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Alexandria Gazette Packet

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JANUARY 31, 2019



Public school custodians gave public testimony and held up “Don’t privatize our jobs!” signs at last week’s School Board meeting.

‘More Than Just Custodians’?

Public school custodians object to administration’s privatization plan.

BY DAN BRENDEN
GAZETTE PACKET

Public school custodians voiced opposition to the privatization of their jobs, as proposed in the division superintendent’s operating budget, at the School Board’s meeting last Thursday, Jan. 24.

Superintendent Dr. Gregory Hutchings’s proposed FY 2020 operating budget would outsource 44 custodial jobs worth about \$1.2 million to private contracting firms.

Custodians say the move will burden their families, and also that the schools will lose the qualitative value of in-house workers.

Jamar Hines told the School Board on Thursday: “I’m a 13-year employee with Alexandria City Public Schools. ... It affects me. I have two boys that are asthmatic. ... I have an 11th grader preparing for college and everything. ... By going to privatizing these schools, ... it’s hard as a parent, ... a child can feel when their parent is struggling, that child is going to struggle. So I just want you all to understand, we’re more than just custodians. We are fathers, mothers, sons and daughters

first. And we treat those children in those schools as our own. You might not get that with privatizing.”

Ernest Ward said: “I’ve been an employee for ACPS for 15 years as a custodian I was living in North Carolina, but the job I had didn’t have any kind of good benefits. ... I came here as a part-timer, I worked, I was dedicated to the job, and my principal and my supervisor recommended me for a full-time position at ACPS. ... I have a health condition, so if you cut my job, I lose my benefits, and I couldn’t afford to buy medication over the counter. ... We have families to provide for, and if we lose our jobs there’s not guarantee that we could ... be employed by another school system, or any other job.”

About two-thirds of the division’s schools use contracted custodial services, provided by two firms, SSC and ABM. Transitioning custodial jobs remaining on the schools’ payroll to contractors would complete a process intended to be accomplished “through attrition” since 2007, said Hutchings.

But this proposal departs from the attrition plan in that current employees cannot finish their careers, says Dawn Lucas, president of the Education Association of Alexandria, a local employee organization. Also, even if the new contractor(s) hire the currently school-employees custodians,

SEE PRIVATIZING, PAGE 4

School Finances: Affirmation, Caution

Report indicates decreasing expenditure per student, widening deficits.

BY DAN BRENDEN
GAZETTE PACKET

The public school division’s recently released financial report, including an independent auditor’s evaluation, describes sound accounting, as well as mixed financial trends and outlooks.

The financial report serves as a kind of companion to the budget. Whereas the budget looks forward to the next fiscal year, the finan-

cial report evaluates the prior fiscal year.

“The financial statements were given an ‘unmodified’ opinion, which is the highest level of assurance that we are able to give,” said auditor Aires Coleman. Auditors can’t assure “everything was good” with the schools’ overall financial situation, only that they found “nothing wrong” with reviewed accounting statements and proto-

SEE FINANCES, PAGE 16

Remembering #81

Campbell, ’71 Titan, dies at 65.

BY JEANNE THEISMANN
GAZETTE PACKET

Julius Campbell, a star defensive lineman who helped lead the T.C. Williams Titans to the 1971 Virginia state championship title, died Jan. 25 of organ failure. He was 65.

Campbell had been hospitalized for several months prior to his death and former teammates visited him regularly.

“You couldn’t ask for a better teammate than old # 81,” said Rusty Reynolds in a Facebook post.



PHOTO FROM FACEBOOK

Campbell

In 1971, T.C. Williams was newly merged with Francis C. Hammond and George Washington high schools and

SEE REMEMBERING, PAGE 3

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Remembering Julius Campbell, '71 Titan

FROM PAGE 1

Campbell was a key player in cultivating friendships on the team after initial racial tension and school rivalries. The Titan's story was portrayed on screen in the movie "Remember the Titans," which starred Denzel Washington.

According to ACPS, the continuing issues at football games in the late 1960s and early 1970s were so bad that the school division moved all Friday night games to afternoons. In the summer of 1971, Superintendent John C. Albom presented and implemented a plan that fully integrated Alexandria's three high schools aimed at meeting the standards set by the federal government to ensure Alexandria continued to receive federal funding. By the fall of 1971, T.C. Williams was fully integrated for grades 11 and 12.

Combining three schools into one created internal competition within the school's sports teams and organizations. The 1971 football team's leadership helped unify the school and break that tension. Under coaches Herman Boone and Bill Yoast, the Titans finished that season 13-0 and Campbell, Gerry Bertier and Brad Smith were named to the Washington Star's All-Metro team.

Campbell's senior year at T.C. Williams was less successful. The 1972 team went 8-1 overall and 5-1 in the district and lost their division to Fort Hunt High School by a single point, 8-7. The team did not advance to the Northern Virginia regional championship round of the Virginia Class AAA football



PHOTO FROM FACEBOOK

Julius Campbell, shown with a fan at the 5th annual Gerry Bertier Foundation Golf Tournament in 2010, died Jan. 25 at the age of 65.

playoffs.

A 1973 graduate of T.C. Williams, Campbell was born in Alexandria, the second of five children born to Hazel (nee Jarret), and Julius Campbell, Sr. With dreams of one day playing at Ohio State, Campbell attended Ferrum Junior College with plans to transfer. An ankle injury during his time at Ferrum ended his football career.

After college, Campbell returned to Alexandria to care for his ailing father. He went on to work for Animal Control in Alexandria and Prince George's County, Md. Along with other teammates, Campbell was often seen around Parker-Gray Memorial Stadium signing items to raise funds for the team and to keep the legacy of the '71 Titans alive.

The former teammates have for years held



PHOTO FROM FACEBOOK

Julius Campbell, seated front right, and former '71 Titans teammates pose with coaches Bill Yoast, seated at left, and Herman Boone, standing center, at the 50th anniversary celebration of T.C. Williams High School in 2015.

reunions and charity events to raise money for the '71 Original Titans Scholarship Fund as well as the Gerry Bertier #42 Foundation in memory of Campbell's close friend and teammate Gerry Bertier, who died in 1981. Bertier had been paralyzed from the waist down in a car accident following the team's state championship victory 10 years earlier.

ACPS noted that the success of the '71 T.C. Williams football team in the Virginia state championship made the reorganization of the school system easier to accept. John Stubbins, ACPS director of secondary education in 1971, told the Washington Post, "It's pretty obvious there's been a tre-

mendous spillover into the entire system because of that team. The parents were thrilled to death to see these kids getting along and it's really helped. A lot of minds have been changed at the dinner table."

Campbell is survived by his wife, Cathy Campbell, daughter Sharron Murray, three stepdaughters, two stepsons and five grandchildren.

A memorial service for Campbell will be held Feb. 2 at Alfred Street Baptist Church, 301 S. Alfred St. Viewing at 10 a.m. with the service beginning at 11 a.m. In lieu of flowers, the family has requested donations to the '71 Original Titans Scholarship Fund. See www.71originaltitans.com.

Keeping Options Open? Board approves high school network plan, contingent on more analysis.

BY DAN BRENDEN
GAZETTE PACKET

The School Board authorized Minnie Howard expansion, as a first step toward the superintendent's proposed "connected high school network," but with some added constraints and milestones, on Jan. 24.

The public schools administration for months has been planning about how best to add high school seats. Enrollment has already outgrown the T.C. Williams main King Street campus (grades 10-12), built in 2007. Last fall, Superintendent Dr. Gregory Hutchings outlined for the prior School Board three general, big-picture choices, though details aren't yet worked out:

- ❖ Make the existing T.C. Williams bigger;
- ❖ Build another stand-alone comprehensive high school;
- ❖ Keep everything under one T.C. Williams Titans "brand," but distribute specialty programs, akin to the school division's existing "academies" (health sciences, finance, STEM), across one or more additional facilities.

Hutchings and school system COO Mi-

gnon Anthony preferred the third option, variously dubbed the "connected high school network" or "campus" model. They asked the School Board formally to approve it as the overarching "strategy" around which to tailor subsequent planning efforts, namely, site selection. As originally framed, a favorable decision would have ruled out building another comprehensive high school campus in the city — at least "not [in] the near future," though perhaps "in the way future," said Hutchings.

"The vote is: are we going to have a strategy with one high school ... [or] multiple high schools ... in Alexandria?" he told the School Board during a Dec. 20 project update.

He reckoned that a new stand-alone high school might cramp flexibility for students and families to choose their best-fit learning environments; and also might require infeasible expense, costing as much as \$216 million. That cost estimate far surpasses the \$124 million the city agreed to last year in its FY 2019-2028 long-range capital improvement budget.

Several School Board members expressed reservations. Some thought the proposal

lacked sufficient comparative cost analysis and constituent buy-in.

On Thursday of last week, the School Board voted unanimously to "empower the superintendent to move forward immediately with the design and build of a new high school building on the Minnie Howard site as part of a Connected High School Network strategy and continue to work on additional elements of the network including expansion of the T.C. Williams Satellite campus, and implementation of the middle college program on the NOVA campus."

For more, visit www.acps.k12.va.us/hproject.

Though they qualified that "students [should] have the option of fulfilling graduation requirements in one building." That wouldn't necessarily have been possible under Hutchings' original proposal, which included the possibility of acquiring smaller, and thus cheaper and more available, sites. The administration says it could also more flexibly adapt a real estate portfolio of smaller sites to future demographic trends.

In a 5-4 split vote, they added the following caveat, explicitly not precluding another stand-alone campus, keeping options more

open: "By May 2019, the superintendent shall provide multiple preliminary design proposals for the board's consideration, including one or more proposals that incorporate the creation of a second comprehensive high school. The superintendent shall provide the board with a comparative cost-benefit (or SWOT [Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats]) analysis that incorporates considerations of at least the following: academic literature / research; qualitative references to comparable high schools / high school models that can inform planning and decision-making; financial impacts of the proposed design; impact of design on student achievement, including impact of the design on subgroups (e.g., EL [English learner] students, SPED [special education] students, underrepresented minorities); impact of design on access to academic and extracurricular program; impact of design on interpersonal and social-emotional skills; strategy to allow staff to continue to explore site and program options."

School Board Chair Cindy Anderson, Vice Chair Veronica Nolan, and members Ramee Gentry and Margaret Lorber dissented.

Senior Diplomacy

BY JEANNE THEISMANN
GAZETTE PACKET

Alexandria has been home to its share of political ambassadors over the years. But Senior Services of Alexandria is giving new meaning to the word with its latest Senior Ambassadors volunteer program.

With a goal of providing information about services and programs for seniors in Alexandria, SSA is recruiting and training volunteers to act as ambassadors on behalf of SSA in their respective communities.

“Our goal is to reach out to senior communities from every part of the city representing different socio-economic and ethnic populations,” said MaryAnne Beatty, director of communications and community outreach for SSA. “We currently have 51 volunteer ambassadors serving communities from faith communities, senior centers, senior communities and general neighborhoods.”

The Senior Ambassadors program has been in existence for about a year. It began as part of the Commission on Aging’s Livable Communities plan that is part of the World Health Organization and AARP Livable Communities initiative across the country. Alexandria

is the first community in the area to be accepted by AARP.

According to Beatty, SSA stepped up to manage the program for the city.

“We put together a task force with members from SSA, the Division of Aging and Adult Services, Loudoun County’s representation from their ambassador program, Commission on Aging, and a community representative from Westminster Presbyterian Church,” Beatty said. “The task force set up how the program would work, what communities we would look to get ambassadors to represent, how to recruit volunteers, training, etc.”

Janet Hawkins has been involved in the program since its inception and is the ambassador to Westminster Presbyterian Church in Beverley Hills.

“I don’t like admitting I’m a senior,” Hawkins said with a laugh. “But it’s important to get the word out about what SSA has to offer. People think it is only Meals On Wheels or for people who need help. Yes, it does that but so much more. It’s one of the best kept secrets in Alexandria and I want people to know about what SSA has to offer to anyone that is a senior in the city.”

According to Beatty, the volunteer can do as much or little as their sched-

SSA program reaches out to community.

ules allow. Each week the ambassadors receive an email from Beatty with updates on upcoming programs and events. Ambassadors receive a training class and are provided resources to use in their community.

“The program is really making an impact in getting out the information and we are seeing an increase in participation in programs and services,” Beatty said. “Ambassadors are serving as an additional set of eyes and ears in the community for seniors.”

Hawkins gets the word out on SSA programs through weekly bulletins and word of mouth.

“I’ve been introducing seniors to the SSA programs such as the Friendly Visitors program, Groceries to Go and Animeals,” Hawkins said. “We all know having a pet in your home as you age is a good thing. It provides companionship, which is important to aging adults.”

Francine Carrera is a senior ambassador for the 4600 Duke Street complex in the West End.

“I’m fairly new to this but it’s very rewarding for me as a volunteer,” said Carrera, who last year completed SSA’s Senior Academy program. “It’s sometimes slow for people to open up about needing service – seniors want to be independent. But I want seniors to know what SSA can provide for them and

SEE SENIOR AMBASSADORS, PAGE 6

Privatizing

FROM PAGE 1

the latter might still lose benefits, seniority and association membership, she said.

On the other hand, the schools administration says the transition would standardize cleanliness across schools buildings; streamline management and accountability; and save money.

“We do not have consistency,” Hutchings told the School Board on Thursday, Jan. 10. The schools need “a standard of cleanliness, in that they have routines in regards to changing filters, to light fixtures, to toilet paper in the bathrooms. ... [Currently] we have some of our buildings that are contracted and some of our buildings that are not. ... We are proposing that we outsource our custodial services, so that we can have consistency in every single one of our buildings ...”

The schools don’t employ enough custodians so that, when one takes days off, someone else can fill the gap, said school system COO Mignon Anthony. Whereas a contractor would always fill the gap to ensure the cleaning got done.

“Everybody has tried to support the value that these people have brought, because we love the work they do, they’re highly valued employees,” said Anthony. But it’s hard “managing people under different sets of rules.”

The transition will save the schools nearly \$1 million in operating expenses, said division spokesperson Helen Lloyd.

The administration plans to retain on its payroll 14 custodians who’ve been on staff for 20 or more years. It’ll try to help the rest get hired on with the new contractor, if they meet the contractor’s hiring requirements. Others will receive severances and access to financial, job and family counseling, said Anthony.

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NEWS

How Much Green to Go Green?

New studies weigh costs, tradeoffs of boosting city's environmental standards for buildings.

BY DAN BRENDL
GAZETTE PACKET

Toughening the city's building-related environmental policy could modestly reduce citywide greenhouse gas emissions, but also would require modest to significant costs, according to recently released reports.

City Council established the Green Building Policy Update Task Force last fall to advise on ways to reduce public and private buildings' environmental impacts. This relates to a larger two-year effort, currently underway, to modernize the city's 2009 Environmental Action Plan. While the plan addresses several issue areas (open space, solid waste, etc.), the council-appointed commission overseeing the modernization emphasizes combating climate change. That involves mitigating the impact of buildings, which the commission says account for about 40 percent of carbon dioxide emissions nationwide — more than both industry and transportation.

The city hired Integral Group and WSP consultancies, to analyze potential benefits and costs of stricter standards and enhanced

incentives for green development.

Stricter standards, as opposed to "business as usual," could reduce annual greenhouse gas emissions of new construction by 20 percent, according to Integral Group's report. That would contribute to an citywide reduction of 3 percent.

"While this number does not sound significant, this is in line with the savings available for new construction policies in most jurisdictions," according to the report. "To truly meet the overall greenhouse gas reduction goals established in the [Environmental Action Plan], Alexandria will need assistance from the Commonwealth and the utility companies to target existing buildings with a suite of policies to reduce energy use, to dramatically increase the renewable energy supply in Virginia, and to transition residents to electric vehicles, among other action areas."

Stricter city standards could also reduce water consumption in new construction by 29 percent, and citywide by 9 percent.

WSP's estimates suggest largely negative impacts on costs and financial returns, often minimal but sometimes substantial.

Increasing the certification requirement

for new private development to LEED Platinum, the top rating on one industry-standard scale, would raise upfront costs by an estimated 1-8 percent. Building to even higher "net zero" standards (onsite energy generation offsets consumption) could yield between a 2-percent upfront cost savings and a 13-percent cost increase.

The report suggests generally less pronounced effects on upfront costs for new public development, like schools and fire stations. Even so, "an increased standard for public buildings has the potential to increase city capital costs by \$25 to \$40 million over the next 10 years." For comparison, last year's capital improvement budget estimated \$18 million to replace a fire station; \$35 million to overhaul city hall; \$46 million to rebuild George Mason Elementary School.

No certification upgrade would budge a leasable residential or commercial project's yield-on-cost, a measure comparing project cost to the revenues a building generates, by more than one percent. That means higher building costs would more or less offset utility savings.

For for-sale residential, increasing to a LEED Platinum certification would reduce a project's estimated return-on-investment by about two percent.

WSP's study also considers potential incentives for green building, such as prop-

erty tax breaks or density/height "bonuses." The latter, which permit bigger buildings than what zoning otherwise allows, in exchange for greener construction, would be among "the most cost efficient" options for the city. Arlington has employed a bonus density program since 1999.

However, "the critical remaining question is to what extent adoption of a green building bonus density might adversely impact the efficacy of Alexandria's existing affordable housing bonus density program," according to the report. If a builder must employ both bonuses together to bring a project to its maximum size allowance, "then [Alexandria's] new policy is unlikely to hinder participation in the existing affordable housing program. If, however, the 30 [percent] density bonus currently provided through the existing program brings a project to its maximum [allowance] already, then adding a new green building bonus option has the potential to force a decision between one program or the other, and is therefore likely to erode participation in the affordable housing program to some extent. In this case, for both programs to coexist without negatively impacting the current affordable housing program, the maximum allowable density would need to be increased. The program could also be structured so that the green building density bonus is available only to developers who have first maximized the affordable housing density bonus."

For more, visit www.alexandriava.gov/EnvironmentalPolicyCommission.



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PEOPLE

Food Dude's Show Films at Al's Steak House

Famous cheesesteak sandwiches are focus for cooking show.

BY MIKE SALMON
GAZETTE PACKET

The cheesesteaks at Al's Steak House in Del Ray were on the top of the storyboard for Brandon Frye, also known as the "Food Dude," as his video crew jockeyed for position in the tight kitchen along Mount Vernon Avenue. Chef Mark Williams chopped a mound of steak on the fryer, which would later turn into about 50 cheesesteak sandwiches that has made Al's a go-to spot on Mount Vernon Avenue since 1955.

Frye kept the conversation going as the cameras rolled. "That's a lot of meat man, how many subs?" he asked. Then Frye segued into the history of the cheesesteak sandwich, and the cameras cut back to the pile of meat being chopped.

That's life on the set with the Food Dude, a native of Alexandria who travels around with a film crew of Cheryl Anders of Reston and Keri Cannistraro from Burke, capturing the culinary art at its best. Cannistraro has a video company called VideoMagic. They've been to a number of places on the east coast, such as the Nordic Lodge in Rhode Island, Bill's Gyro Souvlaki Atlantic City and others, and been featured on NBC and CBS, producing more than 50 food shows in their climb to the top of the food show heap. The format is similar to Diners,



Chef Mark Williams prepares a pile of steak which will make nearly 50 sandwiches.

"Drive ins and Dives" but Frye isn't concerned. "If it works, it works," he said.

Frye grew up on Route 1 in Alexandria, where his family worked at the Cow Palace, a bar and grill, where Frye's memories of that were crawling around on the floor when they opened in the morning, looking for change from night before. He went to Woodley Hills Elementary School at that time.

Fast forward several years, and now he's the focus of his own show that is big on

social media, which he hopes is a first step. "I'm pretty knowledgeable about food, I'm not into fancy food too," mentioning the term "hoity toity," with a scowl. He has his sights on the food network and more.

Back at the grill, Frye talks with Williams about the process for a cheesesteak, but when it comes to the secret ingredients in the marinade, Williams didn't budge. Frye played it up for the sake of suspense. "Can't get it out of him, man," he said to the cameras.

It was getting close to lunchtime and the regulars started coming in, so Dorothy Breeding, one of the owners, kept answering the phone and dealing with the walk-up orders at the counter, like "Curly," from the neighborhood. He was ordering a late breakfast. "They've got great everything, don't leave the pizza out," Curly said.

Frye approached Breeding about the idea a few weeks ago after he heard about the



Camera Operator Keri Cannistraro attaches a microphone to Chef Mark Williams.



Brandon Frye and the famous cheesesteak sandwich at Al's.

cheesesteaks, and she was skeptical at first until she looked at his clips. "He's done some pretty reputable restaurants, we figured we'd give it a try," Breeding said.

Al's Steak House opened in 1955, and changed hands a couple of times before the Breedings took over. There was a fire on July 6, 2016 that put it out of commission for a short time while they rebuilt and redesigned the kitchen.

Anders and Cannistraro will take the footage back to their studio, edit it and release it initially on the FoodDudeUSA Facebook page. From there, people will see it and share it via the internet, and it grows from there in social media fashion. Frye noted to the folks at Al's that they'll see an increase in sales after the show hits the web. Then it's on to the next restaurant for Frye and the crew.

OBITUARY

Amy Jo Southard

Amy Jo Southard, 63, wife of Thomas N. Southard for more than 40 years, died on January 23, 2019. She is preceded by her father John Paton Blake, mother E. Arloa Blake, her brother Scot Blake, and sister, Sue Mitchell. She is survived by her daughter, Casey B. Hutcherson, son-in-law, Kerry B. Hutcherson, her two grandsons, Emmitt F. and James Wrenn Hutcherson, all of which reside in Ashland, Va., as well as her brother, Tom Blake, of Yorktown, Va., and her sister, Lyn Schwartz, of Waterford, Mich.

Amy graduated from Ferguson High School and Virginia Commonwealth University where she studied interior design. She started her career as an interior designer and later got her builder's license. She lived with her husband and daughter in Alexandria for 30 years and helped hundreds of people to beautify their homes by designing kitchens and bathrooms.

After moving to the Northern Neck in 2009, she focused on a career in real estate with IsaBell K. Horsley Real Estate, Ltd. and loved working side by side with Neena Rodgers.

She was a devout Christian, and was a member of the Christian Science Society in Kilmarnock, Va. She lived an active lifestyle and enjoyed going to the YMCA to play pickleball with her friends. She also enjoyed kayaking, traveling, and spending time with



her family and close friends.

People who knew her have described her as calm, patient, loving, determined, certain of what she wanted to do and how she was going to do it, and always active. One long time friend of

Amy's wrote of her: "I loved Amy's confidence in who she was, to have embraced her religion and lived it in a time when most of us had put God on the backburner. Amy was such a beautiful soul and wonderful friend. She embraced everyone she met and helped everyone who needed it. Amy was the most welcoming person and she made friends wherever she went. She really embraced life and had such a talent." She will forever be in our hearts as a kind, wonderful, and beautiful soul.

To send your condolences, visit <http://www.qeepr.com/profile/AmyJoSouthard/>

In lieu of flowers, please be kind to each other and love one another unconditionally, help those in need, and know that God is Love. This is what Amy Jo would want.

"Finally, brethren, farewell. Be perfect, be of good comfort, be of one mind, live in peace; and the God of love and peace shall be with you." II Cor 13:11

Senior Ambassadors Reach Out

FROM PAGE 4

the more I do this the more people will get to know me and feel comfortable about participating."

Carrera's participation led to a senior with limited vision taking advantage of SSA's Friendly Visitor program to receive weekly help reading mail.

"This is a way for me to give back – to 'pay it forward' so to speak," Carrera said. "Through the Senior Academy I saw so many people taking their time to put together that program and not getting paid. I feel the best way of thanking them is to volunteer myself. My building manager has been very supportive, which makes it easier to get the word out to seniors about the programs that are available to them."

Both Hawkins and Carrera mentioned the support and guidance offered by Beatty and SSA executive director Mary Lee Anderson.

"Mary Lee and MaryAnne are doing a

fabulous job," Hawkins said. "They are doing amazing things for the seniors in Alexandria."

For Hawkins, a reward has been in serving the senior community.

"It's been great trying to connect people,"

"It's important to get the word out about what SSA has to offer."

— Senior Ambassador Janet Hawkins

Hawkins said. "The focus in Alexandria today seems to be on development but it's important to see that there are services out there that promote activities for seniors. We want the city to be recognized as good for senior living."

To learn more or to volunteer, visit www.seniorservicesalex.org.



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OPINION

Trying To Help Hungry Children

BY CHARNIELE HERRING
DELEGATE (D-46)



As we approach the mid-point of the 2019 Virginia General Assembly Session, debates about tax plans and economic incentive programs are still happening. While this is all ongoing and bills are heard in committees, the Appropriations Committee has been hearing member budget requests for the current and next fiscal year. One of the requests I have put in (Item 340 #4h) would allow TANF Funds to be used in a program that would help feed low income children during the summer months.

This is an issue that has been close to my heart since I first ran for office. As someone who experienced homelessness as a teenager, one of the things that I look at when making decisions on public policy is whether funds could be better used to help children meet their basic needs. And let's face the real fact that there are still 571,712 children who qualify for free or reduced lunch right here in the Commonwealth.

TANF for Summer Food Assistance for Low-Income Children (Item 340 #4h) would provide funds to the Department of Social Services through the federal Temporary Assistance for Needy Families block grant to provide a summer EBT benefit of \$150 to low-income children who participate in the free or reduced price National School Lunch Program during

the school year and live in a community with zero or only one Summer Food Service Program site.

Benefits would be provided in \$50 installments for the months of June, July and August to ensure that more children have the consistent nutrition they need to stay healthy and return to school ready to learn.

We are fortunate in Alexandria that there are many programs that help cover the gaps for families that need food assistance. However, most places in Virginia are not as lucky as our community. When children get consistent nutrition during the summer months, it helps fight against summer weight gain and summer learning loss. Children are better able to start the school year healthy and ready to learn.

Food insecurity is a problem year-round, but it gets worse during the summer months when schools are closed and children lose access to school meals. The national summer meals program is designed to connect kids to the nutrition they need when school is out of session by providing meals in places like schools, libraries and parks. The program, however, meets only a fraction of the need. Currently, the Summer Food Service Program serves less than 15 percent of the children who get free or reduced-price school lunch because it only operates in high poverty communities and it requires children to eat in a supervised, gathered setting. Due to the nature of the program, it is not effective in rural or suburban communities.

When kids consistently get the nutrition they need, they are better able to break the cycle of poverty and grow up strong. When families get the nutrition they need through programs like the one I propose, fewer face food insecurity, which leads to a reduction in the health care costs associated with hunger.

In 2010, the U.S. Department of Agriculture established a pilot program called Summer Electronic Benefits Transfer for Children (or Summer EBT) to better reach low-income children with the nutrition they need during the summer months. This program, which is the model for TANF for Summer Food Assistance for Low-Income Children in Virginia, was efficient and effective. Among children participating in the Summer EBT pilot programs, the prevalence of the most severe food insecurity decreased by one-third.

The Virginia program could reach more than 50,000 children according to information from the No Kid Hungry Virginia Campaign, a not for profit dedicated to creating public-private partnerships with state, federal, non-profit and private resources across Virginia. Together with the Virginia Department of Education and community partners, their goal is to end child hunger in the Commonwealth. A goal we all share as we fight for Virginia's families. One of the next steps in doing so is combating summer hunger.

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 her online at www.charnieleherring.com.

Working in the City's Glass Factories

BY CHAR McCARGO BAH

In late 19th and early 20th centuries, Alexandria attracted a number of factories and businesses. Prior to 1920, four glass factories settled in Alexandria. These glass factories were Belle Pre Bottle, Virginia Glass, Alexandria Glass, and Old Dominion Glass.

Many children and adults worked for the glass factories including African Americans (Negroes) who worked beside white Americans during this era of segregation. During this time, these factories used cheap labor for low skilled positions. The cheap labor consisted of poor and unskilled individuals, women and children. The glass factories were notorious for using child labor. Unfortunately without these children working at the glass factories, many of their families would not be able to meet their basic needs.

Some of the African Americans who worked at these glass factories were: a 13-year-old Charles Taylor, a laborer lived on Franklin Street; 52-year-old Abraham Brown, a carpenter, who lived on First Street; 17-year-old Abraham Lomax, Jr., a laborer, lived at First Street; 42-year-old, Emma Thomas and her 22-year-old daughter, Virginia Knapper who worked as carriers and lived on First Street; 15-year-old Lawrence Dawkins, a laborer who



"The Negro Work Force of the Alexandria Glass Factory." The picture was taken in 1911.

NATIONAL CHILD LABOR COMMITTEE COLLECTION, LIBRARY OF CONGRESS, PRINTS AND PHOTOGRAPHS DIVISION

lived on Oronoco Street; 16-year-old Lloyd Montgomery Arnold, a laborer, who lived on Duke Street; 14-year-old Henry Anderson, a laborer, who lived on North Henry Street; 28-year-old Charley Spotswood a laborer, who lived on Bashford Lane; and 24-year-old Chauncey Randolph, a wagon driver, who lived on Columbus Street. These employees worked on rotation shifts, alternating their work schedules from day to evening shift. Many of these employees were able to contribute to their families' income and some of them were able to purchase their homes like Abraham Brown and Charley Spotswood.

The glass factories had many problems.

Those factories experienced a number of fires at the plants, equipment failures, fines against the factories for disobeying the child labor laws and the prohibition of alcoholic drinks that impacted their customers. A good amount of the glass factory revenue came from selling glass bottles to beer companies. Due to the prohibition laws on alcohol, many of the beer breweries closed. On top of those problems, the Great Depression sealed the fate of the glass factories. Many of the African Americans who worked for those factories found employment at the Navy Yard, Potomac Yard, Railroad,

SEE GLASS FACTORIES, PAGE 18

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Bipartisan Effort to Create Nonpartisan Redistricting

BY ADAM EBBIN
STATE SENATOR (D-30)



Last week, two of my committees: the General Laws and Technology Committee and the Privileges and Elections Committee, heard a plethora of bills addressing reform for several pressing issues affecting many Virginians, including nonpartisan redistricting and eviction law.

This is the final session to begin the process for a constitutional amendment to require a nonpartisan approach in time for the 2021 redistricting. Redistricting occurs every 10 years after the completion of the federal census. Virginia law requires that a constitutional amendment be passed twice by the General Assembly before and after a state election and be passed via a "referendum" process by the voters. Nonpartisan redistricting is critical because, for years, politicians have made a practice of picking their voters, rather than their voters picking them. Last year, federal courts required a number of House of Delegates Districts be redrawn due to racial gerrymandering. The 4th District US Court of Appeals introduced

COMMENTARY

a plan for the 2019 election, changing the borders of 26 districts from Richmond to Hampton Roads, shifting the partisan makeup of many, some dramatically, including those of Speaker Kirk Cox (R-Chesterfield) and House Appropriations Chair Chris Jones (R-Suffolk).

The Privileges and Elections Committee heard several possible constitutional resolutions to address nonpartisan redistricting last week including proposed legislation presented by Senator Mamie Locke (D-Hampton) and Senator Emmett Hanger (R-Augusta) which I co-sponsored. That bill would have required full transparency in the process, prohibited any criteria that supports a political party, and focused on maintaining existing communities whenever possible. While that resolution died on a 9-5 vote, we eventually passed out of committee Senator George Barker's (D-Fairfax) bill which will ensure bipartisan consensus by balancing membership on the commission and including citizen members.

In the General Laws and Technology Committee we heard a number of bills regarding eviction, an issue which has come to light in the last year as one of the greatest issues of inequality in Virginia. In a recent study by the New York Times, it was revealed that five of the top 10 cities in the nation in which evictions are filed are in our state. These cities include: Richmond, Newport News, Hampton, Norfolk, and Chesapeake. Eviction has many serious effects on low income communities including making it more difficult to find future housing, preventing families from building support systems like child care and a steady learning environment, and creating additional costs because often keeping basic household necessities like furniture and cooking supplies is impossible during evictions. It sows long-term instability in our most marginalized communities and keeps many locked in the cycle of poverty.

Over the last year, the Virginia Housing Commission met with a group of stakeholders to identify possible solutions to this issue. The commission endorsed a number of bills including ones to ensure a written lease, extending the period in which a tenant may pay back rent before the sheriff arrives to evict them, and creating a diversion pilot program which will require landlords and tenants in high eviction areas to participate in a payment plan created by the court. I supported these bills, but co-sponsored a more comprehensive bill introduced by Senator Jennifer McClellan (D-Richmond), which included the commission's recommendations and added

the ability for a tenant to reclaim legal fees if they win their case and extended the time in which they can pay rent before an eviction is even filed. This more comprehensive approach takes the necessary step of truly expanding tenant rights in the courtroom. This adjustment is important because low income tenants can rarely afford quality legal representation against unfair housing practices. Considering that we face an affordable housing crisis across the state, ensuring tenants' rights is a must.

Virginia has, for far too long, failed to put enough emphasis on providing affordable housing for the working class. This year I am excited that Governor Northam proposed to nearly quadruple the funding in the state's Affordable Housing Trust Fund (flexible funds that often serve to supply gap funding that can be used to bring projects to fruition) from \$5 million to \$19 million in his budget. These additional funds are a start, but much more is needed. Additionally, the Virginia Housing Development Authority has put forward \$15 million per year for five years in R.E.A.C.H. (Resources Enabling Affordable Community Housing) funding for Northern Virginia. These funds go to loans and grants that support those in the lowest income brackets. We must refocus our efforts on vulner-

SEE REDISTRICTING, PAGE 18

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Senior Living

Weight Lifting in the Golden Years

When done properly, strength training can have tremendous benefits for seniors.

BY MARILYN CAMPBELL

Richard Foley of McLean says he hits the gym at 7:30 five mornings a week. He spends about 40 minutes lifting weights followed by 40 minutes of walking on the treadmill and 10 minutes of sit-ups and crunches.

"I've always been physically active," he said. "I've actually slowed down a little, but it's important to me to keep going for as long as I can."

A National Institutes of Health (NIH) study of Americans over the age of 60 showed that strength training, such as lifting weights, reduced the risk of osteoporosis and chronic conditions such as heart disease and diabetes. It also found that strength-training exercises has the ability to increase muscles strength and mass and allows seniors to stay mobile longer, while also combating weakness and frailty.

"Improving and increasing the muscles in your legs for example, makes them stronger, which means that you'll be able to maintain your ability to walk without assistance longer than you might otherwise," said Rita Days, RN, a gerontological nurse in Falls Church who was not involved in the study. "For seniors who enjoy traveling, shopping

or any activity that requires walking, having strong quadricep and hamstring muscles means that you'll be able to enjoy those activities longer. It also means that you'll have the strength and endurance to navigate difficult terrain during vacations and other activities that involve walking.

Strength training can lead to a sense of independence for everyday activities like grocery shopping or even getting up from a chair, says Jay Rader, a private health and fitness coach based in Arlington. "When you strengthen the muscles around your joints, you can prolong and even improve your range of motion," he said.

Weight training for seniors, says Days, comes with caveats. "Just because it's beneficial doesn't mean that an 89-year-old should go out and start trying to lift 50 pound weights so that he can regain the ability to walk up three flights of stairs like he could 30 years ago," she said. "The benefits of strength training are tremendous, but they also come with risks and must be done safely. You should definitely consult with a doctor before beginning any kind of exercise program, and it would be my strong recommendation that any one over the age of 50 hire a personal trainer if they're starting any kind of exercise program."



Strength-training exercises has the ability to increase muscles strength and mass and allows seniors to stay mobile longer.

In fact, David Schwartz, a personal trainer in Bethesda says that he has four clients who are over the age of 60, and while he personalizes each client's workout, there are specific exercises that are particularly beneficial to seniors. "I have one client who is 72 and began training with me when she was 68," he said. "The workouts that I do with her include lunges and squats which strengthen the quadriceps, or the muscles

in the thigh area. It's been interesting to watch her gain leg strength and be able to walk longer distances. But strengthening the quads can also protect your knees and prevent injuries and other problems."

The bicep and tricep muscles of the arm are also important to building strength. "All you need are a pair of light to medium weight dumbbells," said Kat Chetrit, a personal trainer in Fairfax. "Two great exercises, that are also relatively simple are bicep curls where you hold the weight in your hand and bend your arm at the elbow and curl the weight in the direction of your shoulder; and hammer curls, which are very similar except that you hold the weight like you would a hammer. Those are both great exercises for maintaining arm strength."

Days however, underscores the fact that there are risks involved "You can strain a muscle or drop a weight on yourself or even fracture a bone," she said. "With the elderly, these injuries can take a longer time to heal than they would in a person who is much younger. The benefits definitely outweigh the risks, but you want to be safe and smart. That includes talking with your doctor and getting help from a personal training, especially if you've never or rarely exercised before."

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ENTERTAINMENT

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

ONGOING

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 for more.

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 St., 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 call 703-548-0935.

Photographp Exhibit: Fax Ayres.

Through Feb. 24, Thursday-Sunday, noon-4 p.m. at The Atheneum, 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.

“Three Sistahs.”

Through Feb. 24, at MetroStage, 1201 N. Royal St., Alexandria. “Three Sistahs” is an intimate musical which exposes the



Lift Us Up, Don’t Push Us Out

Performing Statistics: A Project by ART180 and Legal Aid Justice Center 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. The exhibit runs through Feb. 3, gallery hours at The Art League Gallery in Studio 21, Torpedo Factory, 105 North Union St., Alexandria. An opening reception is planned for Thursday, Jan. 10, 6:30-8 p.m. Visit www.theartleague.org.

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.

Art Exhibit: Ritualisms.

Through March 3, 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.

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 for more.

First Friday: “Chinese New Year Celebration.”

6-10 p.m. at the Durant Arts Center, 1605 Cameron St. The evening will include the Fairfax Chinese Dance Troupe dancing several traditional Chinese Folk Dances accompanied by Alice Guzheng Ensemble, Mr. Zhang on a traditional instrument called hulusi,

and a vocalist Mr. Lin. A Chinese Kungfu, Martial Arts demonstration and the City’s Mobile Art Lab leading interactive art activity will round off the evening’s festivities. A “meet and greet” begins at 6 p.m. with festivities beginning at 6:30 p.m. Light refreshments will be available complements of the Office of the Arts. \$9 per person. Children under 5 years old are free. Children must be accompanied by one adult. Reserve today at www.alexandriava.gov/Arts and select Durant Arts Center. Tickets are available at the door.

“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 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.

Painting with Pastels.

10 a.m.-noon at Huntley Meadows Park, 3701 Lockheed Blvd. Interested in art, but not sure where to start? Soft pastel painting is a fun and forgiving medium. In this class, local pastel artist Teresa T. Brunson will demonstrate many ways to paint with pastels and show expressive ways the medium can be used. Learn painting techniques, mark-making and layering. All supplies are provided. For participants 16-adult. \$35 per person. Call 703-768-2525 or visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/huntley-meadows.

Story Time for Little Historians.

11 a.m. At The Black History Museum, 902 Wythe St., Alexandria. This month’s topic: Presenting Henry’s Freedom Box – A True Story from the Underground Railroad, which was written by Ellen Levine and illustrated by Kadir Nelson. Bring your little learners to the Alexandria Black History Museum for cultural stories and creative craft activities that introduce world history and folklore. Explore the museum exhibits afterward to learn about local black history. All ages are welcome, but most suitable for children 3-6 years old. \$3 per person. Visit www.alexandriava.gov.

Martin & Mahalia.

11-1:45 a.m. in the Picture Book area at Beatley Library, 5005 Duke St. Celebrate with the entire family the words and

songs of the famous Martin Luther King, Jr. and Mahalia Jackson for Black History Month. All ages with adult. Visit www.alexandria.lib.va.us or call 703-746-1702.

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.

An Outrage: A Documentary Film.

2 p.m. at The Alexandria Black History Museum, 902 Wythe St. The Alexandria Black History Museum will screen *An Outrage: A Documentary Film on the History of Lynching in the American South*. Filmed on-location at lynching sites in six states and bolstered by the memories and perspectives of descendants, community activists, and scholars, this unusual historical documentary seeks to educate even as it serves as a hub for action to remember and reflect upon a long-hidden past. Admission is \$5 and must be paid in advance at alexandriava.gov/shop. Call 703-746-4356 for more.

Alexandria Oddball Cinema:

Basquiat. 2-4 p.m. at the Duncan Library Meeting Room, 2501 Commonwealth Ave. Join Alexandria Oddball Cinema in this special screening of *Basquiat* in honor of Black History Month. Visit www.alexandria.lib.va.us or call 703-746-1705.

Country-Western Dance.

At Lincolnia Senior Center, 4710 North Chambliss St, Alexandria. The Northern Virginia Country-Western Dance Association will hold a dance. Lessons, 6-7 p.m. Open dancing, 7-9:30 p.m. A DJ provides music. Couples and singles of all ages welcome. Admission for NVCWDA members \$10; non-members \$12; children under 18 accompanied by a paying adult \$5. Smoke-free, alcohol-free. BYO refreshments. Visit www.nvcwda.org.

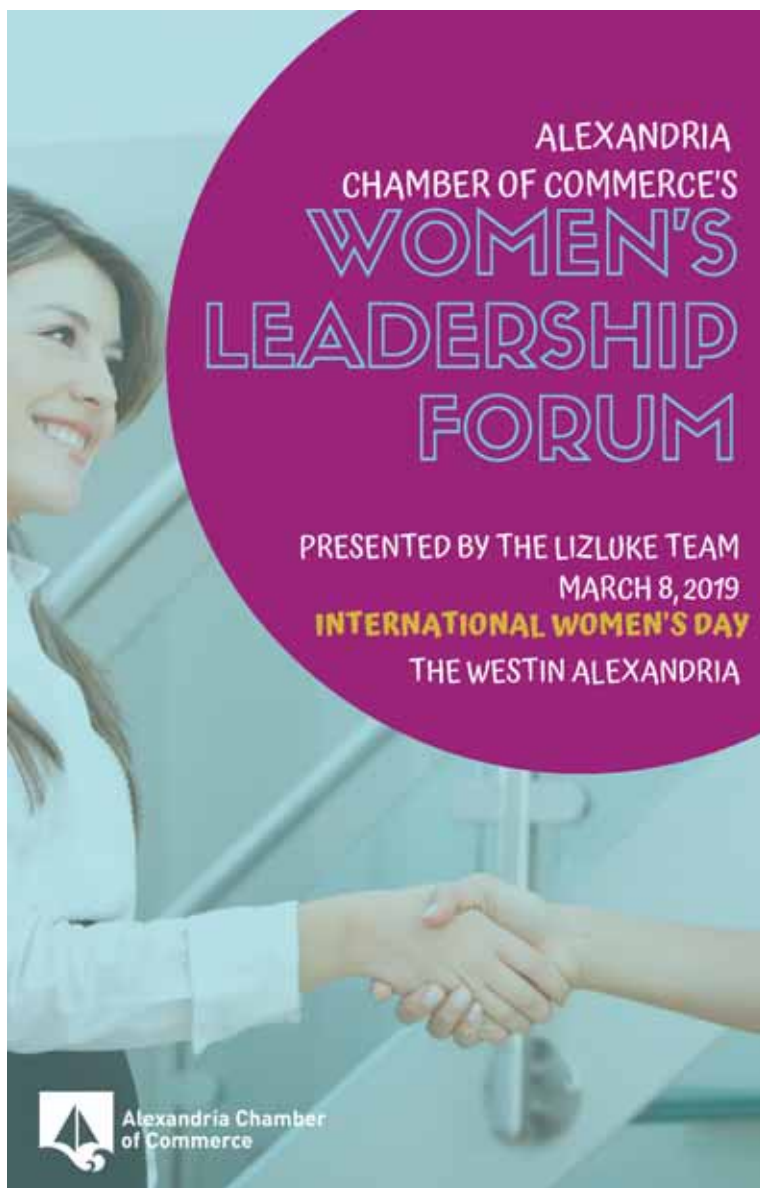
SUNDAY/FEB. 3

Bagels and Bach Concert Series.

11 a.m.-1 p.m. at the Durant Arts Center, 1605 Cameron St. Enjoy classical music and a light brunch, while children will become aware and will learn how to appreciate classical music. This month’s concert showcases Tyler Castrucci, trombonist with the Washington Metropolitan Philharmonic Orchestra. \$9 per person. Children under 5 years old are free. Make reservations at www.alexandriava.gov/Arts and select Durant Arts Center. Tickets are also available at the door.


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



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ENTERTAINMENT

Bistro Sancerre Offers Come-As-You-Are French Flair

BY HOPE NELSON

A long-vacant storefront facing Duke Street in the King Street Station complex has new life with the arrival of Bistro Sancerre, a French bistro and steakhouse that opened its doors a little more than a week ago.

Bistro Sancerre, the Alexandria outpost from the owners of the Arlington-based Grand Cru, came to be when longtime – and voluminous – clientele moved to Carlyle and began lobbying for the restaurant to pick up stakes and move. The National Science Foundation, now stationed nearby, was a neighbor of Grand Cru in Ballston.

“They used to do all of their big meetings over at Grand Cru and told Lena (Thorpe, director of operations) we needed to open a place over here, so that’s what made us start looking over here,” owner Troy Thorpe said. “We (decided on) this location because it kind of resembles our other location.”

But don’t expect Bistro Sancerre to simply be a carbon copy of its elder sibling. With Ravi Narayanan at the helm in the kitchen as executive chef, the menu is full of French-style classics – and a bit of fun, too. Narayanan was in fact the proponent of what he calls the “jocularity” in the menu – plays on words, a festive air – and how he wants to extend that to the dining room as well as the kitchen.

“That’s the feel of the restaurant that I wanted it to be. Come as you are, welcome to the neighborhood, and sit back and enjoy yourself,” he said.

And Narayanan makes it easy to kick back and await the coming meal. All the French favorites are there – filet mignon, Parisian steak frites, duck confit

– but so too are those less-expected offerings. Narayanan doesn’t forget the small stuff – and small plates, too.

“In terms of the starters that we have, my duck wing lollipops are very, very fun,” he said. A take on the classic duck à l’orange, the lollipops are a succulent way to start a meal.

And those dishes that are now essential table stakes don’t get short shrift, either. Consider for a moment the lowly house salad, a mainstay on nearly every menu but one that is largely forgettable.

“The house salad I think is something that we here at Bistro Sancerre are very, very proud about. We’ve elevated our house signature salad and made it something to be proud of,”

Narayanan said. “Not that other restaurants in Washington, D.C., and Virginia don’t, but it always takes that lonely stand-in-the-corner kind of role.”

The wine selection process is rather unexpected, as well. Many varietals are available by

the glass, but to select a bottle, don’t expect a lengthy wine list to arrive at the table. Rather, guests are invited to peruse the shelves lining the dining room to select a bottle that speaks to them.

After a week of dinner-only service, the restaurant is now open for lunch and dinner seven days a week. Troy Thorpe says brunch will be in the offing for spring – perhaps making use of Bistro Sancerre’s extensive outdoor patio space when the weather warms up – but for now, the restaurant is taking time to settle into its new digs and new neighborhood.

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

If You Go

Bistro Sancerre, 1725 Duke St.

Hours: 11 a.m.-10 p.m. Monday-Tuesday; 11 a.m.-11 p.m. Wednesday-Saturday; 11 a.m.-9 p.m. Sunday.

Try This: The wine flights. “Those I will be changing every so often ... every four to six weeks,” says director of operations Lena Thorpe. “Any time I bring something new on the shelf I would like to share with the guests and gather their opinions.”

CALENDAR

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 for more.

Tell Me Your Name. 3:30 p.m. at Carlyle House Historic Park, 121 N. Fairfax St., Alexandria. A conversation about identifying enslaved individuals and their communities and putting that into a historical and genealogical context. In 2017 Carlyle House Historic Park undertook a new research project to improve its 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. Cost is \$10. Tickets available at apm.activecommunities.com/novaparks/Activity_Search/2516.

MONDAY/FEB. 4

School Holiday Camp. 9 a.m.-4 p.m. at Huntley Meadows Park, 3701 Lockheed Blvd., Alexandria. The country may have been in a depression, but kids were still finding ways to have fun in the 1930s. Today’s kids will discover new ways to have old-fashioned fun in the “Play Like It’s 1935” camp at Huntley Meadows Park. Children age 6-12 are invited to the park to play games like the Alcorn children did when they moved to Huntley during the Great Depression. Kids will make a simple toy to take home, too. It’s a full day of fun while school’s out. \$65. Call 703-768-2525 or visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/huntley-meadows.

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 mgv.org. Call 703-228-6414 or email mgarlalex@gmail.com.

TUESDAY/FEB. 5

Tuesday Tots. 11 a.m.-noon at Burke Branch Library Meeting Room, 4701 Seminary Road. Astory with a painting craft based on the art of artist Alma Woodsey Thomas. Children should wear something they can paint in. Ages 1-4 with an adult. Visit www.alexandria.lib.va.us or call 703-746-1704.

Film: Loving. 2-4:30 p.m. at Burke Branch Library, 4701 Seminary Road. The story of Richard and Mildred Loving, a couple whose arrest for interracial marriage in 1960s Virginia began a legal battle that would end with the Supreme Court’s historic 1967 decision. Visit www.alexandria.lib.va.us or call 703-746-1704.

WEDNESDAY/FEB. 6

Family Storytime Class: Books by African American Authors. 10:30-11:10 a.m. at Beatley Library, 5005 Duke St. Family Story Time celebrates Black History Month. With books written and illustrated by African Americans and depicting children of color. All ages with adult. Visit www.alexandria.lib.va.us or call 703-746-1702.

ENTERTAINMENT



Dominion Brass Concert

Benefit concert for Rising Hope Mission Church with Dominion Brass, a large brass and percussion ensemble of professional musicians. Sunday, Feb. 17, 3-4:30 p.m. At Aldersgate United Methodist Church, 1301 Collingwood Road, Alexandria. Free. Donations to support Rising Hope will be collected during the concert. Call 703-300-0985.

CALENDAR

Amazing African American

STEAM. 4-4:45 p.m. at Barrett Branch Library - First Floor, 717 Queen St. Hands on art and science projects for ages 5 and older. No registration required. Visit www.alexandria.lib.va.us or call 703-746-1703.

I Protest! 5-6:30 p.m. at Barrett Branch Library - Second Floor, 717 Queen St. Protest unfair laws and rules today and remember the struggle of the past by making protest signs. Poster board, supplies and inspiration will be provided. Visit www.alexandria.lib.va.us or call 703-746-1703.

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.

THURSDAY/FEB. 7

The Snowy Day - A Story Time Adventure for Black History Month. 4-4:45 p.m. at Barrett Branch Library - Story Room, 717 Queen St. Celebrating the immortal story by Ezra Jack Keats with story and art. Ages 3 and up. No registration required. Visit www.alexandria.lib.va.us or call 703-746-1703.

Evening of French Love Songs. 7 p.m. at The Lyceum, 201 S. Washington St., Alexandria. The Alexandria-Caen Sister Cities Committee invites you to Chansons d'Amour: An evening of French love songs. In anticipation of Valentine's Day, spend an evening learning about French Love Songs and listening to curated selections of "Chansons d'Amour" with event MC, Joseph Gueron. Gueron is the Producer and Host of GloBeat, the

world music radio show on WERA 96.7 FM. The event includes music, dancing, and a wine and dessert reception. Cost is \$10. Tickets available onsite or online at shop.alexandriava.gov. Email AlexandriaCaenSisterCities@gmail.com with questions.

FRIDAY/FEB. 8

Movie Matinee: Chi-Raq. 3:30-6 p.m. at Burke Branch Library Meeting Room, 4701 Seminary Road. Screening of the film "Chi-Raq." Teens, adults. Visit www.alexandria.lib.va.us or call 703-746-1704.

The Alligator Pears. 6-8 p.m. At The Lyceum, 201 South Washington St., Alexandria. The Alligator Pears features Piedmont Blues music. Beer and wine for sale; light refreshments available as well. Visit www.alexandriava.gov.

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 for more.

Gunston Hall Game Night. 6-9 p.m. at Gunston Hall, 10709 Gunston Road, Mason Neck. Gunston Hall is opening its doors after-hours to welcome game enthusiasts to immerse themselves in a variety of 18th-century card, board, and dice games. \$35 registration includes beverages and heavy hors d'oeuvres, including some items made from 18th-century recipes. Visit www.gunstonhall.org for more.

History by the Glass. 7-9 p.m. at Gadsby's Tavern Museum, 134 North Royal St., Alexandria. Enjoy a night out that brings the history of ice and the tavern together through cocktails. Sip inspired drinks created by a local mixologist, examine ice-related artifacts rarely on display, and find

out first-hand how the historic tavern preserved ice for months without electricity. \$50 per person. Price includes two drink tickets and light hors d'oeuvres. Tickets can be purchased at alexandriava.gov/shop or 703-746-4242.

Reception and Gallery Talk:

Ritualisms. 7-10 p.m. 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.

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 for more.

Outfitting Billy Yank Program. 11 a.m.-3 p.m. at Fort Ward Museum, 4301 West Braddock Road, Alexandria. Learn about the clothing and equipment used by Union soldiers during the Civil War in "Kepi to Cartridge Box: Outfitting Billy Yank," at Fort Ward Museum. Free. Call 703-746-4848, or visit www.fortward.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. Call 703-684-4682 or visit www.TheOldTownShop.com.

Workshop on Valentine Topiary. 2-

Mozart

Prague Symphony

February 9, 2019 @ 8pm
February 10, 2019 @ 3pm
 James Ross, Music Director

Also featuring:
 Bach's Brandenburg Concerto No. 1
 Stravinsky's Dumbarton Oaks Concerto
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ENTERTAINMENT

3:30 p.m. at Green Springs Gardens, 4603 Green Spring Road, Alexandria. Branch out and give the gift of topiary this Valentine's Day. Floral Design Workshop: Valentine Topiary" with floral designer Chuck Mason who will lead you through this fun, floral project that you can keep for yourself or give away. \$39 for the program, plus \$30 for supplies. Call 703-642-5173 or visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/green-spring.

Tips on Taking the Story. 3-4 p.m. at Duncan Library Meeting Room, 2501 Commonwealth Ave. Anne Bolen of Anne B. History will give you tips on how to collect family memories with oral history interviews. Visit www.alexandria.lib.va.us or call 703-746-1705.

Yale University Wiffenpoofs Chorus. 3 p.m. at the George Washington Masonic National Memorial on Callahan Drive. The Alexandria Harmonizers Barbershop Chorus will be hosting the Yale University Wiffenpoofs Chorus, the oldest continuously performing a capella chorus in the United States. This performance will be opened by selections by the Alexandria Harmonizers, followed by The Wiffenpoofs. \$30 at the door or directly from members of the Alexandria Harmonizers Barbershop Chorus prior to the event. Visit www.harmonizers.org for more.

Read Write Now: A Craft Talk. 5:30 p.m. at The Athenaeum, 201 Prince St. "Read Write Now" is an event series focused on the craft of writing. Join Old Town Books and National Book Award-nominated writer Carmen Maria Machado in conversation with bestselling writer and editor Nicole Chung. (The talk

will be followed by a book signing of Carmen Machado's short story collection *Her Body and Other Parties* (Graywolf, 2017) and Nicole Chung's *All You Can Ever Know* (Catapult, 2018). \$26. Ticket price includes one pre-order for a signed copy of Machado's "In the Dream House," which will be published and available for pick up at Old Town Books in fall 2019. Visit www.nvfaa.org or call 703-548-0035.

Chili Cook Off and Bingo Night. 6-9 p.m. at Historic Pohick Episcopal Church, 9301 Richmond Highway, Lorton. The Ann Mason Guild of Pohick Church will hold their annual Chili Cook Off and Bingo event. Tickets are \$10 per person (without a chili entry) and \$5 per person (with chili entry). Children 10 and under are free. Hot dogs will also be available. Contact: Wendy Remaly at wendy.remaly@gmail.com or Angela Edgemon at Aedge619@aol.com, or call 703-339-6572 or visit www.pohick.org.

SUNDAY/FEB. 10

Harry Allen Winter Lecture Series. 1:30-2:30 p.m. at Green Spring Gardens, 4603 Green Spring Road. Get "Ideas from Europe for U.S. Gardeners" when garden designer and international traveler Carolyn Mullet shares design ideas from her European garden travels and shows how to modify these inspirations in fun and functional ways at home. Adults. \$10 in advance; \$12 at the door. Visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/green-spring or call 703-642-5173.

Walking With Washington Tour. 2-4 p.m. at Ramsay House, Alexandria Visitor's Center, 221 King St., Alexandria. Explore important sites



James Ross conducts the Alexandria Symphony Orchestra.

PHOTO BY
P.J. BARBOUR

ASO Presents: Mozart's Prague Symphony

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. Saturday, Feb. 9, 8-10 p.m. at Rachel M. Schlesinger Concert Hall, 4915 East Campus Drive. Adult, \$20-\$80; youth, \$5; student, \$10. Call 703-548-0885 or visit www.alexsym.org for more.

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 for more.


Tell Me Your Name. 3:30 p.m. at Carlyle House Historic Park, 121 N. Fairfax St., Alexandria. A conversation about identifying enslaved individuals and their communities and putting that into a historical and genealogical context.

In 2017 Carlyle House Historic Park undertook a new research project to improve its 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. \$10. Tickets available at apm.activecommunities.com/novaparks/Activity_Search/2517.


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PRESENTS

Sunday, February 10, 3:00 p.m.

The History of Jazz

In honor of Black History Month, please join us for a special musical presentation. Internationally-known Jazz Bassist, Michael Bowie, and Trumpeter, Thad Wilson, through spoken word and musical performance, will trace the history of Jazz, an American musical form created by Black musicians. There will be refreshments and special giveaways!

For more information, please visit GraceNoteProductions.org or call 202-255-7802.

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OPINION

Offering More Than a Meal

BY BRITTANY TRYZBIAK
PROGRAM MANAGER
SENIOR SERVICES OF ALEXANDRIA

In recent weeks, Senior Services of Alexandria (SSA) Meals on Wheels volunteers have begun to receive technological training and instruction on using a Mobile Application or "App". The Meals on Wheels App, called "Mobile Meals" allows volunteers to electronically access their delivery route, obtain GPS directions, and most importantly to record and track any observations they make about the well-being and health of the seniors they are serving.

The App includes a feature called "Change of Condition," which prompts the volunteers to make note of any changes or concerns they have for the clients

SENIOR SERVICES OF ALEXANDRIA

that they have observed at the time of meal delivery. These issues related to health and well-being might include injury, depression, or unsafe living conditions among others. That information is passed back

to Senior Services, which allows the organization to connect Meals on Wheels clients with the resources they need. Volunteers have been flexible and willing to learn how to use the App in order to better serve our seniors.

Bobbie O'Brien, a longstanding Meals on Wheels volunteer, said "I was concerned at first since I'm not so hot with technology, but found it is easy to use."

Many seniors who are served by SSA's Meals on Wheels volunteers do not come into contact with any additional people from day to day, so this additional service can be critical for those who need help. Many of our volunteers have been delivering for several years and have already developed relationships with the seniors they serve and it is those connections that aid in the success of these condition checks.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Praise for Ashanti Alert Act

To the Editor:

As a conservative who rarely agrees with the votes of our Democrat senators and congressman, I'd like to take this opportunity to thank Senators Warner and Kaine and Congressman Beyer for their roles in the bipartisan efforts promoting the Ashanti Alert Act through Congress. President Trump signed it into law on Dec. 31, 2018.

This new law (in case you haven't heard) is basically the institution of an Amber Alert type of system for adults (aged 18 - 65) who have been reported as missing but are too old for an Amber Alert and too young for a Silver Alert.

The law is named for the beautiful, young victim Ashanti Billie of Norfolk, Va. who went missing in 2017 and was found in North Carolina having been murdered by a stranger. GOP Congressman Scott Taylor (R-VA) met with Ashanti's family, introduced the bill and moved it through the House of Representatives.

Now that it is law, it could make the difference between life and death for endangered missing per-



Ashanti Billie



Meals on Wheels Volunteers Patrick and Bobbie O'Brien

This is just one more way that SSA can keep seniors living in their own homes. The Meals on Wheels motto is "It's more than a Meal," and we are taking that to heart. We are ensuring that homebound seniors receive nutritious meals every day, and if they need something more, we can help them get the assistance they need.

If you are interested in learning more about Alexandria's Meals on Wheels program or know an older adult who could use this service, contact Nathan Toews, SSA's Meal Programs Director, at mealprograms@seniorservicesalex.org or call 703-836-4414, ext. 115.

sons across our country when implemented. It will also presumably be an important tool in catching criminals who have abducted their victims for nefarious purposes such as rape, murder, or sex trafficking. This new law is a very big deal.

Linda App
Alexandria

Nutritious Eating

To the Editor:

We are hearing recommendations to eat fake meat produced in a laboratory. Wouldn't it be better if we stick to the real thing, grown in a natural way?

Lab meat does not sound appealing to me. I will stick with my local farmers at the Old Town and Del Ray Farmers Markets, who love their cows, care for them well, and feed them green grass, their natural diet.

To find local farm food, talk to a farmer at the local Old Town or Del Ray farmers market, or go to www.westonaprice.org. The Weston A. Price Foundation supports raising animals on pasture as much of the year as possible, and opposes confinement operations, feedlots, debeaking, growth hormones, routine antibiotics in feed, inappropriate feed such

SEE LETTERS, PAGE 17

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School Finances: Affirmation and Caution

FROM PAGE 1

cols. The opinion includes the auditor's judgment of the "reasonableness" of assumptions used to determine pension and other future liabilities, she said.

The report includes various metrics describing the school system's broader fiscal health, some of which are described in the accompanying charts.

Like city government, the division faces continued, widening deficits.

According to Superintendent Dr. Gregory

Hutching's introductory letter in the report: "The school division will face funding shortfalls that range from approximately \$17 million for FY 2020 to over \$54 million by FY 2023. Under the Code of Virginia, School Boards are required to adopt a balanced budget, which means the projected revenues plus beginning fund balance must fully cover the total estimated expenditures. As a result, the School Board and division leadership are analyzing various strategies to increase revenue and reduce costs, while maximizing overall efficiency to ensure

structural deficits do not continue."

Asked to expound, the schools administration said in a statement: "One of our key strategies is to work with city staff to maintain or grow the city appropriation funding. We are continually looking for grant programs (government and private) and

community partners to support our activities. We are working with benefits consultants to review our employee benefits programs to reduce costs and ensure we are competitive with surrounding jurisdictions."

For more, visit www.acps.k12.va.us/Page/487.

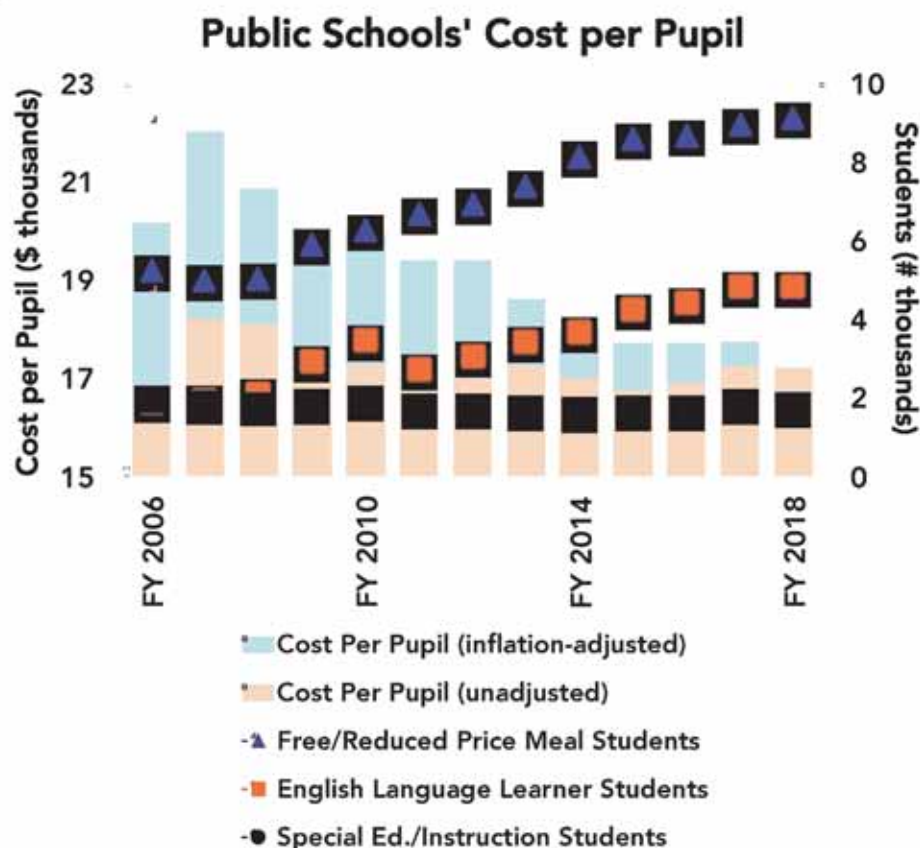


CHART DATA SOURCE: ACPS FY 2018 AND FY 2015 CAFRS, STATISTICAL TABLES 8 AND 9; ADJUSTMENTS DETERMINED USING BUREAU OF LABOR STATISTICS' CPI INFLATION CALCULATOR.

The school division reports generally declining per-pupil expenditures, despite generally increasing enrollment of higher-cost students. The trend indicates the division increasing efficiency of its use of resources, but also revenues not keeping pace with growing enrollment, said the division's acting CFO Dominic Turner. Alexandria spends more per student than seven of 10 regional jurisdictions, but less than Arlington and Falls Church, according to the FY 2019 Washington Area Boards of Education Guide, an annual publication. Though it serves a disproportionate share of English learners and students eligible for federally subsidized meals, who require additional services and supports, and therefore costs. Alexandria's student body consists of a higher proportion of both subgroups than seven jurisdictions — only barely behind Manassas City and Manassas Park City's in the first case, and Manassas Park City and Prince George's in the second. Alexandria's proportion of special education enrollment is about even with six jurisdictions, and a few percentage points lower than Arlington, Fairfax and Falls Church.

BULLETIN BOARD

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

WINTER SHELTERS

Find homeless and cold weather drop-in centers and shelters that serve Northern Virginia at www.novaregion.org/174/Homeless-Shelter-Lists.

THURSDAY/JAN. 31

Veterans Curation Program Meet and Greet. 10 a.m.-2 p.m. at VCP laboratory, 816 N. Saint Asaph St. The VCP provides employment and vocational training for recently-separated veterans using archaeological collections administered by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. Visit www.veteranscurationprogram.org.

Writing Contest Entry Deadline.

For those in grades 6 through 12 and who love to write. Alexandria Library is hosting a "free write" or open-ended contest, which means there are no writing guidelines. Entries must be in middle school or high school (grades 6-12) to be eligible to win. Writing can be about any topic and written in any format. Email iwest@alexlibraryva.org with contest questions.

FRIDAY/FEB. 1

Submission Deadline. The "DASHing Words in Motion" program provides a venue for writers to display their poems. The competition is to encourage quality writing by writers 16 years or older, who live, work or study in the City of Alexandria. Visit www.alexandriava.gov/Arts.

Monthly Memory Café. 1-3 p.m. at 7910 Andrus Road, Suite 6

Alexandria. The Memory Café, a social gathering for individuals living with memory loss and their families, will be held on the first Friday of every month. Registration is free and highly recommended to reserve a spot, which are open on a first come first served basis. To reserve a spot, call 571-210-5551 or email bdesai@seniorhelpers.com. Visit dementiacareconnections.com/memory-cafe.

Public Schools' Bottom Line (Year-over-year changes, \$ million, unadjusted)

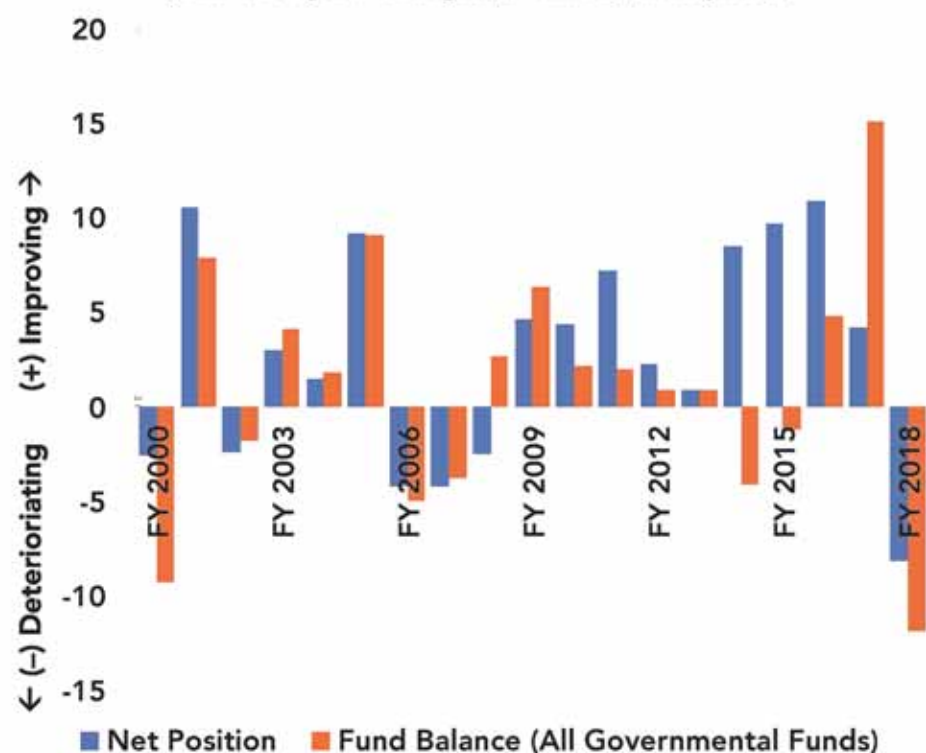


CHART DATA SOURCE: ACPS FY 2018 CAFR, STATISTICAL TABLES 2 AND 4; FY 2009 CAFR, STATISTICAL TABLES 4 AND 6.

The school division's net position and fund balance, measures of fiscal health, have improved over the long term, notwithstanding periodic changes in calculation methods that can complicate historical comparison. "Increases or decreases in net position over time may serve as a useful indicator of whether the financial position of the school division is improving or deteriorating," according to the schools' FY 2018 Comprehensive Annual Financial Report. The division's net position is its bottom line. Specifically, it's "the difference between assets and deferred outflows, on the one hand, and liabilities and deferred inflows, on the other," according to the Governmental Accounting Standards Board, a standards-setting organization. It includes non-monetary capital assets (land, buildings, etc.) and long-term pension liabilities. Fund balance is similar, though narrower and shorter-term in scope, indicating only the net of financial assets and liabilities of specific funds, such as the General Fund. Fund balance could impact the schools' ability to address future budget deficits and emergencies. Regarding the dip in FY 2018, the administration said in a statement: "Our fund balances have remained relatively stable or increased slightly since FY 2015, except the Capital Projects Fund. ... The Capital Projects fund balance increased significantly in FY 2017 ... due to funding from bonds proceeds received in advance of planned capital projects spending. Spending for capital projects (Ferdinand T. Day Elementary School, Early Childcare Center, etc.) occurred in FY 2018 causing decrease of fund balance"

LETTERS

FROM PAGE 15

as soy, and other practices that harm animals' health and well-being, harm the environment, and result in animal foods that are not optimally nutritious for humans.

Janice Curtin,
Alexandria Chapter Leader
The Weston A. Price Foundation

Historic Role Of Lee Family

To the Editor:

Three members of the illustrious Lee family with January birthdays include 18th century patriots who contributed to our freedom: statesman Richard Henry Lee (Jan. 20) and his first cousin "Light-Horse" Harry Lee (Jan. 29), father of Robert E. Lee (Jan. 19).

Richard Henry introduced the June 12, 1776, resolution declaring the colonies' independence. Its adoption led to the appointment of the committee that produced the Declaration of Independence. He signed that document and the Articles of Confederation which established our government until the Constitution was adopted. R.H. Lee served a one-year term

as the president of the Congress of the Confederation, was 12th president of the Continental Congress, and represented Virginia as a U.S. senator from 1789 to 1792

Aged 19, "Light-Horse" Harry (Henry) Lee III, having graduated from the College of New Jersey and married his cousin the "Divine Matilda" Lee, heiress of Stratford Hall, presented himself to Gen. Washington as a cavalry officer. He soon captured a British supply train, brought food to the starving patriot army, and successfully continued his blitzkrieg strategy. He was one of the few Washington accepted into his inner circle of friends. After the war he served in the Confederation Congress, the Continental Congress and the Virginia General Assembly. Ninth governor of Virginia (elected three times), he was also a representative to the U.S. Congress.

Widower Harry married another heiress, Anne Hill Carter of Shirley; their fifth child was Robert Edward. Congress appointed this noted author and orator to deliver its farewell at Washington's death; his speech included the immortal description of him as "first in war, first in peace, and first in the hearts of his countrymen." Lee received wounds that caused

his death while defending freedom of the press in Baltimore in 1812. Attacked by a mob and left for dead, he recovered enough to go to the West Indies, hoping the climate would promote his recovery. It did not. Knowing death was near, he hoped to reach Alexandria but died in Georgia at the home of his friend Gen. Nathaniel Greene. Today three generations of Lees, including Henry and Robert E., are buried in the Lee Chapel at Washington-Lee University in Lexington.

Robert E. Lee has been unjustly maligned by people believing that because he is identified with the Confederacy, he was a slave-owner who fought to preserve slavery. However, he did not own slaves and opposed slavery and secession. During a cruel Reconstruction when the entire South was under federal military occupation and impoverished by carpetbaggers, Lee, respected and loved by all, was the foremost spokesman for reconciliation with the North. He used kindness and spread community nationally, continuing his practice of never speaking ill of anyone. As president of Washington College, he promoted national

SEE LETTERS, PAGE 18

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Obituary

Obituary

Robert (Bob) Young



Robert (Bob) Stewart Young,
age 93, died peacefully on Jan-
uary 18, 2019 in Barry's Bay,
Ontario.

He was born on September 22,
1925 in Buffalo, NY to Ethel Grif-
fiths and Robert Young, brother of
Alice, Ethy, Loretta and Virginia.

Bob served in the Navy during WWII. He attended
Georgetown University's School of Foreign Service
where he met Jean Walden. They married in 1950 and
raised their children in Alexandria, VA. Bob was active

in many parish and social justice activities while work-
ing as a procurement officer for the Dept. of Navy.

After retiring, they moved to Combermere, Ontario
where Bob was an active volunteer, gardener, and fre-
quent traveler with his kids and grandkids to visit their
ancestral homelands.

Bob was generous and kind, had an engaging per-
sonality and wonderful sense of humor, loved his fam-
ily, friends, and nature.

For funeral information and his full obituary, visit the
Heubner Funeral Home website.

Obituary

Obituary

Robert Griffith Culbertson (Age 98)



"Commander Bob" passed away peacefully on January
25, 2019. He was born in Minneapolis, MN October 28,
1920 with twin brother Gene to Harold and Anna Cul-
bertson. His father was a sales executive with B.F. Go-
odrich. They lived in Chicago, Charlotte and Atlanta,
before settling in Akron, OH, then "the Rubber Capital
of the World." Bob, Gene and their brother Keith made
local news when each earned the rank of Eagle Scout.

Bob learned to fly in Akron with the Civilian Air Pa-
trol, and worked at the B.F. Goodrich plant making bul-
let-resistant airplane fuel tanks. In 1942 he joined the
Navy and earned his Navy wings. He served in WW2 in North Africa piloting PBY
Catalinas and PV-1 Venturas on long-range patrol missions searching for German
U-boats moving between the Atlantic and the Mediterranean. After the war, he
completed broadcasting school at Northwestern University. He was an announcer
and the man-on-the-street interviewer for the NBC radio affiliate in Canton, Ohio,
WAND. Later, he operated and managed auto parts and tires stores throughout
Pennsylvania.

Bob and Keith moved to Alexandria in 1950 and opened the Thrift Auto stores in Old
Town. At a USO gathering, Bob met his future wife, Sara Luise Meisner, who worked
in the Pentagon. They married in 1951 and had five children. In 1959 Bob started a
successful career in real estate, eventually managing over 300 salespeople and ten
offices as vice-president of Routh Robbins Realty, which became the local Cold-
well Banker firm. He devoted himself to managing, training and teaching, and led
various committees on the Northern Virginia Board of Realtors. In 1973, he was
president of the Board, one of the largest in the country. In recognition of his service
and leadership he was awarded Realtor of the Year in 1985. He retired in 1999.

Bob flew with the U.S. Naval Reserves until 1962, retiring as a Commander. For
many years, Bob used his speaking talents to train lay readers at Good Shep-
herd and Saint Mary's Catholic churches.

Bob was preceded in death by his parents, wife Sara Luise, brother Keith and
daughter Stacey. His brother Gene, airman with the US Army Air Corps is Miss-
ing-In-Action from the Korean War. He is survived by his sister, Carol, children Anne
Wennerstrom (Martin), John (Cindy), Greg, and Dreux (Frankie), grandchildren Rob-
ert, Clare (Keaton), Davis, Jack, and great-grandchildren Ellie and Lincoln.
Visitation will be Friday, February 1st at 10:30 am at Good Shepherd Catholic
Church in Mount Vernon, followed by funeral service at 11:30.

Legals

Sealed responses to the Request for Qualifications
(RFQ) for the City of Alexandria per specifications
will be received in the office of the Purchasing Divi-
sion until the date and time designated as follows:

Title: Request For Qualifications No 797:
Chinquapin Elevator Design
Closing Date and Time:
March 8, 2019, 3 p.m., local time

Non-Mandatory pre-proposal conference
and site visit date, time, and location:
February 5, 2019, 10:00 a.m.,
prevailing local time
100 North Pitt Street, Suite 301
Alexandria, VA 22314

For general inquiries contact James Pearson,
Contract Specialist, at 703.746.4275.

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

Announcements

Legals

Sealed proposals for the City of Alexandria per specifi-
cations will be received in the office of the Purchasing Divi-
sion until the date and time designated as follows:

RFQ: Public Safety Center Kitchen Renovation
Design
RFQ Close Date and Time:
March 4, 2019, 4 p.m., local time
Non-Mandatory Tour Waiver Form Submission
Date and Time: February 7, 2019, 5 p.m. local time
Non-Mandatory Pre-Proposal Conference: February
15, 2019, 9 a.m., local time, Procurement Conference
Room, 100 North Pitt Street, Alexandria, VA 22314
Non-Mandatory Site Visit: February 15, 2019, 10 a.m.
local time, Public Safety Center, 2003 Mill Road, Alex-
andria, Virginia 22314

For general inquiries contact Michael F. Hauer, CPPO,
CPPB, Deputy Purchasing Agent at 703.746.4295.

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Announcements

Legals

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Cat It Again



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

As my white cat, Twinkle, continues to walk left to right and right to left across my writing pad with various stops in between for scratching, nudging, belly-rubbing and paw patty cakes, I can't help wondering if there's a method to her non-madness. She doesn't appear to be the least bit agitated. She's not meowing her presence or seemingly demanding anything – other than attention, that is. In fact, she's purring and seems quite pleased with herself.

What's puzzling to me is exactly what the attraction/need is here? I don't have any treats. Her food and water bowls are not here. Neither is her litter box. It's in the adjacent room. Yet here she sits and rolls and scratches herself with what appears to be not a care or concern in the world. She seems extremely content with her situation.

I would have expected her to be sleeping in the house somewhere like our other four cats. I mean, it is 2:15 in the afternoon, many hours after her 6:30 breakfast and hours still to go before her 5:30 dinner. Heck, I've even dozed off myself for a bit before I sat down to try and write this column. But here she is, wide awake, and back and forth.

My wife, Dina, maintains that cats and dogs have a sixth sense when it comes to people being sick, and tend to hang around those afflicted with something or other, providing aid and comfort, if you will.

And so, she gets nervous when multiple cats surround me when we're sitting on the couch watching television: a black cat, usually "Sleeky," lays on top of the couch behind where I'm sitting; Twinkle, sits on the couch next to me and cuddles up against my left thigh; and Biscuit (one of our two buff-colored brothers) "sphinxes" on the coffee table staring at me while I'm having to stare through him to watch television. The other two cats, "Chino" and Andrew are usually sleeping in their spots, out of sight, but never out of mind.

A shift change, apparently. "Chino" has just jumped on my desk and Twinkle has jumped off, no doubt to find a warm spot to sleep perchance to dream. Chino is now laying on his side/back – partially on my writing pad, with his rear end pressed up against my left forearm with all four paws raised up in the air not exactly in my direction but definitely in my proximity.

This cat exchange sort of reminds of how my brother and I would alternate our visiting time with our parents on Sundays, splitting the day so that one of us was always present and accounted for.

But I'm not sick (OKAY, diseased then), and I don't feel as if I need 24/7-type cat companionship. Though I am home alone a lot – and left with my own thoughts, I don't view the cats shifting around me as anything more than there considering me as a big toy.

A toy whose movements and appearance are stimulating to them, sort of like a giant scratching post infused with catnip. A combination they couldn't possibly ignore, like peanut butter and chocolate is to me.

So as much as I feel nurtured and loved and comforted by this cat behavior, I don't feel it's because I'm sick, or rather about to be sick (again, their sixth sense at work), I feel simply that we have some very affectionate cats whose indoor-only lives have caused them to become dependent and appreciative of those who feed and water them. (We won't mention that we're also the ones who stuff them into cat carriers and drive them to the vet, an experience which they collectively hate.)

But if I do get sick (I guess I should be honest: get sicker, I do have cancer) I know I can count on "Chino," Biscuit, Twinkle, Andrew and "Sleeky" to always keep me company. I don't know how much better their presence will make me feel, but I do know their presence will keep me from feeling worse.

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

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OPINION

Glass Factories

FROM PAGE 8

Wood Yard, Shipping Yard and the Torpedo Factory.

When World War II began, a great number of people were needed to help in the war efforts. The African Americans who worked at the glass factories had useful skills needed during the war.

Today many of the African Americans' descendants of the glass factories are still living in the Alexandria, District of Columbia and Maryland areas. Some of these families have glass heirlooms from the glass factory like Emma Taylor and Virginia Knapper. Virginia's daughter, Dorothy Knapper-Taylor, held on to the little glass pig that her mother and grandmother had from the glass factory. Mrs. Taylor died in 2013 at the age of 99. The little glass pig has been in the family for over 100 years.

Historically, Alexandria's African Americans have contributed to the workforce that built Alexandria's strong economy to this day. They are proud of their family legacy of hard work and that contributed to the Alexandria's thriving economy then and now. As the descendants of the glass factory, they stand tall and proud to have been a part of the 20th century Industrial Age.

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

Redistricting

FROM PAGE 9

able populations and enable them to stay in the communities they have developed and in the homes that they have created. This will be an ongoing struggle. As our population continues to grow we have to create affordable housing that grows with it.

Though these issues are complex, and our state is behind the mark in finding appropriate fixes, the bills headed to the Senate floor will move us forward.

Please consider taking the time to fill out my constituent survey to let me know your priorities: www.adamebbin.com/survey

It is my continued pleasure to serve the people of the 30th District.

LETTERS

FROM PAGE 17

unity among our country's youth, including the many Northern students whose parents so respected his character that they wanted their sons to study there. Congress recognized his contributions by establishing the Custis-Lee estate as a national park; it is now America's most honored burial site.

Ellen Latane Tabb
Alexandria

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