northern Virginia. When Chapter #23 formed in 1908 and became a Charter in 1909, it immediately started serving their Alexandria African American community through faith, hope and charity.

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

Legislature: From ERA to No Excuse Voting

BY CHARNIELE HERRING
DELEGATE (D-46)

The 2019 Virginia General Assembly session is in full swing. There are measures regarding equality, voting, and even taxes up for debate this year. We have seen the Equal Rights Amendment pass Senate Committee, though it has not yet been heard in the House of Delegates.

Once again, I am joining others to sponsor legislation to make sure that voting is both easy and secure. My bill HB1641 would make a simple, but powerful, change in the way people can vote in Virginia. It would allow people to vote absentee without

an "excuse" or reason that they need to vote absentee (before Election Day). Like many in other states where this is law, no excuse absentee voting would ease lines on Election Day and has a beneficial impact for working people, the elderly, and the physically challenged. This measure joins a host of other bills including same day voter registration and automatic voter registration.

In addition to the Equal Rights Amend-



ment, we are going to see legislation this year that addresses housing and employment discrimination. We will also see bills that protect women's health and promote fair pay.

Of course, one of the largest debates we will see in the coming weeks is the response to the Trump Tax Plan and the effect that it will have on the Commonwealth. Governor Northam

has proposed a plan that helps working Virginians, most of whom are not seeing substantial benefit from the new law, by making the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) refundable. This is an ongoing debate with ongoing negotiations. Despite the Governor making his intentions clear about his plan, Republicans have only recently offered one of their own. Despite what partisan spin you might believe, there is no tax increase on the table right now, just responses to the new Federal law.

Making sure Virginia is a place that works for everyone is very important to me. The EITC has been proven to encourage work and has helped many increase their earnings more rapidly over time. According to the Commonwealth Institute for Fiscal Analysis the EITC helps over 600,000 low

and moderate income Virginia families every year. It is most effective for families with children. Moving to a refundable EITC would also help balance out Virginia's somewhat regressive state tax system, where low income and middle class families pay a larger percentage of their income in taxes than those who are more affluent. More importantly, we would help families give their children the building blocks they need to be successful while their parents demonstrate the value of hard work. Many families who receive federal and state EITCs no longer claim the credits within two years because they earn more money than the eligibility cutoff. The benefits of the EITC are wide ranging — helping families with health, education, and meeting their basic needs.

I look forward to the ongoing debate and encourage my constituents to reach out with their thoughts on how we should proceed in dealing with the consequences of the Trump Tax Plan.

Del. Charniele Herring represents Alexandria City's 46th District in the Virginia General Assembly where she serves as House Minority Caucus Chair and on the Courts of Justice, Counties, Cities, & Towns, and Agriculture, Chesapeake & Natural Resources Committees. Follow Herring online at www.charnieleherring.com.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

FROM PAGE 10

overlook one phenomena: limits. Just as a glass can hold only so much fluid, Alexandria can hold only accommodate so many structures, people and vehicles. Too many — me included — feel Alexandria is already too dense. Congestion has blemished the charm and quality of living here.

And without limits, evermore congestion is inevitable. There can be no more roads in Alexandria but, without limits, there will be evermore traffic. With no more inexpensive land on which to build houses, there will be fewer affordable houses for purchase or for rent by families, especially those of modest means. And more housing, affordable or not, means more congestion.

It will be enlightening when our new City Council and mayor articulate their density goals for the city of Alexandria. Is it one million residents? Half a million cars? Twice as many structures as there are now? My guess: they'll permit density limits for everything but for the number of structures, people and vehicles that can be placed within the 55 square miles of Alexandria.

Pity. Selecting desired densities allows us to prepare, to marshal resources, to be ready — not surprised — by future costs, housing needs and congestion consequences, especially in schools and public facilities. Without limits for structures, people and

SEE LETTERS, PAGE 22



Ann Dorman, Mike and Donna Anderson and Roger Parks



Chamber of Commerce board chair Charlotte Hall, left, with Stephanie Landrum, Elizabeth Moon and Cathy Puskar at the Jan. 11 Chairman's Reception at the Old Dominion Boat Club.



Reuben and Deborah Johnson

‘Rockin’ on the Rivah’ Hall takes helm as chamber board chair.

BY JEANNE THEISMANN
GAZETTE PACKET

The Alexandria Chamber of Commerce officially welcomed Charlotte Hall as its 2019 board chair Jan. 11 at the “Rockin’ on the Rivah” celebration at the Old Dominion Boat Club.

Hall, formerly of the Potomac Riverboat Company, outlined her goals for the coming year, which include strengthening the relationship between small neighborhood business associations and large businesses, and supporting important business issues before City Council.

“We have come a long way,” Hall told the crowd. “To all the developers here tonight, thank you for your patience and your persistence in putting up with all of us.”

Hall noted the importance of volunteers in the business community, signaling out the Del Ray Business Association as an example in her remarks.

“While the Chamber is the anchor of the business community, we need our neighborhood business associations,” Hall said. “We need to continue working together in a positive and productive manner.”

Hall succeeds Gin Kinneman, owner of Kinneman Insurance, as board chair. See www.alexchamber.com.



Mitch Opalski, Sue Kovalsky, Sean McEneaney and Gayle Reuter

PHOTOS BY JANET BARNETT



Mark Garmon, Melonie Johnson and Chamber of Commerce CEO Joe Haggerty



Stephanie Beyer Kirby, Marcia Call and Lonnie Rich



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A Look at Council, School Board Members' Economic Interests

FROM PAGE 3

property, inheritance, etc., though probably not vehicles — can yield capital gains and/or income, like dividends or rents. In particular, many tout homeownership as a key means of building wealth.

To get an idea, albeit limited, of local legislators' wealth, data were compiled from state-mandated disclosure forms filed during their candidacies or previous terms, as well as Alexandria's public tax assessment database.

Of 16 elected officials, 13 (81 percent) own their primary residences. For comparison, about 41 percent of Alexandrians own the units they live in, according to the American Community Survey for the period 2013-2017.

In general, rates of homeownership citywide are skewed by race and ethnicity. Whereas non-Hispanic whites account for 60 percent of occupied housing units overall, they account for 78 percent of owner-occupied and 47 percent of renter-occupied units specifically, according to the same survey over the same period. Whereas black householders account for 20 percent of occupied housing overall, they account for 9 percent of owner-occupied and 29 percent of renter-occupied units. Whereas non-white Hispanics account for 11 percent of occupied housing overall, they account for 5 percent of owner-occupied and 16 per-

cent of renter-occupied units.

Homeownership in the city similarly skews toward older and more educated households.

For the 11 home- and condo-owners in the elected lineup, the average 2018 assessed value of their primary residences was about \$708,000.

The citywide average assessed value of single-family homes was about \$752,600, as of June 30, 2018, according to the city's FY 2018 Comprehensive Annual Financial Report. The citywide average assessed value of condos was \$324,000.

In addition to their primary residences, 10 officials own or have an interest in a business or one or more other real properties. Twelve own additional reportable securities. These might include stocks, mutual funds, certain bonds, IRAs and trusts; but would exclude pension plans, securities issued by the U.S. government, certificates of deposit, money market funds, annuity contracts and insurance policies.

Eight officials declared one or more personal debts, nearly all for \$50,000 or less. Reportable debts do not include debts under \$5,000, owed to a government, or loans "secured by a recorded lien on property if

such lien is at least equal to the value of the loan." Particularly in relation to a home mortgage, the latter basically means that a homeowner must report a home loan only if it's underwater — that is, if the debt exceeds what the bank would recoup if it foreclosed and sold the property, such as during a major housing downturn.

Asked for comment diversity, Bennett-Parker said: "I absolutely believe in and support all kinds of diversity in leadership I called out age, race, and gender for a few reasons: speech length ... and also the idea that those are all things you can generally tell from looking at a person. It's important for people of all ages, including young girls and boys forming perceptions of how the world works (and what they can be when they grow up), to see people who look like them in positions of power And the broader point I was making is that it's important to have a variety of perspectives, backgrounds, and experience."

"... it's important to have a variety of perspectives, backgrounds, and experience."

— Vice Mayor Elizabeth Bennett-Parker

The time demand of serving on council "is a potential barrier for women, including but not limited to single mothers, as well as anyone who does not work something akin to a 9-5 job."

Similarly, Councilman John Chapman says those already working more than one job probably couldn't afford to make the financial and time sacrifices necessary to serve on council. For this reason, it'd be hard for council to gain in its membership the perspective of those who are "desperately struggling to stay in our city."

Alexandria's elected officials are considered part-time positions. The mayor makes \$41,500 per year and the other City Council members make \$37,500 per year. That's roughly middle-of-the-pack among five regional jurisdictions with part-time positions, according to a report last spring from a local ad hoc advisory committee on council compensation. Three counties with full-time positions — Fairfax, Montgomery, Prince George's — pay between \$95,000 and \$126,000 per year, depending on office, according to the report. The School Board chair makes \$17,000 per year and the other board members make \$15,000 per year.

Find the elected officers' most recent financial disclosures — called Statements of Economic Interest — at www.alexandriava.gov/Elections (for all non-incumbents); www.alexandriava.gov/Council (for city council incumbents); and by contacting the School Board's clerk (for School Board incumbents). Officers must file new Statements of Economic Interest no later than Friday, Feb. 1, and annually thereafter.



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IMAGE COURTESY OF PARTNERSHIP FOR DRUG-FREE KIDS

E-cigarettes come in a variety of forms.

How to Talk About Vaping

Approaching conversation about dangers of e-cigarettes.

BY MARILYN CAMPBELL

Jessica DeBoer's 13-year-old son just returned to school after a six-day suspension because he was caught vaping in the boys bathroom of his elite private school. Until she received a call from one of the school's administrators, DeBoer was not familiar with the practice and never dreamed her son would partake in it.

"Now I feel like I might have been naive considering how widespread it seems to be," she said. "My son told me that many of the kids in his school have tried vaping and some even do it regularly."

Vaping is the use of e-cigarettes to inhale and exhale an aerosol, often referred to as vapor, which is produced by an e-cigarette or similar device. The term is used because e-cigarettes produce an aerosol that consists of fine particles, many of which contain varying amounts of toxic chemicals.

For parents like DeBoer, keeping the line of communication open is a key weapon in keeping kids away from e-cigarettes, says therapist Lisa Baguio, LCSW. "Before talking with your teen about vaping, or any sensitive issue for that matter, educate yourself and make sure you know what you're talking about," she said. "Kids know more than we give them credit for. Be prepared with unfutable facts and scientific evidence because you can guarantee yourself that your kids will have their own set of facts, which are often false."

Once you have those facts, be prepared to share them during a conversation with your teen. "It's important that parents are open and honest with their

children," said child psychologist Laurie Jones, Psy.D. "You first have to tell them your expectations. For example, 'In our family, we have zero tolerance for e-cigarette or tobacco use of any kind.' You then should explain the dangers and risks involved and make sure that your teen knows that this is not your just opinion, but proven hazards."

A teen might be less likely to engage in vaping if they can connect it to negative consequences that affect them personally, advised marriage and family counselor Joyce McCarry, M.A. "One thing that teens value is their image among their peer group," she said. "If vaping a substance causes bad breath, that will deter a teen from using it. If getting caught vaping means that they are kicked off a sports team, that will be a deterrent."

A parent's best tactic is creating an environment where one's teen feels comfortable sharing information about vaping and working with them collaboratively to find ways to avoid it, says McCarry. "You want your child to let you know if they're vaping or have friends who are doing it," she said. "You can also let them know that if they're ever in a situation where they're being offered an e-cigarette, real cigarettes or drugs or anything dangerous, that they can call you and you will pick them up immediately with no questions asked."

"You also want you to give your child a way to get out of a risky social situation without feeling embarrassed."

— Joyce McCarry, M.A.

"You also want you to give your child a way to get out of a risky social situation without feeling embarrassed," continued McCarry. "I have a patient whose parents tell him to text them a numerical code whenever he's in a precarious situation with friends. The parents know to call his cell phone and tell him that there's a family emergency and he needs to come home right away. This gives the child an excuse to leave without feeling embarrassed or like he'll be ridiculed for not engaging in risky behavior."

ENTERTAINMENT

‘Guys and Dolls Jr.:’ On Taking Risks

**Children’s musical
about love and
gamblers set in
1920s’ New York City.**

BY STEVE HIBBARD

Aldersgate Church Community Theatre (ACCT) is presenting “Guys and Dolls Jr.” from Jan. 18-27. Set in New York City, “Guys and Dolls Jr.” follows gambler Nathan Detroit as he tries to find the cash to set up the biggest crap game in town while the authorities breathe down his neck. Meanwhile, his girlfriend and nightclub performer, Adelaide, laments that they’ve been engaged for 14 years without getting married. Nathan turns to fellow gambler Sky Masterson for the dough but Sky ends up chasing the straight-laced missionary, Sarah Brown.

Director Emily “EJ” Jonas said she grew up in Alexandria and loved seeing the shows as a child. “I decided to direct this musical because I love the opportunity to work with students of all ages, and I love the risk-taking theme of this musical,” she said.

She said her goal was to bring the risk-taking lifestyle of New York City in the 1920s to the greater Washington, D.C., area. “Many of these classic musicals can be looked at through different eyes and from multiple perspectives. Our production looks at the theme of risk through the eyes of the women. Adelaide and Sarah are committed to their bets. They each take a risk to step forward in their lives and embrace the world they are in. They make a bet and they win,” she said.

Producer Jennifer Saunders said she’s always been passionate about musical theater. “I truly love watching young actors develop their skills and then shine on stage. They are all so talented, brave and fun. A young cast brings so much energy and excitement to the process of putting on a musical. It was especially fun watching them take on a classic like ‘Guys & Dolls!’ It’s been a pleasure being a part of the backstage magic that allows young actors to practice their craft and then shine with joy at showtime,” she said.

Brett Medley is playing the role of Sky Masterson, who has the classic confidence from the golden days of Broadway. “His character arc essentially revolves around how he’s changed by Sarah, and furthermore by love. He starts as this respected man at the top of the gambling game and this comes into play in his interactions with other gamblers in the show. As he interacts more with Sarah, we see him come out of his shell and open up more about how he’s feeling, which is something he’s never done before,” he said.

Claire Fuller is playing the role of Benny Southstreet, one of the craps shooters who helps Nathan with his craps game. “She definitely helps him keep his craps game afloat, with the help of Nicely-Nicely Johnson and Rusty Charlie. My character has been helping Nathan with his game for a long time and it has helped her fill her wallet during the Great Depression,” she said.

Ellee St. Pierre plays the General of the Mission. “I don’t believe that Sarah Brown’s mission branch is successful enough to keep open. I’m skeptical of her ability to recruit sinners, and I plan on shutting her branch of mission down if she doesn’t prove that she can bring people in,” she said.

Jefrey Lopez is playing the role of Nicely-Nicely Johnson who is part of a comic-re-



PHOTO BY HOWARD SOROOS

The cast of ACCT’s production of “Guys and Dolls” in rehearsals (from bottom left): Claire Fuller (Benny); Adam Martineau (Arvide); Sophia Stine (Adelaide); Nate Jones (Nathan Detroit); Ellie St. Pierre (General Cartwright); Catherine Weingold (Harry the Horse); Isabella Spooner (Kitty); and Joel Simpson (Rusty).

lief trio. “I, along with Benny Southstreet and Rusty Charlie, am there to lighten up the atmosphere and contrast with the seriousness of the Sky and Sarah love-story. Nicely, as I see it, is a condescending, yet well-meaning, know-it-all,” he said.

Mary Margaret Bargery is playing the role of Sarah Brown. “She is organized, proper, caring, and virtuous, but she also struggles with a judgmental mentality towards the ‘sinners’ she aspires to save. Her rather severe exterior serves as a wall that hides her adorable innocence and potent fear of failure. I interpret that Sarah is struggling with herself and who she is. She suppresses her desire to take a risk and experience more of what life has to offer outside of the mis-

sion,” she said.

Sophia Stine is playing the role of Adelaide, a sassy, confident actress. “She is madly in love with Nathan and wants things her way all of the time. She hates the crap game, dreams of getting married, and is constantly getting sick. Achool!” she said.

❖ ❖ ❖

Aldersgate Church Community Theatre is presenting “Guys and Dolls Jr.” from Jan. 18-27. Show times are Fridays at 7:30 p.m.; Saturdays and Sundays at 2 p.m.; and Monday, Jan. 21 at 2 p.m. (holiday). The venue is located at Aldersgate Church, 1301 Collingwood Road, Alexandria. Visit www.acctonline.org.

CALENDAR

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

ONGOING

George Washington’s Mount Vernon is Open. George Washington’s Mount Vernon, a private, non-profit organization that does not accept government funding, will remain open through the partial government shutdown. Mount Vernon visitors can tour the first president’s Mansion, explore the gardens and grounds, and visit Washington’s final resting place. The Donald W. Reynolds Museum and Education Center, Be Washington interactive theater, and the 4D Revolutionary War Theater offer visitors and immersive experience to learn about George Washington and the Founding Era. Specialty tours are offered daily for an additional cost. Visit mountvernon.org.

Art Exhibit: Bringing Words to Life. Through Jan. 27 at VCA Alexandria Animal Hospital, 2660 Duke St., Alexandria. The exhibit is a part of Del Ray Artisans’ Gallery Without Walls program in partnership with VCA Alexandria. The show pairs a line from an artist’s favorite song, poem, book, or speech with the artist’s visual interpretation of that quote. Patrons may view the artwork at VCA Alexandria during regular business hours and at the discretion of hospital staff. Visit DelRayArtisans.org/exhibits/gww.

Exhibit: “Hard Wired.” Through Jan. 31 at Touchstone Gallery, 901 New York Ave. NW Washington, D.C. Tory Cowles of Potomac is represented by Touchstone Gallery, a resident artist in Studio 7 at Alexandria’s Torpedo Factory, and an abstract painting instructor at Glen Echo Park’s Yellow Barn. Her work evolves out of a spontaneous abstract expressionist process which depends on the rawness of the materials, the

unexpectedness of the composition, and the mystery of how materials are transformed. Artist talk, Saturday, Jan. 19, 4-6 p.m. Call 202-347-3787 or visit www.touchstonegallery.com.

Art Exhibit: “Destroy the Picture.” Through Feb. 2, Wednesday-Saturday, noon-6 p.m. at Gallery B, 7700 Wisconsin Ave., Suite E, Bethesda. Beverly Ryan has been a resident artist at the Torpedo Factory Art Center since 2001 and has taught at The Art League School in Alexandria, Va., for 15 years. She has curated several shows of abstract painting, narrative painting and encaustic painting. Between 1949 and 1962, numerous painters including Alberto Burri, Salvatore Scarpitta and Yves Klein produced artwork that incorporated destruction in their processes. The book *Destroy the Picture: Painting the Void*, written and edited by Paul Schimmel describes the exhibition of these works in Los Angeles at the Museum of Contemporary Art, 2012-2013. In

the spring of 2018, this work inspired Beverly Ryan to lead a group of her students to explore destruction and re-creation of artworks from previously unresolved paintings. Visit www.bethesda.org/bethesda/gallery-b.

Art Exhibit: “Lift Us Up, Don’t Push Us Out.” Through Feb. 3, gallery hours at The Art League Gallery in Studio 21, Torpedo Factory, 105 North Union Street, Alexandria. Performing Statistics: a Project by ART180 and Legal Aid Justice Center – “Lift Us Up, Don’t Push Us Out” asks the question, how would criminal justice reform differ if it was led by incarcerated youth? Connecting incarcerated youth at the Richmond Juvenile Detention Center with artists, legal experts, and advocates to reimagine Virginia’s juvenile justice system, this exhibition provides the answer. Including virtual reality experiences, photography, murals, and interactive audio installations that use human

touch to activate stories from youth in the system, their media campaigns and mobile exhibits have connected the dreams, stories, and policy demands of youth in the juvenile justice system with tens of thousands across Virginia and beyond. Visit www.theartleague.org.

Art Exhibit: It’s Not All Black and White. Through Feb. 3, 10:30 a.m.-5:30 p.m. daily (Thursdays until 9 p.m.) at Potomac Fiber Arts Gallery, in the Torpedo Factory Art Center, 105 N. Union St., Studio 29, Alexandria. Potomac Fiber Arts Gallery announces the opening of its juried show, *It’s Not All Black and White*. It may be black and white (dreary) outside but Potomac Fiber Arts Gallery radiates with color. In addition to lovely neutral pieces, artists have warmed their space with colorful creations. Themed work will be eligible for recognition by the jurors. Non-themed work may also be exhibited. Free admission. Visit www.potomacfiberartsgallery.com or

ENTERTAINMENT

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Photography Exhibit: Fax Ayres.

Through Feb. 24, Thursday-Sunday, noon-4 p.m. at The Athenaeum, 201 Prince St. Fax Ayres' photography employs a 'lightpainting' technique to imbue his subjects with an almost surreal quality. He sets up still life vignettes in the dark and then carefully paints individual components with light, assembling multiple images together to create the final photograph. Visit www.nvfaa.org or call 703-548-0035.

Beginner Square Dance Lessons.

Through March 27, 7:30-9 p.m. at the Lincolnia Senior Center, 4710 N. Chambliss St. Keep up with New Year's resolutions and enjoy both mental and physical exercise with Square Dance Lessons. \$30 for each four-week session. Open to couples, singles and groups. Email boomerangs@wascaclubs.com or call 571-210-5480.

FRIDAY/JAN. 18

Traveling by Pullman. 7:30-9 p.m. At The Lyceum, 201 S. Washington St., Alexandria. The name Pullman is synonymous with first class rail travel. Join Kevin Tankersley for an overview of the Pullman Company, and learn how the D.C. National Railway Historical Society chapter interprets the Pullman experience by operating the Pullman car Dover Harbor today. Free. Visit dcnrhs.org.

JAN. 18-27

Alexandria Winter Restaurant

Week. For 10 days and two weekends, 65 restaurants in Alexandria, Virginia, will offer a \$35 three-course dinner for one or a \$35 dinner for two. More than 35

restaurants will also offer lunch menus at \$15 or \$22 per person in addition to the dinner specials. Brunch lovers can enjoy brunch menus for \$15 or \$22 per person at 14 restaurants. Visit www.AlexandriaRestaurantWeek.com.

SATURDAY/JAN. 19

Children's Program on Deer. 10-11 a.m. At Huntley Meadows Park, 3701 Lockheed Blvd., Alexandria. White-tailed deer are our largest mammal neighbors, and kids can learn all about these graceful animals in the "Dashing Deer" program. Children age 2-6 can join a park naturalist and learn to appreciate the wonderful life of a deer from fawn to doe or buck. There will be hands-on activities, songs and a guided walk in search of deer and their tracks. Participants will also create a craft to take home. Cost is \$10 per child. Call 703-768-2525 or visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/huntley-meadows.

Artist Talk: "Hard Wired." 4-6 p.m. at Touchstone Gallery, 901 New York Ave. NW Washington, D.C. Tory Cowles of Potomac is represented by Touchstone Gallery, a resident artist in Studio 7 at Alexandria's Torpedo Factory, and an abstract painting instructor at Glen Echo Park's Yellow Barn. Her work evolves out of a spontaneous abstract expressionist process which depends on the rawness of the materials, the unexpectedness of the composition, and the mystery of how materials are transformed. Call 202-347-3787 or visit www.touchstonegallery.com.

JAN. 19-MARCH 3

Art Exhibit: Ritualisms. Gallery hours at Target Gallery, 105 N.

Union St., Alexandria. New Target Gallery Exhibition contemplates the universality of rituals. The exhibition juxtaposes different artists' interpretations of rituals through their work, daily routines, habits, or personal quirks. It also brings in broader cultural formalities and religious ceremonies. Visit www.torpedofactory.org.

SUNDAY/JAN. 20

What's Buggin' You? 1:30-2:30 p.m. At Green Springs Gardens, 4603 Green Spring Road, Alexandria. Bring your bug questions and stories for entomologist Nate Erwin who will present a colorful slide show about insects and their associated plants. Find out how to attract butterflies and fireflies or put a name to that curious bug in the garden last year. Cost is \$10 in advance or \$12 at the door. Call 703-642-5173 or visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/green-spring.

THURSDAY/JAN. 24

Play "House Detective." 1-2 p.m. At Historic Huntley, 6918 Harrison Lane, Alexandria. Adults are invited to come to Historic Huntley to discover some of the clues that help historians unravel the mystery surrounding a property. What can architectural details and styles tell historians? Examine photographs, artifacts and the buildings of Historic Huntley to resolve some of its unexplained past. \$5. Call 703-768-2525 or visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/historic-huntley.

JAN. 24-FEB. 24

"Three Sistahs." At MetroStage, 1201

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ENTERTAINMENT

N. Royal St., Alexandria. "Three Sistahs" is an intimate musical which exposes the souls of three strong independent women as they gather together in the family home one last time. They reflect on the past, present and their hope for the future with powerful music and insights about their lives and relationships. Performances will be Thursdays and Fridays at 8 p.m., Saturdays at 3 p.m., and 8 p.m., Sundays at 3 p.m. and 7 p.m., Jan 24- Feb 24, 2019. Tickets are \$55 with student and active military and group discounts available. Four or more tickets are \$50 each. Call the theatre at 703-548-9044 or go online to www.metrostage.org.

FRIDAY/JAN. 25

Container Gardens for the Yardless. 1:30-2:30 p.m. At Green Springs Gardens, 4603 Green Spring Road, Alexandria. Just because you don't have a yard doesn't mean you can't have a garden. Learn how to brighten your home with plants and flowers. Whether in flower pots, hanging baskets or window boxes, container gardens are beautiful, easy and rewarding. At this Garden Talk with Extension Master Gardeners, learn how to create a dazzling display with eye-catching perennials and annuals. Get information and inspiration to design your own container gardens. Cost is \$10. Call 703-642-5173 or visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/green-spring.

Family Splash Night. 6-9 p.m. At Chinquapin Park Rec Center and Aquatics Facility, 3210 King St., Alexandria. Featuring James K. Polk and William Ramsay Schools. Enjoy swimming, a floating obstacle course, games, relays, refreshments, music,

diving for prizes and more. Different schools are featured at each event but all are welcome. Admission is \$4 per person upon entry. Visit www.alexandriava.gov/Recreation.

SUNDAY/JAN. 27

Wild Women of Washington. 1-3:30 p.m. At Green Spring Gardens, 4603 Green Spring Road, Alexandria. From newspaperwomen and suffragettes to rebellious first ladies and socialites, the nation's capital has attracted many unladylike ladies over the years. Hear their stories as author Camden Schwantes discusses her book, "Wild Women of Washington, D.C.: A History of Disorderly Conduct from the Ladies of the District." Reservations are required. \$42 for the program and tea; \$18 for the program only. To make reservations for tea, call 703-941-7987, or to learn more about the historic site, visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/green-spring.

MONDAY/JAN. 28

Bullying and Lockdowns: Perspectives on School Security. 7:15 p.m. At The Hermitage Auditorium, 5000 Fairbanks Ave., Alexandria. Part of the Agenda:Alexandria program, which falls on the fourth Monday of the month, begin at 7:15 p.m. Programs are \$5 each or free with your \$35 membership, payable online at www.AgendaAlexandria.org/sign-up page or at the door by check or credit. All are invited to a pre-program dinner if desired. Dinner is 6:45-7:15 p.m., prices starting at \$32 with reservations by the Friday prior to the program. Visit www.Agenda:Alexandria.com.

FRIDAY/FEB. 1

Family Splash Night. 6-9 p.m. At Chinquapin Park Rec Center and Aquatics Facility, 3210 King St., Alexandria. Featuring Ferdinand T. Day and Samuel W. Tucker schools. Enjoy swimming, a floating obstacle course, games, relays, refreshments, music, diving for prizes and more. Different schools are featured at each event but all are welcome. Admission is \$4 per person upon entry. Visit www.alexandriava.gov/Recreation.

"New Beginnings" Opening Reception. 7-9 p.m. At Del Ray Artisans Gallery, 2704 Mount Vernon Ave., Alexandria. See artwork created by reuse. These creations incorporate found objects, recycled materials or older works of art. The exhibit runs from Feb. 1-24. Exhibit details, plus information on four special workshops at www.DelRayArtisans.org/event/new-beginnings.

FEB. 1-MARCH 30

Art Exhibition: High School Students. At The Gallery at Convergence, 1801 N. Quaker Lane, Alexandria. The Alexandria All City High School Art Exhibition hosted by the Convergence Arts Initiative returns for its fourth year. This year's experience features more than 90 Alexandria high school students representing six high schools including public, private, and independent. Returning for 2019's collaborative event are students from Bishop Ireton, Episcopal High School, T.C. Williams, St. Stephen's and St. Agnes School, Commonwealth Academy, and The Howard Gardner

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Front: Ilyana Rose as the boy Mute, and under the sign (from left): Janice Zucker as Hucklebee; Luis “Matty” Montes as Matt; Rachel Hogan as Luisa; and Stephen P. Yednock as Bellomy.



PHOTO BY
MICHAEL DEBLOIS

‘The Fantasticks’

The Tom Jones musical from 1960 is a tale of a boy, a girl, and their meddling fathers pushing the pair together by pretending to keep them apart. The Little Theatre of Alexandria is presenting “The Fantasticks” from through Feb. 2. Show times are Wednesdays through Saturdays at 8 p.m.; Sundays at 3 p.m. Tickets are \$29 to \$34. The venue is located at 600 Wolfe Street, Alexandria. Visit www.thelittletheatre.com.

CALENDAR

School. Visit www.ourconvergence.org.

SATURDAY/FEB. 2

15th Annual Alexandria

Warehouse Sale. 9 a.m.-4 p.m. At The Westin Alexandria, 400 Courthouse Square, Alexandria. Deemed the “Super Bowl of Shopping Events” (always occurring the Saturday of Super Bowl weekend), the winter deals event is free to enter and will include a variety of new boutiques and retailers not only located in Alexandria, but throughout the Metro region. The event was the brainchild of Elizabeth Todd (co-founder of the Old Town Boutique District and owner of The Shoe Hive). Visit www.oldtownboutiquedistrict.com or www.AlexandriaWarehouseSale.com.

Story Time for Little Historians. 11 a.m. at the Alexandria Black History Museum, 902 Wythe St., Alexandria. Enjoy cultural stories and creative craft activities that introduce world history and folklore. Afterwards, explore the museum exhibits to learn about local Black history. All ages welcome, but most suitable for children 4 and older. Admission is \$3 per person. All children must be accompanied by an adult. Call 703-746-4356.

Happy Birthday, John Carlyle: A 1770s Celebration. 12-4 p.m. at Carlyle House, 121 N. Fairfax St., Alexandria. Help wish a happy birthday to Alexandria town founder, Col. John Carlyle. Festivities will include 18th-century dancing, live music, and a birthday treat. Admission is free, but donations are welcome. Visit www.novaparks.com.

Locals’ Alley Saturdays. 12:30-2:30 p.m. at The Old Town Shop, 105 S. Union St. at King Street. Meet the makers of local goods, featuring: Ester’s Granola tasting. Call 703-684-4682 or visit www.TheOldTownShop.com.

Seed Exchange. 12:30-4 p.m. at Green Spring Gardens in Alexandria. These seed swaps are in-person and face-to-face. Bring extra seeds and swap them with other gardeners. Everyone will leave with a bag full of seeds, new garden friends, and expert planting advice. \$20 per person. Registration is now open at WGSeedExchange-GSG.brownpapertickets.com.

SUNDAY/FEB. 3

Walking With Washington Tour. 2-4 p.m. at Ramsay House, Alexandria Visitor’s Center, 221 King St., Alexandria. Explore important sites associated with George Washington in his hometown of Alexandria. This guided walking tour of historic Old Towne covers significant people and events in Washington’s life and in American history, with stops at Ramsay House, Market Square, Carlyle House, Wise’s Tavern, Duvall Tavern/Charles Lee House, Gadsby’s Tavern, Washington’s townhouse, The Lord Fairfax House, the “Light-Horse” Harry Lee house and Christ Church. Sponsored by the City of Alexandria’s George Washington Birthday Celebration Committee. Free. Visit washingtonbirthday.com.

Tell Me Your Name. 3:30 p.m. at Carlyle House, 121 N. Fairfax St., Alexandria. In 2017 Carlyle House Historic Park undertook a new research project to improve their knowledge and interpretation of the site’s enslaved population. Join Maddy McCoy, founder of Slavery Inventory Database, LLC, for an illuminating tour on the new research of the enslaved community at Carlyle House. Conversation about identifying enslaved individuals and their communities and putting that into a historical and genealogical context. Cost is \$10. Visit apm.activecommunities.com/novaparks/Activity_Search/2516 for

4 Reservations to Make for Winter Restaurant Week

BY HOPE NELSON

Just in time for your new year’s resolutions to have bitten the dust, Alexandria’s Winter Restaurant Week takes center stage, allowing diners from across the region to taste some of the city’s favorite menus for a fraction of the price.

Sunday in Saigon, 682 N. St. Asaph St.

The upscale Vietnamese restaurant in the shadow of Trader Joe’s has several tricks up its sleeve for a thorough Restaurant Week spread. Take a tour through Vietnam with a three-course \$35 dinner or two-course \$15 lunch, both of which sport an array of options for nearly any palate. Lunch comes with a choice of three appetizers, from chicken and wood ear mushroom rolls to shrimp fritters, and a selection of four entrée options, including a vegan yellow curry and a lemongrass beef noodle soup. At dinner, the selections widen even more; with three appetizers, four entrees and two desserts to choose from, diners won’t go home hungry.

Sonoma Cellar, 207 King St.

The cute little tasting room and restaurant nestled on lower King Street isn’t just a wine bar. Rather, it offers a full-fledged menu – and during Restaurant Week, the kitchen really struts its stuff. Diners have two options – a \$35-per-person dinner or a \$15 week-end brunch. For brunch, kick things off with a bellini, mimosa or salad; for an entrée, pick between such treats as a monte cristo, tater tot waffle or fajitas tacos. For dinner, start off with the likes of a quinoa salad with peppers and chickpeas or a chicken torti-

tickets.

MONDAY/FEB. 4

Talk on Microgreens. 7-8:30 p.m. at Barrett Branch Library, 717 Queen St., Alexandria. Discussion on Microgreens: What Are They, Why Are They So Fabulous, and How to Grow Them. This class is offered by Extension Master Gardeners with the Virginia Cooperative Extension, Master Gardeners of Northern Virginia. Free. Advance registration requested at mgnv.org. Call 703-228-6414 or email mgaralex@gmail.com.

FEB. 6-MARCH 10

“Opposites Attract.” At Potomac Fiber Arts Gallery, Torpedo Factory Art Center, Studio 29, 105 North Union St., Alexandria. Show featuring everything Quiet and Loud, Large and Small, Smooth and Rough, Bright and Dull, Stiff and Flowing, Smiles and Frowns – the list goes on and the artists had a great time incorporating this theme into their work. Visit www.Potomacfiberartsgallery.com.

FRIDAY/FEB. 8

Family Splash Night. 6-9 p.m. At Chinquapin Park Rec Center and Aquatics Facility, 3210 King St., Alexandria. Featuring George Mason and Matthew Maury schools. Enjoy swimming, a floating obstacle course, games, relays, refreshments, music, diving for prizes and more. Different schools are featured at each event but all are welcome. Admission is \$4 per person upon entry. Visit

www.alexandriava.gov/Recreation.

Tequila and Taco, 540 John Carlyle St.

The Carlyle neighborhood’s newest taco-slinging neighbor is entering the Winter Restaurant Week game strong with a three-course, dinner-for-two option. Order up a margarita – not part of the special – and peruse the menu. For \$35, two diners will feast on guacamole or queso to start, then move on to a choice of fajitas or any three tacos from the dinner menu. Dessert brings with it a difficult decision: Tres leches cake, key lime pie or churros with ice cream?

Lena’s Wood-Fired Pizza and Tap, 401 E. Braddock Road

Del Ray’s top pizza purveyor is back for another Restaurant Week deal. But don’t get complacent – Lena’s special menu strays from the wood-fired pizza and focuses more heavily on the pasta side of the equation. After a choice of four starters (including Lena’s famous giant meatball), choose from a half-dozen entrees, which range from grilled chicken alfredo to lasagna Bolognese to eggplant parmesan. To end things up on a sweet note, select from four desserts including tiramisu or house-made doughnuts.

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

Call 703-684-4682 or visit www.TheOldTownShop.com.

SUNDAY/FEB. 10

Walking With Washington Tour. 2-4 p.m. at Ramsay House, Alexandria Visitor’s Center, 221 King St., Alexandria. Explore important sites associated with George Washington in his hometown of Alexandria. This guided walking tour of historic Old Towne covers significant people and events in Washington’s life and in American history, with stops at Ramsay House, Market Square, Carlyle House, Wise’s Tavern, Duvall Tavern/Charles Lee House, Gadsby’s Tavern, Washington’s townhouse, The Lord Fairfax House, the “Light-Horse” Harry Lee house and Christ Church. Sponsored by the City of Alexandria’s George Washington Birthday Celebration Committee. Free. Visit washingtonbirthday.com.

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SATURDAY/FEB. 9

ASO Presents: Mozart’s Prague Symphony. 8-10 p.m. at Rachel M. Schlesinger Concert Hall, 4915 East Campus Drive. New and old traditions collide in February with an exploration of the Classical-era symphony. The program centers on Mozart’s Symphony No. 38 “Prague,” juxtaposed with Prokofiev’s Symphony No. 1 “Classical.” The program will also feature soloists from the ASO for Bach’s Brandenburg Concerto No. 1 and Stravinsky’s Dumbarton Oaks. Adult, \$20-\$80; youth, \$5; student, \$10. Call 703-548-0885 or visit www.alexsym.org.

Locals’ Alley Saturdays. 12:30-2:30 p.m. at The Old Town Shop, 105 S. Union St. at King Street. Meet the makers of local goods, featuring: Truly-Life soaps and bath products.



Go Blue!

In recognition of National Slavery and Human Trafficking Prevention Month, the City of Alexandria, Department of Recreation has gone "Blue." During the month of January, "going blue" draws attention to the importance of protecting the basic rights of freedom and to bring those who exploit human lives to justice. Human trafficking is the third largest international crime industry and the fastest growing crime industry at home and abroad.



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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. 805, Design of Accessibility Improvements for Fort Ward Park.
There will be a non-mandatory pre-Proposal conference for this solicitation on January 22, 2019 at 1:00 p.m. in the Purchasing Conference Room located at 100 N. Pitt St., Suite 301, Alexandria, VA 22314.
Closing Date and Time: February 12, 2019, 4:00 p.m., prevailing local time.

For general inquiries contact Peter Tomaselli at peter.tomaselli@alexandriava.gov. The City of Alexandria reserves the right to reject 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.

Obituary



Gregory Blair Gould rounded third base for the last time on Monday, January 7, 2019. Greg was born on November 28, 1951 in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania but lived in Arlington and Alexandria, Virginia most of his life. Greg was predeceased by his parents, George Blair and Dorothy Edwards Gould and his brother, Russell Barry Gould. He is survived by his sister Lynne Gould Parks and her husband Scott; nieces and nephew, Blair Hill Parks, Melissa Gould Allen and Kyle William Parks.

Greg graduated from Francis C. Hammond High School and earned a B.A. in Religion from the University of Richmond in 1973. Professionally, Greg made a 40-year career with Red

Top Cab of Arlington, but his first love was sports of all kinds. Greg, nicknamed "Maz", was a gifted baseball and softball player, so much so that he garnered a tryout with the Kansas City Royals and is a member of the Fairfax Adult Softball Hall of Fame as part of the RAVCO Softball team. He leaves a legacy where he touched many youths' lives coaching multiple sports in the Alexandria Recreation League in the George Mason Elementary School Neighborhood. A memorial service will be held at Everly-Wheatley Funeral Home, 1500 W Braddock Rd, Alexandria on January 26 at 11:00 a.m. The family will receive guests at 10:30 a.m. In lieu of flowers, contributions can be made to the National Kidney Foundation.

Obituary

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What To Right About

By KENNETH B. LOURIE



Today, Jan. 12, 2019 is National Glazed Donut Day and the day after my most recent post-scan appointment with my oncologist. A day when, if I'm lucky – as I have been for the past 10 years – my world will change for the better (donut consumption notwithstanding). However, the 'world' to which I refer is one fraught with danger and offers no more guarantees than I've been accustomed to.

To invoke the late, great Rod Serling: I am now entering "The Immunotherapy Zone."

Yes, a brand new – for me – treatment protocol: new drug, new side effects, new frequency, new lifestyle/fewer hassles (potentially), and most importantly: shrinkage (possibly), of my tumors, especially my "Adams Apple" tumor, as I've come to nickname the mass just below my Adams Apple (which is sort of bothering me, if you want to know the truth).

The nature of cancer treatment as I've experienced it – and learned from my oncologist is – if the drug is working, you continue it until it isn't (sounds simple I know). When it stops working, you change as the cancer has figured out the drug's intent. (Cancer cells are smart that way.)

Generally speaking, the cancer drug doesn't start working (shrinking, stabilizing) after it has stopped working (growing). Over my nearly 10 years, I have switched drugs upwards of a dozen times.

Now, I am switching again: to Opdivo, an immunotherapy drug, a class of drugs that didn't even exist a decade or so ago when I was first diagnosed, and one that has only been approved for the treatment of lung cancer since 2015. A drug that, to quote the television advertisement: "offers a chance at longer life."

And so, Team Lourie, two-thirds of it anyway, made the decision to switch and fight. Starting this Friday, I will be infused into the great unknown.

From what my oncologist explained yesterday, aside from the possible benefits, Opdivo has some potentially unpleasant side effects. However, continuing with my present infusion drug, Alimta, now that there's been some growth, is also likely to produce some unpleasant side effects: growth and movement.

And more growth/movement is the worst side effect, relatively and comparatively speaking. So we chose a definite over a maybe. If we continue with Alimta, there will be growth – definitely (that's how cancer works). If we opt for Opdivo, maybe there won't be growth, and maybe there might even be some shrinkage (the good kind).

As for lifestyle changes, there are, according to my oncologist, some quality of life improvements as well, or at least, more weeks in the month when potentially I'll be less impacted by my disease/treatment. Which along with my quality of life has always been a concern of my oncologist.

And, without getting into the details, I'm ready for a change.

Combined with the possibility of tumor shrinkage and fewer/different side effects (some patients report few side effects from Opdivo), I wouldn't say switching to an immunotherapy drug was enticing/a "no-brainer," but it does offer an alternative of sorts. And given where I've been treated from and where I'll be treated now, I am ready for something different.

Changing drugs is always a risk though; it could improve my life or it could make matters worse, a 'worse' from which quite frankly I might not recover (do you remember my yo-yo down-the-stairs visual from a few columns ago?). And I am familiar, unfortunately, with some less-than-encouraging accounts of patients not faring so well.

I just hope there's not a hole in my thinking. Oh wait. That's a hole in my donut. No worries. I'm happy to buy the donut and I never complain about the hole. That's the trade-off. I'm hoping, given the potential benefit of Opdivo, I can likewise live/trade-off with side effects.

My philosophy has always been to take the good with the bad – and vice versa, and after almost 10 years of rolling with the punches, I see no reason to change now.

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

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LETTERS

FROM PAGE 13

vehicles, Alexandria will simply morph over time into Calcutta on the Potomac hopelessly dense, dirty and impassible.

Jimm Roberts
Alexandria

Noting Lee's Accomplishments

To the Editor:

One of Alexandria's most illustrious citizens, Robert E. Lee, was born on Jan. 19, 1807, at Stratford Hall. When he was three, his father moved the family to Alexandria. His death when Robert was 11 left the family with few resources.

As a schoolboy, Robert cared for his invalid mother and did household chores, including shopping in Market Square. The Lee family pew at Christ Church has a silver marker with a replica of his signature. His impoverished mother could not afford college tuition so he sought a free education at West Point, where he excelled. He had a distinguished career as an engineer, even changing the Mississippi River's course to keep St. Louis a port, after others had failed to do so. He was the hero of Veracruz in the Mexican War.

He married the heiress of Arlington, Mary Anna Randolph Custis. When her father died in 1857, his will left the entire estate to her for her lifetime and then to their eldest son. Lee did not inherit any slaves. He was named an executor of the heavily indebted estate whose slaves were to be freed within five years. Without selling anyone, he cleared the debts and freed them by 1862 despite other heavy war responsibilities.

Lee owned no slaves. However, Gen. Grant's wife owned slaves until 1865. Lincoln's 1863 Emancipation Proclamation was carefully crafted to free no slaves in Union states or Union controlled areas of the South.

At its outset Lincoln declared the war was about saving the Union, not about slavery. Virginians had voted to remain in the Union, but after Lincoln's call for 75,000 troops to invade the South, they voted for secession. In 1861 the state was the primary unit of government and focus of citizens' allegiance, including Lee's, although he opposed slavery and secession.

Despite serving admirably in the US army for 36 years, Lee is best known as a general in the Confederate army. Because secession was legal, he was not a traitor any more than Washington who also fought for independence. Because Lee is an Alexandrian, it is especially regrettable that public officials, clergy, teachers and citizens misstate the facts about him. We all should know and disseminate the truth.

Lee's name is synonymous with integrity. One example is his refusal to accept \$10,000 from the New York Life Insurance Co. merely for use of his name; at the time he was destitute and the sole support of his invalid wife and three adult daughters. American and European military academies still study his innovative battle strategies. He is one of only two men in recorded Western history to have been offered a top command by opposing sides in the same war. Read a biography to celebrate his birthday!

Ellen Latane Tabb/Alexandria

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