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Alexandria Gazette Packet

WELLBEING

PAGE 15

25 CENTS

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MAY 2, 2019



PHOTOS BY JANET BARNETT/GAZETTE PACKET

Christine Friedberg, center, prepares a pressure washer for use during National Rebuilding Together Day. With her are Rebuilding Together board member Jon Ray and Andrea Koslow.



Paul Anderson, president of the Rotary Club of Alexandria, clears around the foundation of a home during Rebuilding Together Day April 27.

Volunteering for National Rebuilding Together Day

Alexandria Rotary Club members Sharon Meisel, Pat Tokarz, Andrea Koslow, Mike Wicks, Christine Friedberg, Paul Anderson and Patrick Coye gather for a photo after participating in National Rebuilding Together Day April 27. The club made repairs to the home of Ann Hoover, who said “I am amazed that so many people gave up their Saturday to help others and I am grateful for that.”



Pat Tokarz holds a snakeskin found under a home while doing yard work April 27 as part of Rebuilding Together Day. With him are Christine Friedberg, Sharon Meisel and Rebuilding Together board member Jon Ray.



Mike Wicks makes ceiling repairs at an Alexandria home during National Rebuilding Day April 27.

Strike Possibility

To get parity with Metrobus, DASH bus drivers say they’re willing to strike during Metro shutdown.

BY DAN BRENDEN
GAZETTE PACKET

DASH bus drivers voted to authorize a possible strike at an Amalgamated Transit Union Local 689 meeting on Saturday, April 27.

The union hopes the threat of a strike, on the brink this summer’s shutdown of Alexandria’s four Metro stations, will work in the drivers’ favor at the collective bargaining table.

“We’re in a hell of a position,” said DASH driver Alphonza “Big Al” Clements. “It’s about us and our families. ... We’ve got to exploit this opportunity for what it’s worth.”

“[Negotiations are] just not going anywhere, unless we make them,” said DASH driver Tyler Boos.

The union and DASH management have been negotiating DASH pay and benefits, among other things, since February, following the drivers’ vote to unionize in

SEE STRIKE, PAGE 4

‘Potentially a Disaster’?

Council fears extended Metro shutdown economic impact.

BY DAN BRENDEN
GAZETTE PACKET

City Council members warned of potentially severe negative economic and tax revenue impacts following recent surprise announcement that the summer Metro shutdown will extend by six days, past Labor Day.

WMATA, the regional transit authority, announced the extension in a press release on Thurs-

day, April 18. Council members expressed indignation that they weren’t consulted, grilling Metro administrators about the extension at council’s legislative meeting on Tuesday, April 23.

“The announcement last week really was dumbfounding for us, especially the way it came out, without any kind of pre-coordination, without any discussion, without any consideration of alternatives,” said Mayor Justin Wilson.

SEE IMPACT, PAGE 8

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At Budget Finish Line

Council negotiates final budget nickels and dimes.

BY DAN BRENDEN
GAZETTE PACKET

As the Gazette Packet goes to press, City Council will vote on its two-part budget, including funding for the public school system: a \$947 million (including all funds) FY 2020 operating budget and a \$1.6 billion 10-year capital improvement program.

The final version includes council's final nibbling around the edges of City Manager Mark Jinks' original proposal, in what's called the addition-and-deletion — or "add/delete" — process. Having to shave off just a quarter-million dollars from their earlier proposed programming adjustments and add-ons in order to balance the budget, council wrapped up final horse-trading on Monday, April 29. Negotiations came down to a couple thousand dollars here and there.

"We've never been in a situation where the council has considered giving the School Board more of an operating allocation than they have requested in their proposed budget."

— Mayor Justin Wilson

Councilman John Chapman's proposal to add an extra \$100,000 to the School Board's appropriation received particular attention.

"We've never been in a situation where the council has considered giving the School Board more of an operating allocation than they have requested in their proposed budget," said Mayor Justin Wilson.

Under the city's present budget policy, council can only appropriate an undifferentiated chunk of money to the School Board, but can't tell the School Board how to spend it. Even so, some council members hope the School Board will put the additional funds toward retaining 30 school cus-

	Council Sponsor	Council Proposed	Negotiated Change	Consensus Final
Net New Revenue		594,918	N/A	594,918
New Expenditures				
Extra equity staff contingency	Chapman	60,000	(60,000)	0
Family unit due process universal repres. access program, toward providing nonprofit legal counsel to residents facing deportation	Seifeldein	150,000	(50,000)	100,000
C-PACE start-up contingency, toward enabling private financing of eco-friendly building improvements via city tax assessments	Pepper	125,000	(50,000)	75,000
SNAP program staff addition for increased outreach and expansion from 2 to 5 farmers' markets	Bennett-Parker	86,260	(23,660)	62,600
ACPS additional funding (to prevent custodian privatization?)	Chapman	100,000	(22,395)	77,605
Environmental Action Plan education & outreach	Pepper	20,000	(20,000)	0
King Street Corridor tree lighting, beyond current 5 months	Pepper	34,800	(17,400)	17,400
ACPS textbook capital transfer, toward treating textbooks as "educational infrastructure" rather than an operating expense	Wilson	708,750	0	708,750
ACPS textbook operating transfer		(708,750)	0	(708,750)
Inova Alexandria hospital uncompensated care assessment contingency: assess ramifications of Medicaid expansion	Wilson	490,575	0	490,575
Inova Alexandria hospital appropriation		(490,575)	0	(490,575)
Sheriff's Dept. pay/benefit contingency, toward bringing pay and benefits more in alignment with comparator jurisdictions	Wilson	330,000	0	330,000
Early childhood care capacity expansion contingency, toward reducing program waitlist times	Wilson	200,000	0	200,000
Local match for fed grant for 9 new firefighter positions, toward completing full 4-person staffing on all the city's fire engines	Wilson	200,000	0	200,000
WasteSmart implementation contingency, incl. new glass drop-off	Wilson	102,846	0	102,846
Zoning inspector: review night/weekend staffing, policies and coordination between the APD and other depts	Wilson	83,595	0	83,595
Zoning inspector		(83,595)	0	(83,595)
Technical Adjustments	N/A	(70,533)	N/A	(70,533)
Change in undesignated contingent reserve	N/A	(500,000)	N/A	(500,000)
Total		838,373	(243,455)	594,918
Deficit		243,455		0

City Council whittles down proposed programming adjustments and add-ons in order to adopt a balanced budget on May 1.

todians on the public payroll. The schools administration earlier slated the custodians' jobs for privatization.

"I would hope that this is used for custodians. ... I'm very frustrated when we ... want to talk about 'equity,'" said Councilman Canek Aguirre, calling custodians "some of the most vulnerable within the school system, in terms of staff." He added: "I don't think it's fair to tell 30 families that ... likely the primary breadwinner is not longer going to have employment."

Wilson cautioned that extra funding for custodians might become a continuous fix-

ture in future budgets. Aguirre and Council Mohamed "Mo" Seifeldein said they support the extra money only as a one-time deal.

Council resisted trading any dollars out of Wilson's proposed \$200,000 to bolster the city government's early childcare programs — one of the largest proposed adjustments.

In the future, Chapman wants to see funding for such programming baked into the city manager's initial budget proposal, rather than put off to the end.

"I really don't want to see this again as

an add/delete issue. I think we as a community have said, ... the children are our future," he said.

"We do not want to move backwards on our kids," said Councilwoman Amy Jackson.

Funding for most of council's final budget additions will go into contingency, where it will await appropriation pending more detailed city departmental staff planning.

For more, see budget question #79 at www.alexandriava.gov/budget/info/FY20Memos.


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News



PHOTOS COURTESY ATU LOCAL 689

DASH bus drivers authorize a potential summer strike as a bargaining tool.

Authorizing Possible Strike

FROM PAGE 1

November. DASH offers lower pay and slower pay progression compared to several other regional bus systems, especially Metrobus. DASH drivers want their pay and benefits to mirror what Metro offers.

DASH offers starting pay of \$17 per hour and top pay of \$29, achievable after 20 years of employment. Metrobus offers starting pay of \$19.68 and top pay of \$32.80, achievable after seven years (some union literature incorrectly states five years). Those figures will rise to \$20.28 and \$33.79, effective Jan. 1, 2020. That's according to wage increase factors stipulated by an arbitration board last summer, applied to base wages in Local 689 and Metro's previous collective bargaining agreement, which expired in 2016. An updated agreement incorporating the arbitrator's stipulated awards is currently "in the final stages of approval" an expected in a matter of weeks, according to Metro spokesperson Ian Jannetta.

"Out of the 130 operators there are 98 who are at or less than \$21.51," said union organizer Chris Townsend.

For comparison, according to the city government's Office of Housing: An average one-bedroom apartment in Alexandria requires \$32.84 per hour, assuming rent is kept at 30 percent of gross income, a common rule of thumb for household budgeting. Though 73 percent of low- to moderate-income households spend more than that proportion, "at the expense of healthcare, education, daycare and savings."

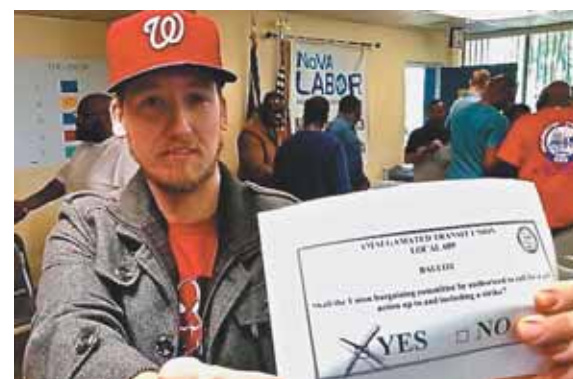
"Right now you don't get anything guaranteed to you [for retirement]," union organizer John Ertl told DASH drivers Saturday. "Unless you're able to put away your wages. ... [But] who's able to save out of 17 bucks an hour when rent is what it is? Groceries, the price of gas, the price of everything is up in this area."

Marvin Falwell, who's driven for DASH for 34 years, says he and his wife haven't been able to save sufficiently for retirement. They financially assist their two daughters, "because this is a hard world for women. ... They have kids to take care of," he said.

Falwell worked two jobs for seven years, "until my body said: stop," due to the long hours. He says some younger DASH drivers work two jobs to make ends meet.

For retirement, as for wages, the union wants DASH to offer parity with Metrobus.

DASH currently offers a defined contribution plan, including employer matching up to a maximum of



DASH bus driver Tyler Boos casts his strike authorization vote.

five percent. But DASH makes no baseline contribution: if an employee contributes zero, DASH contributes zero.

Of DASH employees, 62 percent contribute some amount to their 401(k) plans, and 40 percent contribute more than four percent, according to DASH General Manager Josh Baker in February.

Metrobus offers a defined benefit plan, to which employees contribute three percent of their wages and the employer contributes 14.6 percent of its payroll, according to union financial officer Esker Bilger. Metrobus retirees then collect pension allowances for life.

The union wants DASH not to switch to a defined benefit pension, but rather to contribute a comparable 14.6 percent of each employee's wages to his/her 401(k). The employer contribution would constitute a retirement savings floor, even if the employee contributed nothing.

DASH negotiators counter-proposed contributing two percent of wages, according to Ertl.

The union thinks another \$2.8 million to DASH from the city government would achieve the wage-and-benefit parity they seek, according to statements at a recent budget public hearing. Baker estimates the added cost to the city would come closer to \$4 million, according to an April 29 memo.

"It has become evident that a deadline has been set by the Union to finalize a contract prior to the summer Alexandria Platform Improvement Project. While we too would like to see this, we cannot rush a complex process such as this," said Baker. "We must hold strong in our resolve to move forward working in good faith to reach a collective bargaining agreement, without being pressured by artificial deadlines."

Baker declined to comment on contract proposal specifics. The city administration did not respond to a request for comment.

High School Expansion: Next

School system takes steps toward honing final plan.

BY BRIDGETTE ADU-WADIER
AND DAN BRENDL
GAZETTE PACKET

The Alexandria City Public Schools administration specified certain elements of its planning for high school capacity expansion on Thursday, April 25, though other elements remain fuzzy.

The city and schools' current budget earmarks \$119 million for the project — the second single largest capital investment on the city's horizon after sanitary sewers.

But how that money will be spent remains undetermined. The School Board is weighing two options: (1) Superintendent Dr. Gregory Hutchings' recommended "Connected High School Network," which would comprise a network of smaller campuses citywide; and (2) another comprehensive high school. Here's what new for their consideration:

9TH GRADE INTEGRATION

Whereas freshmen are currently set apart at T.C. Williams' Minnie Howard campus, the administration recommends incorporating grades 9-12, regardless of the decision regarding the School Board's Connected High School Network.

"We will not be dividing our student population by grade level. ... Minnie Howard will not stay a

ninth-grade campus," said the schools' Erika Gulick.

The decision stems from a 2017 "Grade Level Feasibility Study," briefed to the School Board last May.

NARROWED CAPACITY PARAMETERS

The administration estimates that it needs 312,000 square feet of new facility space to accommodate 1,600 more students. Those figures represent major downward revisions from December estimates of 409,500 square feet for an additional 2,100 students. The revision owes in part to including the high school's early college program, which would put students at the local community college.

The school division earlier determined that a comprehensive high school should accommodate no more than 1,650 students — a close match to the revised figures. However, land availability remains a constraint. A new stand-alone high school, including fields, parking, etc., would require about 20-30 acres, according to school division COO Mignon Anthony.

RE-PURPOSING MINNIE HOWARD


To use land it already has to address immediate capacity needs, the School Board earlier instructed Hutchings to draw up plans to expand Minnie Howard.

"We do think we have flexibility at Minnie Howard," said Gulick.

The administration is working with the city's planning and zoning department to modernize Minnie Howard, as well as analyze other properties that could accommodate 1,600 additional students.

Minnie Howard spans 12 acres, according a site

SEE EXPANSION, PAGE 22



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PEOPLE

To Protect and Serve

Valor Awards to honor
21 first responders.

BY JEANNE THEISMANN
GAZETTE PACKET

The Alexandria Chamber of Commerce will honor 21 of the city's first responders at the annual Public Safety and Valor Awards May 7 at the Holiday Inn and Suites in Old Town.

The annual awards ceremony recognizes the bravery and heroism of members of the Alexandria Police and Fire Departments, the Alexandria Sheriff's Office and the Department of

Emergency Communications.

Four members of the Alexandria Police Department — Officers Osama Sharif, David Daniels, Asad Nawaz and Wesley Vitale — will be presented with Bronze Medals for the courageous execution of their duties during a multiple stabbing situation in the early morning hours of Sept. 14, 2018.

Sponsored by INOVA Alexandria Hospital, the Valor Awards will be held May 7 at the Holiday Inn and Suites, 625 First St., at 8 a.m.

For tickets or more information, visit www.alexchamber.com.



**Firefighter
Michael
Ambrose
Bronze Medal**



**Firefighter/
Medic Richard
Krimmer
Bronze Medal**



**Officer Asad
Nawaz
Bronze Medal**



**Officer Wesley
Vitale
Bronze Medal**



**PCOII Tiana
Allen
Lifesaving
Award**

PHOTOS CONTRIBUTED



**Deputy Ashley
Battle
Lifesaving Award**



**Officer David
Daniels
Lifesaving Award**



**Firefighter
Edward Freeman
Lifesaving Award**



**Deputy Steven
Hand
Lifesaving Award**



**Officer Andrew
Harrell
Lifesaving Award**



**Capt. Chad
Lallier
Lifesaving Award**



**PCOII Leslie
Lewis
Lifesaving Award**



**Firefighter
Donald Lynch
Lifesaving Award**



**Firefighter
Michael Lynn
Lifesaving Award**



**Firefighter Phillip
Perry
Lifesaving Award**



**Deputy Eloy Reyes
Lifesaving Award**



**Firefighter Ken-
neth Salfelder
Lifesaving Award**



**Officer Osama
Sharif
Lifesaving Award**



**Firefighter James
Swanick
Lifesaving Award**



**Firefighter Devin
Velazquez
Lifesaving Award**



**Firefighter
Darrell White
Lifesaving Award**

Hayes Selected as Assistant Police Chief

Donald Hayes has been named Assistant Chief of Police for Operations. Hayes is a 38-year veteran of the Police Department.

"After a national search, Don was chosen for this position based on his extensive operational experience in local law enforcement and his long and valued service to Alexandria," said Police Chief Michael L. Brown. "His leadership of multiple divisions within the Operations Bureau over the course of his career, along with his



Donald Hayes

dedication to the community we serve, make him an outstanding fit for this new role."

Hayes grew up in the region and has been a resident of Alexandria for the past 25 years. He joined the Alexandria Police Department in 1981 and was promoted to sergeant in 1996. At various times after his promotion to lieutenant in 2000, he commanded the Special Operations Division, Information Services Section and Public Services Section, and served as assistant commander of the Patrol Op-

erations Bureau.

Following his promotion to captain in 2013, he commanded the Traffic, Parking & Special Events Division and a sector of the Patrol Operations Bureau. In addition, Hayes commanded the Community Relations Division, where he also served as the department chaplain. He has overseen the Community Policing Section, School Resource Officer Unit and School Crossing Guard Unit.

Hayes holds a master's degree in organizational leadership from Johns Hopkins University, a master's degree in divinity from Liberty University Baptist Theological Seminary, and a bachelor's degree in business administration from Bowie State University. He is a graduate of the FBI National Academy and holds numerous certifications.

State Honor For Richardson

Alexandria Archaeology Museum's Emma Richardson has been named Museum Educator of the Year.

The Virginia Museum Educator of the Year award is presented by The Virginia Association of Museums and Virginia Department of Education to a museum educator who best demonstrates a long term commitment to high quality educational experiences in their organization. Richardson was recognized as the 2019 recipient in recognition for her outstanding achievement in museum education creating exceptional experiences for school-aged visitors in the Alexandria area.



Richardson

PEOPLE



PHOTOS BY JEANNE THEISMANN/GAZETTE PACKET

Steve Reed, Joan Renner, India Mertins and Richard Moorhouse enjoy a friendly game of poker at the Symphony Orchestra League of Alexandria's Gatsby's Speakeasy II gala April 13 at The Atrium. Now in its 32nd year, the annual SOLA gala raised funds for the Alexandria Symphony Orchestra.

Gatsby's Speakeasy II

SOLA gala raises funds for ASO.

The Symphony Orchestra League of Alexandria transformed The Atrium in Old Town into a speakeasy reminiscent of the Great Gatsby and the Roaring Twenties for its 32nd annual fundraiser and gala April 13 benefitting the Alexandria Symphony Orchestra.

More than 130 attendees turned out for Gatsby's Speakeasy II, an Evening of Drinks, Dice and Dance that included a cocktail hour, silent auction and dinner by Society Fair. SOLA member Gant Redmon conducted the live auction, donning a different 1920s style hat for each item offered.

David Magsumbol and Genevieve Moorhouse co-chaired the event and Claire Schwab assisted Magsumbol with the table theme and room decor.



Gant Redmon acts as auctioneer at the SOLA gala April 13 at The Atrium in Old Town.

SOLA has been a major financial supporter of the ASO since 1981. Donations to the symphony can be made at sola.givesmart.com.

— JEANNE THEISMANN



Andy Finn and Roger Parks look on as Diane Finn takes her chances rolling the dice at the craps table April 13 at the SOLA Gatsby's Speakeasy II Gala.

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Impact?

FROM PAGE 1

“It prompts, quite rightly, very valid questions about whether everything else we’re telling the community about this shutdown is true and will meet reality.”

Despite assurances from Metro staff, Councilman John Chapman lacks confidence the extension will only last the advertised six days. He’ll tell Alexandria constituents to expect an extra month, he said.

“This is going to cost us significant lost revenue and it’s going to threaten the viability of businesses we have in our community,” said Wilson. “My very real concern, given the [lack of planning] diligence that occurred to get to this point, we are very likely to see additional surprises when you get started. ... If this last months longer, this is a disaster for this city. This is absolutely potentially a disaster for us.”

According to city spokesperson Craig Fifer: “In late 2018, Visit Alexandria commissioned a study by Smith Travel Research (STR) on the likely impact of the summer closure. STR projected a 13.5 percent loss of revenue per available room for the months of June, July and August. Applying that to hotel revenues and city tax receipts, that comes out to \$8.6 million in reduced hotel revenues and \$576,000 in reduced lodging tax receipts to the City. At that pace, the six additional days would bring another \$510,000 in lost hotel revenues and

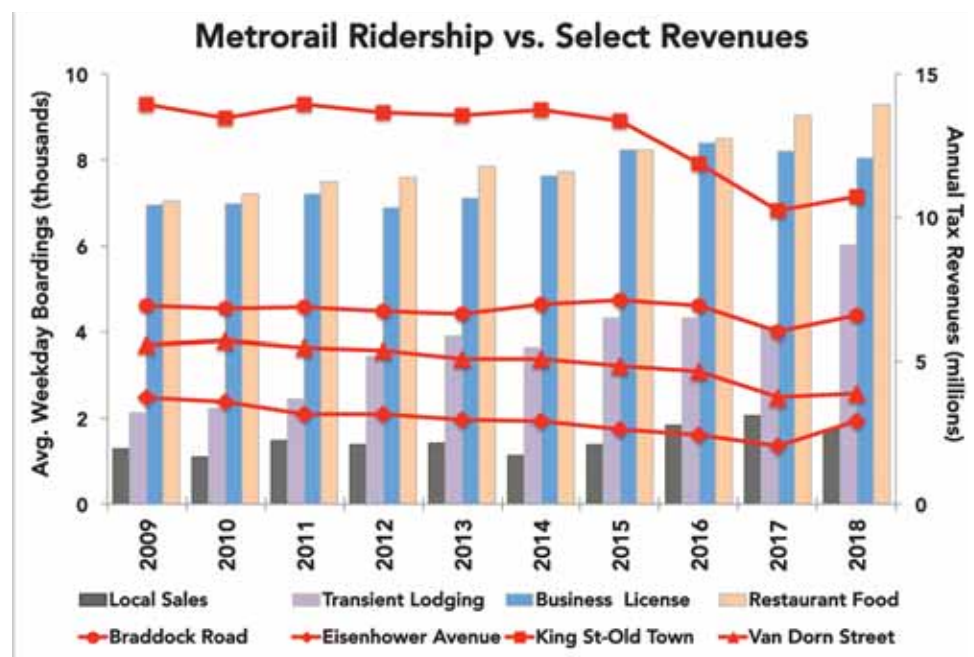
\$34,000 in City tax receipts. Keep in mind this is only looking at the economic impact of lost hotel stays, and not other potential impacts to City tax revenue or to the private sector.”

Visit Alexandria’s Tom Kaiden declined to furnish to full STR report, citing STR’s licensing constraints.

On the other hand, declining Metrorail ridership over the last decades hasn’t stopped the city’s revenues from rising. In particular, the city’s transient lodging tax revenue has nearly tripled, whereas total ridership between the city’s Metro four stations has decreased by 15 percent on average — by 24 percent at the King Street station, by far the city’s busiest.

Similarly, whereas Wilson called post-Labor Day “the worst commuting period of the year,” Metro reports that system-wide passenger trips usually stay flat or fall off in September, compared to August. That’s according to the transit authority’s FY 2018 Comprehensive Annual Financial Report.

Regarding these data, Kaiden said: “Metro is an important asset that affects Alexandria’s appeal to visitors and residents. But, it’s just one aspect. There are many factors that impact lodging tax receipts (e.g., promotion, media coverage, overall growth of travel). And, there are many factors that impact Metrorail ridership (e.g., gas prices, telecommuting trends, Metro’s performance and safety record). So, while it may be difficult to quantify the exact correlation between transit access and tax receipts, that does not mean it’s absent.”



SOURCES: REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION DATA CLEARINGHOUSE; CITY OF ALEXANDRIA, FY 2018 COMPREHENSIVE ANNUAL FINANCIAL REPORT

There’s no direct correlation between Metro ridership and city economics. Over the past decade, ridership has fallen off on average at each of the city’s four Metro stations: Braddock Road (-5 percent); 23 percent at both King Street and Eisenhower Avenue (-23 percent each); and Van Dorn Street (-30 percent). At the same time, city tax revenues have generally risen over average over the same time period: transient lodging (+182 percent); local sales (+35 percent); restaurant food (+32 percent); business licenses (+15 percent).

The extension stems from an increase in the scope of work over what Metro originally anticipated, according to Joseph Leader, the transit authority’s COO.

“It’s a very difficult operation,” he said. Workers will have to jack up the Braddock Road Metro station’s 1.6 million pounds and adjust structural concrete-and-steel, in or-

der to make the platform level with the train.

“Why were you not aware of this?” Wilson asked Metro officials. “I assumed — naively, apparently — that you guys had done the work to determine the scope of that work. What I’m hearing now is that did not happen.”

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OPINION

Suicide Rates Are Rising

Join the conversation on this major health crisis May 8.

BY MARY ANNE WEBER

In the state of Virginia on average one person dies by suicide every eight hours. Nearly three times as many people die by suicide in Virginia annually than by homicide. It is the second leading cause of death for people ages 15 to 34 and the fourth leading cause of death for ages 35 to 54. This is according to the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention whose statistics came from the Centers for Disease Control. As grim as these statistics are Virginia is not a leader in the nation's rising suicide rates. It ranks 36.

Nationally we not only know how many suicides were reported, 47,173 in 2017, but we have a portrait of who commits suicide. What we don't really have is why. And not knowing why makes it difficult to prevent particularly if the person at risk is flying under the radar, not receiving regular health care, not having access to mental health care and not having friends or family who would notice changes.

The picture becomes clearer as we look at the numbers. Nationally, white males accounted for 69.67 percent of the suicide deaths in 2017. The rate was highest in middle-age white men and the number appeared to be higher in rural areas. While this is the picture

nationally, in Virginia it is young people who are at the greatest risk.

The methods of suicide are also accounted for. Slightly over half of all suicides are committed by gun, the second most common method is by suffocation which includes hanging and the third by poisoning. Obviously keeping guns out of the hands and households of those who are suicidal would greatly reduce opportunity and some states are doing just that. In many areas, there has also been an effort to secure medications to keep them from misuse, and some municipalities have put guardrails on bridges to keep people from jumping.

While the focus nationally may be on middle-aged adults, it is also clear that both depression and suicide have been increasing among teens and young adults since 2009. A study in the Journal of Abnormal Psychology reported on by Time magazine indicated that in 2017, more than one in eight Americans ages 12 to 25 had a major depressive episode. The same researchers found rates of suicidal thoughts, plans and attempts all increased significantly.

And now thanks to stories on CNN and PBS there is a new awareness of increasing suicide in the elderly population. Across the United States the second highest rate of suicide occurred among those 85 years of age and older including those in assisted living and nursing home facilities. Their methods included overdosing, hanging, jumping out windows and at least in one case a gun no one knew he had.

It seems this is an epidemic that reaches all ages and demographics and that is why Alexandria is hosting a serious conversation about the risks of suicide and prevention across the ages from children to the elderly.

U. S. Rep. Don Beyer, who is a member of the bipartisan Congressional Mental Health Caucus and co-chair of the Caucus Suicide Prevention Task Force, will speak about this issue. He will also act as a moderator in a conversation with Dr. Marcia Jackson, director of K-12 School Counseling in the Alexandria Public Schools; Officer Bennie Evans of the Alexandria Police; and Rhonda Williams, LCSW, therapist and Mental Health First Aid Instructor of the Alexandria Community Services Board. They will talk about how to identify risk factors and provide ways to help someone who is showing warning signs. Audience members are encouraged to ask questions. Printed resource materials will be provided to take home.

All residents are invited to this free community event on Wednesday, May 8 from 7 to 9 p.m. in the auditorium of the Minnie Howard campus, 3801 West Braddock Road in Alexandria.

The program is hosted by the Alexandria City Public Schools, Alexandria Community Services Board, Friends of the Alexandria Mental Health Center, the Partnership for a Healthier Alexandria and Senior Services of Alexandria. Sponsors include the Alexandria Chamber of Commerce, Alexandria Health Department and the Suicide Prevention Alliance of Northern Virginia.

For more information contact Laurie Flynn at 202-297-4554 or LaurieFlynn212@gmail.com.

If you are in a crisis call the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 1-800-273-TALK (8255) or text TALK to 741741.

Mary Anne Weber is a former chair of Alexandria Community Services Board.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Concerns over Renovation Proposal

To the Editor:

The recent story of 619 S. Lee, the Justice Hugo Black House, is truly a case of truth being stranger than fiction. The case is before the City Council on appeal of a BAR decision allowing extensive additions and renovations that would forever change the nature of both a designated Virginia Historic Landmark and contravene a Virginia Open Space Land Act Easement. Every Alexandria preservation and regional entity dealing with historic preservation including the Historic Alexandria Foundation, Historic Alexandria Resources Commission, the Northern Virginia Conservation Council and the Old Town Civic Association are asking the City Council to overturn the BAR's decision. Some of the concerns with the proposed renovation project are:

- ❖ Breaking a historic easement and ignoring the Virginia Historic

Landmark Designation: One of the first perpetual historic preservation easements granted by the commonwealth of Virginia that Justice Black proactively sought out in 1969 has been surprisingly relaxed by the Virginia Depart-

ment of Historic Resources, although the VHR first denied the initial request and requests by previous owners. The current owners were well aware when they bought this property that the house and open space are pro-

tected by a historic easement.

- ❖ Endangering the preservation of an important part of Alexandria's and the Nation's History: Justice Black is listed in any history of the Supreme Court as

SEE LETTERS, PAGE 12



PHOTO BY CERI BALDWIN

Beauty of Spring

Photo taken along the 600 block of Wilkes Street, April 10 at 10:14 a.m.

Alexandria Gazette Packet

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OPINION

Rebuilding Together in April

BY RILEY CONRAD
AMERICORPS OUTREACH COORDINATOR
REBUILDING TOGETHER DC/ALEXANDRIA

In 1972, a small community in Midland, Texas, organized to repair the homes of their neighbors who could not afford to fix them on their own. One of the homeowners they helped told them it felt like “Christmas in April.” In 1986, we opened our doors as Alexandria Christmas in April to carry the legacy of providing critical repairs to our neighbors in need. The movement caught traction and our name changed to Rebuilding Together to reflect the spirit of inclusivity and cooperation that continues to bring out 100,000-plus volunteers to over 130 communities across the country.

Our affiliate has proudly served Alexandria for 33 years and this year we are thrilled to expand our reach to the District of Columbia, where there are over 28,000 underserved homeowners in need of our services. In three decades, we have recruited more than 29,000 volunteers to work on over 2,200 projects year-round, leveraging \$8.8 million worth of in-kind value to our community. On the last Saturday of every April, we celebrate National Rebuilding Day to honor our humble April beginnings and help homeowners in need. In April of 1987, we worked on eight projects. This past April,



Volunteers make “Christmas in April” possible.

we were able to mobilize 700-plus volunteers to work on over 40 homes throughout Alexandria and DC.

Rebuilding Together DC • Alexandria is an award-winning, mission-driven organization that creates healthy neighborhoods for residents by maintaining housing for low-income homeowners, revitalizing community spaces, and creating homeownership opportunities.

We accept applications from homeowners for free home repairs year-round. Visit www.RebuildingTogetherDCA.org or call 703-836-1021.

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HISTORY

A Mother's Unconditional Love

BY CHAR MCCARGO BAH

Mothers are made of all kinds of packages, especially Mrs. Jennie Bell-Cantey, who was a special package that helped raise 44 children in her lifetime. Those children were kids that she kept while their mothers were working and some of the kids were her foster children. One of those foster children,

THE OTHER ALEXANDRIA

Carolyn Phillips was very dear to her. Her mother brought her to Mrs. Jennie when she was an infant. The 77 year old was already beyond her years of raising children when she took the infant Carolyn.

Mrs. Carolyn Phillips-McCrae was born on Oct. 2, 1938 at the Alexandria hospital on Duke Street. She was a premature baby weighing two pounds, and she was not expected to live. Her biological mother heard about Mrs. Jennie and she entrusted her premature child to Mrs. Jennie. But Carolyn's mother never made any attempts to take back the infant baby. Mrs. Jennie known to Carolyn as "Mama" bonded as mother and daughter. Mrs. Jennie showered all her affection and devotion on Carolyn, and Carolyn loved Mama as if she was her biological mother.

Carolyn was living with Mama at 307 Gibbon St. when she started school at Lyles-Crouch Elementary School. It was a short walk from Mrs. Jennie's house to Lyles-Crouch but Mama took Carolyn by the hand and walked her to school.

From the time Carolyn was in elementary school until she graduated from Parker-Gray School in 1957, Mama attended all of Carolyn's school and church activities. When I asked Mrs. Carolyn Phillips-McCrae what kind of mother was Mrs. Jennie, she said, "Mama was a fantastic mother, I never wanted to leave home."

Mrs. Jennie Settle Travis-Bell Cantey was born in Rappahannock, Va. on Dec. 2, 1859. She was illiterate but she knew that she was born on the day John Brown was killed. Mrs. Cantey was married three times and outlived all her husbands. Her last husband, John Edward Cantey, died in 1936. Mrs. Jennie worked in the District of Columbia in 1910 as a laundress. She purchased her home in Alexandria in 1907



Jennie Bell-Cantey toward the end of her life.



Photo of Jennie Bell-Cantey prior to the 20th century.

PHOTOS COURTESY OF CAROLYN PHILLIPS-MCCRAE

at 307 Gibbon St. Besides raising children, she did domestic work and worked with the City of Alexandria to provide housing for the elderly African Americans. Mrs. Jennie only had one biological child with her first husband, John Samuel Travers, her daughter was Sarah Elease Travers-Dixon who preceded her in death.

On Thursday, Sept. 24, 1959, The Alexandria Gazette published an article on Mrs. Jennie titled, "Aunt' Jennie Bell, 100 Years Old, Leaves Her Old Home With A Smile." In this article, Mrs. Carolyn is standing beside Mrs. Jennie when she received the key to her new subsidized apartment. Her house at 307 Gibbon St. had been condemned due to a lack of modern updates to the home that caused the City of Alexandria to condemn it. Ms. Jennie had been in the house for over 50 years and the house itself was much older than Mrs. Jennie. It had no electricity but it had a lot of love — love that she gave to the 44 children that she raised — but now at 100 years old, she was glad to move to a new place. Mrs. Jennie enjoyed her new home for two years. She died on Feb. 7, 1961 several months shy of her 102nd birthday.

Today, Mrs. Carolyn Phillips-McCrae still remembers the kind and motherly attention that "Mama" gave her throughout the years. Looking back at her life with "Mama", she could not have asked for a better mother than Mrs. Jennie Bell-Cantey. Happy Mother's Day, Mama.

Char McCargo Bah is a published author, freelance writer, independent historian, genealogist and a Living Legend of Alexandria. She maintains two blogs, <http://www.theotheralexandria.com> and <http://www.findingthingsforu.com>.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

FROM PAGE 10

one of the top 10 Justices. What an honor for Alexandria to include his home. In his rulings he was both an ardent supporter of Freedom of Speech and the First Amendment and the equal protection guarantees of the 14th Amendment. The landmark 1954 Brown v. Board of Education Supreme Court decision that mandated desegregation of public schools was said to have been decided when members of the court gathered around Justice Black's dining table in the house. He also wrote an opinion in 1964 that finally put an end to the denial of African American school children's

right to an equal education in Virginia and the nation. Why would Alexandria fail to preserve this important legacy?

❖ Violation of The Virginia Open Space Land Act of 1966: prohibiting the diversion of open space protected by the Act unless five specific conditions are met, none of which have been satisfied. The proposal includes massive new construction that would virtually double the footprint of the existing house, removing Landmark Open Space in the same amount.

Given these facts, I ask that Alexandria citizens ask the mayor and council to vote to save and protect a vital part of Alexandria

and American history for future generations at 619 South Lee St. — the story of the seminal Supreme Court Justice who lived in our city — Justice Hugo Black.

Nancy Kegan Smith
Alexandria

Control Spending

To the Editor:

The April 15 article "Hamstrung Local Tax Authority" on is an interesting contrast to the March 7

SEE LETTERS, PAGE 13

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LETTERS

FROM PAGE 12

story “Fiscal Slam Dunk for City?”. The two articles are bookends. Where is Alexandria’s benefit of Amazon HQ2? Perhaps the New York people were correct to reject Amazon. The two articles are contradictory. One week, HQ2 is the best thing since sliced bread and several weeks later we read about the search for more revenue sources. What is going on? Where is the slam dunk? Why trust our city’s financial skills?

If all this growth is so good, why the need for new sources of revenue? The Maryland income tax structure cited in the article is about as poor a role model that can be found, and shows the council is not very observant. Amazon could have located HQ2 anywhere in the country, except possibly New York City, as can be seen in the competition. A significant reason for choosing Virginia is relatively friendly business and tax environment. They rejected several sites in Maryland, including Montgomery and Prince George’s counties and Baltimore City, in part because of both counties and Maryland’s unfriendly local income tax structure and business climate. The same thing that they think we should have. Will we see an offset?

Your article singles out real estate taxes as being regressive. That shows a failure to understand that different taxes have different impacts. Progressive and regressive are adjectives, a political description versus any real analysis. It could be argued that tax fairness is in the eye of the beholder. Also, a flat tax is not definitionally a regressive tax.

Why pick on just real estate taxes? There are a variety of taxes at all governmental levels that to some greater or lesser degree are regressive. This includes but is not limited to Social Security, Medicare, gasoline, utilities and restaurants (Alexandria favorites) and sales taxes. Cable taxes are an example of taxing the modern service economy. Most regressive is Virginia’s food sales taxes. There is also a school of thought that “sin” taxes (alcohol and tobacco) along with state run lotteries are also regressive. Additionally, in this area the Virginia income tax effectively functions as a flat tax, as it caps at \$17,000, and thus is not really “progressive.”

Why the endless search for new revenue sources? Why isn’t the current roughly 460 sources not enough? What is wrong with controlling spending?

In conclusion it appears that we are merely sheep to be sheared. This really has nothing to do with regressive or progressive. It is sim-

ply a money grab wrapped up in fancy language.

William L. Blumberg
MBA

Enhancing Safety

To the Editor:

Cities across the United States are experiencing increased numbers of crashes on their roads with a commensurate rise in the number of injuries from traffic violence. In 2018, 40,000 people died, and the lives of another 2 million people were permanently altered. In Alexandria in 2018, 5 people were killed in traffic crashes, an increase of more than double the 10-year average.

Our city, recognizing this danger and understanding its responsibility for public safety, has enacted a series of policies to reduce the risk faced by all people using its transportation infrastructure. Alexandria’s Complete Streets policy is one whose aim is to provide safe accommodations for all possible road users including people walking, cycling, taking the

SEE LETTERS, PAGE 21

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At **Rebuilding Together DC • Alexandria**, we want to build communities where people of all incomes and cultures live and work side by side, neighbor helping neighbor. This past weekend, volunteers provided free safe and healthy home repairs to over 40 low-income homeowners throughout DC and Alexandria.



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News



PHOTOS BY JANET BARNETT/GAZETTE PACKET

Reach and Rise for Excellence program participants Brooklyn Carmelo Clark and brother Robert Clark celebrating with mom Sheray Dempsey and advisory panel member Col. Jim Paige (ret.) at the 10th anniversary reception of the Concerned Citizens Network of Alexandria April 18 at the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office.

CCNA Celebrates 10 years

Lewis honored for her service.

The Concerned Citizens Network of Alexandria celebrated its 10th anniversary with a reception April 18 at the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office.

CCNA was founded in 2009 by Gwendolyn H. Lewis in response to a Washington Post article which identified T.C. Williams High School as one of the lowest performing schools in the state and with the highest dropout rates.

Lewis set out to create a community-wide effort to increase student achievement and reduce the dropout rates in Alexandria City Public Schools. CCNA uses three major programs in its outreach to schools, parents, students and families: Reach & Rise for Excellence (RARE); Parent Engagement; and Community Forums.

The 10th anniversary celebration featured the testimonies of students participating in the RARE program as well as remarks from current and former board members.



Founder Gwendolyn H. Lewis holds a plaque for her 10 years of service to CCNA as well as a plaque for Gwendolyn Day-Fuller, who could not be present.

Lewis was honored for her 10 years of service to the organization and Gwendolyn Day-Fuller was recognized for her years of support to the organization.

See www.ccnaalexandria.org.

— JEANNE THEISMANN



Col. Jim Paige (ret.), Gwendolyn H. Lewis and Dr. Bernard Jackson at the CCNA 10th anniversary reception April 18 at the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office

A Lethal Form of Abuse

Demystifying Munchausen's Syndrome by Proxy.

BY SERENA FISCHER
CAPITAL NEWS SERVICE

Recent programs such as Hulu's "The Act" and the HBO documentary "Mommy Dead and Dearest" have introduced audiences to a dangerous and often overlooked phenomenon: Munchausen's syndrome by proxy.

It is a mental health problem in which a caregiver causes an illness or injury to a vulnerable person — often a child. The disorder is difficult to diagnose and treat. Here are key facts about Munchausen syndrome by proxy, or MSBP.

What is it?

The symptoms of MSBP manifest as child or elder abuse, depending on the circumstances. Officials at the National Institutes of Health describe MSBP as "a special form of child abuse in which an adult repeatedly produces symptoms of illness in a person under his/her care."

Health professionals distinguish MSBP from Munchausen syndrome, a condition in which people intentionally harm themselves or purposely self-induce illness to satisfy a desire to be cared for. With MSBP, the perpetrator (often a mother) will inflict such symptoms on a child or elder as a way to inspire sympathy from others.

The methods used to garner such attention from others can range from simple lies about an illness to actual physical harm — even poisoning — of the victim.

Health officials say the victim may have been initially healthy but face the risk of becoming seriously ill or even dying in the care of someone with MSBP.

Studies cited by the NIH report a mortality rate between 6 percent and 10 percent for MSBP victims, making it one of the "most lethal forms of abuse."

The current medical term for such an illness is Factitious Disorder Imposed on Another, although it is more commonly referred to as MSBP. The phenomenon is relatively rare in the U.S. — making up just 1,000 of the approximately 2.5 million cases of child abuse reported annually.

Health experts said it is notoriously difficult to identify and properly treat Munchausen's syndrome by proxy. People with the disorder are known to be great liars and master manipulators.

One method they use is to alter medical tests and results to make it seem as if the person in their care is sicker than they truly are. People with MSBP can get away with this, health experts say, because they often are familiar with medical terms and concepts.

This could explain why many cases of abuse caused by people with MSBP can go undetected by medical staff and law enforcement for long periods of time.

Online organizations such as the Munchausen Syndrome by Proxy Survivor Support and Awareness Group on Facebook provide those affected by MSBP with a community to vent and to heal.

Two cases of MSBP involving young mothers in Virginia have been publicized in recent years. In both instances, the perpetrator was arrested on child abuse charges.

One case involved a 23-year-old woman whose 3-year-old son was being treated in 2016 at the Children's Hospital of the King's Daughters in Norfolk for "ongoing medical issues."

The woman was arrested after video surveillance from her son's room showed the young mother allegedly detaching medical equipment being used to give the boy vital medicine. The judge overseeing her case said there was reason to believe the woman gave doctors false information about her child's medical records.

Earlier this year, 29-year-old Elizabeth Malone admitted to purposely poisoning her 5-year-old son with syringes of her own blood while he was being treated at Inova Fairfax Hospital last spring. She said she did so because she "liked the way staff responded to him once he was bleeding." Video footage from a security camera shows Malone injecting blood into her son's IV line and tracheostomy tube.

Had she not been caught, according to doctors, it is likely that her child would have died from the injections, which resulted in high fevers and infections. Malone, who has two other children, will be sentenced in July.



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Support 14th Annual VisionWalk

The Foundation Fighting Blindness (FFB) and its Northern Virginia Chapter will host their 14th Annual VisionWalk on Sunday May 5, at Cameron Run Regional Park in Alexandria. Registration opens at 9 a.m. and the walk will commence at 10 a.m.

The VisionWalk is a family friendly 5K walk that serves to raise awareness and funds for vision-restoring research. The event is free to attend though donations are encouraged. Participants of all ages are welcome to attend. Dogs are also welcome at this event provided they are leashed. There will be bagels, coffee, and snacks available beforehand. There will also be face painting and fun outdoor games for children.

The event will kick off with an opening ceremony at 9:40 a.m. Medical Chair Dr. Faheem

Ahmed will speak as to the current medical advances. As part of the kick off ceremony there will be a competition among walk participants to determine the best t-shirt design, largest team, and team with the most money raised. At 10 a.m. the walk will begin. The course wraps through Holmes Run Trail and ends with a balloon arch in the Cameron Run Regional Park parking lot.

Since 2006, VisionWalk has raised over \$51 million to fund sight saving research nationally. This year the Northern Virginia walk will be approaching the benchmark of \$2 million in funds that have been raised.

Registration and sponsorship information can be found online at: www.fightblindness.org/NorthernVirginiaVisionWalk.

THE CONNECTION Newspapers & Online

UPCOMING SPECIAL SECTIONS

April

4/24/19.....Senior Living/Mother's Day Celebrations,
Dining & Gifts/Spring Outlook

May

5/1/19.....Mother's Day Dining & Gifts II
5/8/19.....HomeLifeStyle
5/15/19.....A+ Camps & Schools
5/22/19.....Senior Living
5/29/19.....Connection Families: Fun, Food,
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- Potomac Almanac
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- Vienna/Dakota Connection

ENTERTAINMENT



Katie Rey Bogdan as Lucy Meli and Colton Needles as Eddie Randall in rehearsals for “Ponzi.”



Christopher Overly as Carlo Ponzi and Talia Segal as Rose Gnecco Ponzi.



PHOTOS BY ROBERT BLIZARD

Lois Cecsarini who created the music and lyrics for “Ponzi.”

Play Reading for the Musical, ‘Ponzi’

Music and lyrics written by Alexandria resident Lois Cecsarini.

BY STEVE HIBBARD

With original music and lyrics by Lois Cecsarini of Alexandria, the first play reading of the new musical “Ponzi” will be held on Saturday, May 4, at 2 p.m. at the Nannie J. Lee Center in Alexandria.

It was a time of turmoil, with new technology flooding the market, as well as voting rights, Russian influence, and unrest on the Southern border dominating the headlines. Weary of war, people were anxious to believe their fortunes would soon change for the better. Enter Charles Ponzi, with his signature smile and confidence, ready to take anyone’s money and turn it into gold. So, began the saga that would make the name ‘Ponzi’ live on to this day.

According to Director Bridget Grace Sheaff: “Ponzi” is a new musical about the

life of Charles Ponzi who the Ponzi scheme is named after. A lot of the musical is taken from his autobiography. There’s quite a few direct quotes from his writings that end up in the text itself. It’s really about the scope of society around Ponzi, specifically in the heat of the 1920s and the rapidly changing century that we experienced in the early 1900s.”

Playwright and lyricist Lois Cecsarini of Alexandria said she had been inspired by a random audiobook on the life of Ponzi and found his autobiography, which is what the main inspiration is based upon. It took her 10 months to write.

“I was struck by that same question,” she said. “Why did people believe in this person? Why did they give him their money when it all seemed too good to be true? It’s a darn good story with a fascinating character — a complex character. He has moments of great insight and moments of self-

delusion, and I found that fascinating.”

She added: “For me, the story is about a man but also the crowds who respond to him. There are many different reasons the crowds respond to Ponzi. You could say it was greed but it was more than that.”

In composing the music, she said she wanted to make it sound vaguely 1920s. “I’m not well versed in jazz or genres composing specifically to those genres. So, there are syncopations that might remind you of Ragtime. And a few dance themes that were popular but mostly the story dictates the music and I try to listen to the voices,” she said.

Writing a musical is a long process and many changes are made along the way, she said. “First of all, every composer wants his or her work to come to life but you realize that to do that you have to give it over to the performing artists and the audience, and it’s a little daunting to let that go,” she said.

Cecsarini has written five plays or musicals; her writing started when she was stationed in the U.S. Foreign Service in Cape Town, South Africa, with her production of “The Gospel of Mary” in 1999.

Christopher Overly, 46, of Prince Frederick, Md., is playing the lead role of Ponzi, a swindler. “Money was of utmost importance to him. He generally cared for people but money edged them out. He actually stole money from paperboys and his brother-in-law. He took them as investors to the Ponzi scheme. But he would also literally give you the skin off his back. But almost everything he did was for a reason,” he said.

The first reading of the musical “Ponzi” will be held on Saturday, May 4, at 2 p.m. at the Nannie J. Lee Center, 1108 Jefferson St., Alexandria. No tickets are required; a free will donation will be taken. Visit www.lonotesmusic.com.

CALENDAR

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

ONGOING

Photography Exhibit: “Ranch Life.” Through May 5, daily 10 a.m.-5 p.m.; Thursdays, 2-8 p.m. at Multiple Exposures Gallery, The Torpedo Factory Art Center, 105 N Union St., Studio 312. Sandy LeBrun-Evans visited Eaton’s Ranch in Wyoming last year and was enamored with the lifestyle and how easy it was to forget the troubles of the world and to get lost in the past. Visit www.multipleexposuresgallery.com or call 703-683-2205.

Art Exhibit: “Bugs. Or Kafka on Prozac.” Through May 5, gallery hours at The Art League, 105 North Union St., Studio 21 in the Torpedo Factory Art Center. Megan Partridge’s “Bugs. Or Kafka on Prozac” takes a closer look at these tiny creatures that are often overlooked. The artist imparts each arthropod with a

personality as distinct as their biology, from the bedraggled bug aptly named Hangover Cricket to the speeding blur in Super Bee. Exhibitions are free and open to the public. Visit www.theartleague.org or call 703-683-1780.

THURSDAY-SATURDAY/MAY 2-4

Sailing on String. Thursday-Friday, 10:30 a.m.; Saturday, 10 and 11:30 a.m. at The Lab at Convergence, 1819 N. Quaker Lane. Arts on the Horizon produces original work exclusively for children ages 0-6 and their families. Follow two curious explorers on a voyage into a world made of string. This gentle, engaging performance features object transformation, movement, live string music, and captivating design. Best for children ages 0-2 and their families. Sign interpreted performance May 11, 10 a.m. \$7. Visit www.ArtsOnTheHorizon.org or call 571-549-1270.

FRIDAY/MAY 3

Ribbon-Cutting Ceremony. 10 a.m.



PHOTO BY H. PAUL MOON

Eclipse Music Director Abel Pereira and musicians.

Eclipse Chamber Orchestra

Britten: Lachrymae: Reflections on a Song of Dowland, Mahoko Eguchi, viola; Britten: Serenade for Tenor, Horn, and Strings, Benjamin Butterfield, tenor / Abel Pereira, horn; Haydn: Symphony No. 104, “London.” Sunday, May 5, 3-5 p.m. at George Washington Masonic Memorial, 101 Callahan Drive. \$30 suggested donation; students and children free. Visit www.eclipseco.org for more.

ENTERTAINMENT

Old Town Safeway, 500 S. Royal St. Safeway will unveil renovations to its Old Town store. The celebration will include live music from the New Line Brass Band, refreshments and free gifts. As part of the ribbon-cutting celebration, Safeway will present donations to two local community organizations: The Campagna Center and ALIVE!

UCM Give From the Heart Gala. 6 p.m. at Belle Haven Country Club, 6023 Fort Hunt Road. Hosted by The Friends of UCM, the 2019 Gala is also part of UCM's 50th Anniversary Celebration. The theme for the yearlong celebration is "50 Years of Neighbors Helping Neighbors." Honorary Co-Chairs are U.S. Sen. Mark Warner (D-VA) and Mrs. Addy Krizek, both former UCM Board members. \$200. RSVP at www.ucmagency.org.

MVHS Theatre Arts Alumni Night. 6:15 p.m. (reception); 7 p.m. performance. The MVHS Theatre Arts Alumni night will feature the MVHS Theatre scrapbook and honor all Mount Vernon alumni in their first annual MVHS Theatre Arts Alumni Night during the spring musical production of Cinderella. \$5-\$10. Purchase tickets online (www.itickets.com/events/402293.html) or at the door.

Symphony of Frogs. 7:30-9 p.m. at Huntley Meadows Park, 3701 Lockheed Blvd. Join a naturalist for an indoor discussion and a guided walk to listen for serenading frogs and toads. Adults. \$8. Call 703-768-2525 or visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/huntley-meadows.

Fostering the Future Gala 2019. 7 p.m. at Hummingbird, 220 South Union St. The Fund for Alexandria's Child hosts its Annual Fostering the Future Event — Captain's Night. This annual fundraiser supports the work of The Fund in providing life enriching opportunities for children in foster care and those at risk of abuse and neglect. Join for an evening of live/silent auction items, an oyster bar, hors d'oeuvres, cocktails, music and dancing. Nautical or cocktail attire. \$100. Visit www.FFAC2019.givesmart.com for tickets.

MAY 3-11

Old Town Cocktail Week. Take part in Alexandria's growing craft scene and enjoy specialty cocktails at restaurants and attend more than 20 events at boutiques, historic sites, restaurants and more. Old Town Cocktail Week is presented by Old



PHOTO BY GAIL BINGHAM

Two dancers on stage during a performance of Mouse in the House.

Mouse in the House

Adapted from the book "The Mouse of Amherst" by Elizabeth Spires, Mouse in House reveals an unlikely friendship between a lively mouse and reclusive 19th-century poet Emily Dickinson. Monday, May 6, 10-11 a.m. at Beatley Library, 5005 Duke St. Free. Call 703-933-1111 or visit www.janefranklin.com/mouse-show.

Town Business with support from the King Street Corridor Initiative. Old Town Cocktail Week kicks off with Art on the Rocks on May 3, presented by The Art League at the Torpedo Factory Art Center, and culminates with a Meet the Makers Virginia Spirits Tasting Event on May 11 at Gadsby's Tavern Museum. Admission varies depending on the event; visit OldTownCocktailWeek.com for details.

MAY 3-JUNE 2

Art Exhibit: "Sacred Feminine." Gallery hours at Del Ray Artisans Gallery, 2704 Mount Vernon Ave. This show explores female energy, the power of life and birth; it connects that energy to ideas, expressions, dreams, life and all of existence. Tap in to your Sacred Feminine and channel the goddess. An opening reception takes place Friday, May 3, 7-9 p.m. Visit DelRayArtisans.org/exhibits.

SATURDAY/MAY 4

Old Town Farmers' Market Spring

Kickoff. 7 a.m.-noon at Market Square, 301 King St. The City of Alexandria's historic Old Town Farmers' Market will host its Spring Kickoff, ushering in the return of favorite warm-weather vendors and the addition of new ones, each offering locally-sourced products including produce, breads, meats, art, flowers and prepared food. Visit alexandriava.gov/OldTownFarmersMarket.

5K Operation Walk/Run. 8-10 a.m. at Fort Hunt Park - Area B, 8999 Fort Hunt Road. Operation Walk Virginia is a not-for-profit volunteer medical services organization that provides free surgical treatment for patients in developing countries who have little or no access to life-improving care for arthritis. All proceeds from the 5K & 1 Mile Fun Run support a 2019 mission trip to Panama. \$35. Register at rnsignup.com/Race/VA/Alexandria/OperationWalk5K.

Ribbon Roses Workshop. 10 a.m.-noon at Green Spring Gardens, 4603 Green Spring Road. (Adults) Roses made of ribbons make beautiful and enduring gifts. Hear snippets of ribbon history while crafting a ribbon

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New Executive Director at ASO

George Hanson, the director of two music festivals and an experienced musician and manager will be the Alexandria Symphony Orchestra's new executive director.

Hanson has directed the Tucson Desert Song Festival, a collaborative endeavor among performing arts groups in the Tucson area since 2015. He is also the director of the Sunriver Music Festival in Bend, Ore. Hanson's career includes 20 years with the Tucson Symphony; work with such U.S. orchestras as Atlanta, Charlotte, Indianapolis and Phoenix; and six seasons at the Wuppertal Opera and Orchestra in Germany, as well as other musical activities throughout the U.S. and around the world. An attendee of the Eller College of Management at the University of Arizona Graduate School, he received his Master of Music from Indiana Univer-



George Hanson

PHOTO BY RICARDO LEON

sity. "George brings with him a truly unique portfolio of varied experiences moving orchestras forward from multiple angles and directions," said ASO Music Director James Ross. "He is a fabulous musician, an experienced arts leader, an articulate advocate for classical music, a mean golfer and a creative thought partner who will help raise the intensity of the ASO's vibrant connection to the city and its music lovers. With George on board, the breadth and depth of our impact can now blossom."

Hanson arrives at the ASO just as it completes its 75th anniversary season and its first season under Ross.

Subscriptions for the ASO's 2019-2020 season are now on sale and can be purchased by calling 703-548-0885 or by visiting www.alexsym.org.

DINING DIRECTORY

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www.royalrestaurantva.com

Old Town Alexandria's neighborhood restaurant delighting generations of families for over 115 years with delicious home-style American, Greek & Italian food favorites. Our customers rave about the quality of our food and our exceptional service. Stop by for breakfast, lunch & dinner or our popular Sunday Brunch!

ENTERTAINMENT

rose. Supplies included and refreshments served. Class meets at the Historic House. \$28/person. Register online at www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/parktakes/ using code AC9.3578 or call 703-642-5173.

RecFest: An Explosion of Fun for All Ages.

10 a.m.-2 p.m. at Armistead L. Boothe Park, 520 Cameron Station Blvd. RecFest is a day of fun for the whole family, with activities representing the City's fitness, sports, enrichment, arts, nature, out of school time, and summer camp programs. Food trucks will offer food for sale. Admission and all activities are free. Visit alexandriava.gov/Recreation. In case of inclement weather, the event will take place indoors at Samuel W. Tucker Elementary School, 435 Ferdinand Day Drive.

Pillars to Pavers. 10 a.m. and 2 p.m. at Lee-Fendall House Museum & Garden, 614 Oronoco St. This walking tour will explore the streets of Alexandria with stops to highlight how buildings have been preserved and reused for future generations to enjoy. \$35. Call 703-548-1789 or visit www.leafendallhouse.org.

Used Book Sale. 10 a.m.-4 p.m. at Sherwood Regional Library, 2501 Sherwood Hall Lane. Selection of over 20,000 gently used books, including children's books, fiction, history, biography, home and garden, cooking, crafts, sports, religion, travel, CDs, DVDs, and more. Unless specially priced, \$1 for hard backs, 50 cents for large paperbacks, and 25 cents for mass market paperbacks. Visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/library/branches/friends-of-sherwood-regional.

Story Time for Little Historians. 11 a.m. at the Alexandria Black History Museum, 902 Wythe St., Alexandria.

Enjoy cultural stories and creative craft activities that introduce world history and folklore. This month, featuring The Fantastic Undersea Life of Jacques Cousteau by Dan Yaccarino. Afterwards, explore the museum exhibits to learn about local Black history. All ages welcome, but most suitable for children 4 and older. Admission is \$3 per person. All children must be accompanied by an adult. Call 703-746-4356.

Grand Opening. Noon-6 p.m. at School of Rock Alexandria, 3260 Duke St. Family fun and kid friendly event. Discounts on programs and camps. Regional School of Rock House bands will be performing live. Ribbon cutting and guitar smashing ceremony. Free trial lessons. Raffle. Food and fun. Free. Call 571-376-ROCK or visit Alexandria.schoolofrock.com.

New Musical Reading: Ponzi. 2 p.m. at Nannie J. Lee Center, 1108 Jefferson St. A first reading of the new musical Ponzi, with music and lyrics by Lois Cecsarini. Weary of war and want, people were anxious to believe their fortunes would soon change for the better. Enter one Charles Ponzi, with his signature smile and cock-sure confidence, ready to take anyone's hard-earned money and turn it into gold. No tickets required; free will donation.

Documentary Screening. 2 p.m. at Alexandria's History Museum at The Lyceum, 201 S. Washington St. Construction workers discovered the body of a 19th century African American woman in an iron coffin in Queens, New York. This documentary follows forensic archaeologist Scott Warnasch and a team of historians and scientists as they investigate this woman's story and the time in which she lived. The Alexandria Black

History Museum presents a free screening of the PBS documentary followed by a lecture by Dr. Douglas Owsley of the Smithsonian Institution. Free; open to the public. Reserve a seat by calling 703-746-4356.

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

Chocolate & Wine Tasting. 6:30-9 p.m. at Carlyle House Historic Park, Alexandria. Join Potomac Chocolate on the Magnolia Terrace for an evening of locally made chocolates paired with wines. There will also be small snacks that guests can enjoy between wine and chocolate. Tours of the house will run from 6:30-7 with the tasting at 7. Ages 21 and over only. Registration required, no refunds. \$40. Find tickets at apm.activecommunities.com/novaparks/Activity_Search/2568.

Acoustic Eidolon. 7 p.m. at St. Aidan's Episcopal Church, 8531 Riverside Road. Acoustic Eidolon is Joe Scott and Hannah Alkire. Their music is a combination of Celtic, classical and contemporary folk. This show will be a benefit for Holly's Hands Southern Animal Charity (www.hollyshandscharity.org). Tickets are \$18 in advance at www.focusmusic.org/buy-tickets and for members, \$20 at the door.



Story Time for Little Historians

Enjoy cultural stories and creative craft activities that introduce world history and folklore. This month, featuring The Fantastic Undersea Life of Jacques Cousteau by Dan Yaccarino. Afterwards, explore the museum exhibits to learn about local Black history. All ages welcome, but most suitable for children 4 and older. Saturday, May 4, 11 a.m. at the Alexandria Black History Museum, 902 Wythe St., Alexandria. Admission is \$3 per person. All children must be accompanied by an adult. Call 703-746-4356.

SUNDAY/MAY 5

Walk for a Cure. 9 a.m. at Cameron Run Regional Park. The Foundation

Operation Walk-Virginia Annual 5K & 1 Mile Family Fun Run

Saturday, May 4th, 2019

This is a kid and dog friendly event!

Race Starts at 8:00am

Same Day Packet Pickup at Fort Hunt Park @ 7am.

Ft Hunt Park, Area B

8999 Fort Hunt Rd, Area B, Alexandria, VA 22308

To register go to:

<https://runsignup.com/OperationWalk5K>

Registration fee of \$35 includes a T-shirt and Race Packet



Operation Walk Virginia is a not-for-profit volunteer medical services organization that provides free surgical treatment for patients in developing countries who have little or no access to life-improving care for arthritis. All proceeds from the 5K & 1 Mile Fun Run go to supporting our 2019 mission trip to Panama. Thank you for your support!

CALENDAR

			1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9
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28	29	30	31		

**Let us know
about an
upcoming event**

connectionnewspapers.com/Calendar

ENTERTAINMENT

4 Dates to Circle in May

BY HOPE NELSON

From beer tastings to Italian cuisine to a book release, May is shaping up to be an action-packed month for Alexandria's foodies. Here are some of the month's top picks.

Old Town Drinks Book Release at The Hour, May 7

Join author Victoria Vergason to celebrate the release of her new book, "Old Town Drinks," a showcase of local watering holes and their cocktail menus.

Think of it as a travel guide for those looking for a libation that matches their mood. Twenty-one establishments are featured, as are 42 different cocktail recipes for you to try at home. 1015 King St. 6:30-8:30 p.m. \$40, which includes a copy of the book.

Steal the Taster Night at Hops N Shine, May 9

Northern Virginia's own Crooked Run Brewing will kick off Hops N Shine's May 9 happy hour with an array of its latest brews. Take advantage of the eatery's happy hour prices – including \$2 off appetizers and a number of drink specials to boot. On your way out, pocket a taster glass from Crooked Run – it's not shoplifting if they give you permission. 3410 Mount Vernon Ave. 5-8 p.m.

CALENDAR

Fighting Blindness (FFB) and its Northern Virginia Chapter will host their 14th Annual VisionWalk. The VisionWalk is a family friendly 5K walk that serves to raise awareness and funds for research. Free to attend though donations are encouraged. Participants of all ages are welcome, as well as leashed dogs. Registration and sponsorship information can be found at www.fightblindness.org/NorthernVirginiaVisionWalk.

Spring Ballet: Coppelia. 12:30 and 3:30 p.m. at Metropolitan School of the Arts, 5775 Barclay Ave., Alexandria. \$12. Visit www.metropolitanschoolofthearts.org for more.

Tutor & Student Reunion. 1:30-3:30 p.m. at Calvary Presbyterian Church, 6120 N. Kings Highway. A tutoring program that began 30 years ago at Calvary Presbyterian Church has impacted the lives of more than 750 Mount Eagle Elementary School students. Anyone who participated in Eagles Wings as a tutor, substitute tutor, Mount Eagle staff member or teacher, and Eagles Wings' student alumni over the past 30 years is invited to a celebration of the Eagles Wings Tutoring program commemorating the 30 years of collaboration between the school and the community. Email ladyalicemiller@gmail.com or call 703-960-3743 with questions.

Eclipse Chamber Orchestra. 3-5 p.m. at George Washington Masonic Memorial, 101 Callahan Drive. Britten: Lachrymae: Reflections on a Song of Dowland, Mahoko Eguchi, viola; Britten: Serenade for Tenor, Horn, and Strings, Benjamin Butterfield, tenor / Abel Pereira, horn; Haydn: Symphony No. 104, "London." \$30 suggested donation; students and children free. Visit www.eclipseco.org for more.

Lloyd, Martin & Vox plus Shanna in a Dress. 7 p.m. at George Washington Masonic National Memorial, 101 Callahan Drive. Lloyd, Martin and Vox marry Heather Aubrey Lloyd's powerhouse percussion, Victoria Vox's renowned mouth trumpet and ukulele prowess

and Kipyn Martin's flawless folk songwriting and vocals. Shanna in a Dress is a smashing combination of clever lyrics, sweet serenade, and tongue twisting rhymes. Tickets are \$18 in advance at www.focusmusic.org/buy-tickets and for members, \$20 at the door.

MONDAY/MAY 6

Mouse in the House. 10-11 a.m. at Beatley Library, 5005 Duke St. Adapted from the book "The Mouse of Amherst" by Elizabeth Spire, Mouse in House reveals an unlikely friendship between a lively mouse and reclusive 19th-century poet Emily Dickinson. Free. Call 703-933-1111 or visit www.janefranklin.com/mouse-show.

Garden Sprouts Spring-Nature Playgroup. 10-11:30 a.m. at Green Spring Gardens, 4603 Green Spring Road. (3-5 yrs.) Preschoolers enjoy nature-themed toys and puzzles while parents chat. Explore monthly topics with games, songs, activities and a garden walk. The May topic is worms. \$8/child. Register online at www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/parktakes/ using code EDA.9A9B or call 703-642-5173.

TUESDAY/MAY 7

Yoga on the Magnolia Terrace. May-October; Tuesdays, 5:30-6:30 p.m.; Saturdays, 10-11 a.m., at Carlyle House Historic Park, 121 N. Fairfax St. Join for an hour long Vinyasa Flow Yoga on Carlyle House's Magnolia Terrace. A gentle flow yoga class that uses the breath to flow from one pose to the other. Bring water, a towel, and yoga mat. Wear comfortable yoga wear. Class may be cancelled due to extreme weather. Call the site to check class status. \$5 per class, \$20 for 5 classes. Visit www.novaparks.com/parks/carlyle-house-historic-park.

TUESDAY-SATURDAY/MAY 7-11

Sailing on String. Tuesday-Friday,

A Taste of Italy in Old Town at The Italian Place, May 19

The Italian Place has teamed up with Ciao DC to offer a round-the-country taste of Italy without leaving Alexandria. Taste a sampling of Italian wines, nibble on antipasto and start your Italian language lessons all in one compact afternoon. Salut! 621 Wythe St. 3-5 p.m. \$15.

Memorial Day Party at Port City Brewing, May 25

Port City Brewing Company is hosting an all-day soiree to kick off Memorial Day weekend festivities, and it's safe to say that the party has something for most every taste. The day starts with the inaugural Rivershed Run 5K, which leads runners through Cameron Run Park and winds back toward – you guessed it – the brewery, where participants can cool off and refuel with both beer and lots of food. Barbecue and apple pie are on the menu, and the brewery's new Rivershed Ale, a dry-hopped pale ale, is on tap. 3950 Wheeler Ave. Run at 10 a.m.; festivities run at the brewery through 10 p.m. \$45 registration for race; free admission for party.

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

10:30 a.m.; Saturday, 10 and 11:30 a.m. at The Lab at Convergence, 1819 N. Quaker Lane. Arts on the Horizon produces original work exclusively for children ages 0-6 and their families. Follow two curious explorers on a voyage into a world made of string. This gentle, engaging performance features object transformation, movement, live string music, and captivating design. Best for children ages 0-2 and their families. Sign interpreted performance May 11, 10 a.m. \$7. Visit www.ArtsOnTheHorizon.org or call 571-549-1270.

MAY 7-JUNE 15

Photography Exhibit: "Tonal Visions." Gallery hours at Multiple Exposures Gallery, Torpedo Factory Art Center #312, 105 N. Union St. Featuring work by Alan Sislen. The highly graphic, black and white architectural images in this exhibit explore the range and beauty of tones that might or might not have existed, but were visible in the mind of the photographer. Whether it's the darkest tones that convey a sense of mystery, the brightest tones that attract attention, or the mid-tones that provide the connecting tissue, it is this range of tonalities that shapes the lines, curves, volumes and objects to give the structures life, beauty and meaning. This exhibit is an exploration of tonalities. Visit www.MultipleExposuresGallery.com or call 703-683-2205.

THURSDAY/MAY 9

Garden Tour & Tea. 1-3 p.m. at Green Spring Gardens, 4603 Green Spring Road. (Adult) Tour the lush demonstration gardens with master gardener docents. View show-stopping plants of spring and learn how to grow them. Hear about Green Spring's past and how horticultural and historical resources are shared with visitors today. \$32. Call 703-941-7987, TTY 703-324-3988.



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T.C. Williams High School scholarship recipients Lutfi LaSida, Ailysh Motsinger, Tessa Naughton-Rockwell and Ella Foster.



T.C. Williams High School graduate Lutfi LaSida, former Mayor Allison Silberberg and gala supporters Karen Modzel and Sally Nelson.

Titanic Dreams

Gala celebrates TC scholarship recipients.

By JEANNE THEISMANN
GAZETTE PACKET

It was a sold-out crowd of 550 attendees as the Scholarship Fund of Alexandria celebrated the success of more than 160 scholarship recipients from the T.C. Williams class of 2019.

Held April 27 at the Hilton Mark Center, the SFA annual gala recognized this year's recipients, including Amaiya Howard, who was awarded the Madelyn Anderson Memorial Scholarship of \$40,000 over four-years.

Since 1986, SFA has provided financial aid to thousands of Alexandria students and their families and awarded scholarships with a total value over \$5.5 million to more than 2,900 T.C. Williams graduates.

The Spring gala serves as SFA's signature event, honoring the achievements of past scholarship recipients and raises funds to help send local T.C. Williams High School



Executive director Beth Lovain, right, with assistants Margaret Feldman and Lois Brown.

students with financial need to college.

Alexandria City Public Schools Superintendent Gregory Hutchings is a T.C. Will-



Victor and Tammy Ignacio

iams graduate and 1995 Scholarship Fund of Alexandria recipient. "I am a scholarship recipient and it changed the trajectory of



Diane and Yon Lambert

my life," said Hutchings.

For more information, visit www.alexscholarshipfund.org.



Matt Megary with Fredericka and Reginald Smith



T.C. alumnae Colleen and Cara Donley

PHOTOS BY JANET BARNETT
GAZETTE PACKET



Jack Taylor, a founding supporter of the Scholarship Fund of Alexandria, with Emily, Keely and Mike Potterfield.

LETTERS

FROM PAGE 13

bus or driving. Another policy the city is currently implementing is Vision Zero, modeled after successful efforts in Sweden and other jurisdictions in the U.S. and Europe. The goal of Vision Zero is to minimize, if not outright eliminate, injuries resulting from transportation crashes on our roads. Combined, these policies guide our city in making transportation decisions with the safety of all road users in mind.

The Seminary Road Complete Streets Alternative 3 fits the mold of both of the above policies. It will effectively reduce excessive vehicular speeds, it will provide cycling infrastructure for people who wish to ride their bikes to Old Town by connecting to Janneys Lane, and it will create safe crossings and a buffer for people walking on the sidewalk so that they can comfortably stroll around their neighborhood.

One of the responsibilities of government in our country is the safety of its citizens. The proposed configuration of Seminary Road in Alternative 3 is well within that mandate.

Jake Jakubek
Alexandria

Critical Changes

To the Editor:

I feel very strongly that Seminary Road, along with other city streets, should be revamped to include safety features such as bike lanes and better pedestrian crossings. The West End of Alexandria should not be known as the "car required" part of the city.

Walking and biking, along with public transportation and driving, should be among the transportation options for all city residents. Our roads need to be efficient and safe for all modes of transportation.

I have three school age children and we have lived in the West End for 16 years. Seminary Road is a main corridor for us. My children could be riding their bikes to school as well as social and extracurricular activities if I felt it was safe enough.

By adopting a Complete Streets Policy in 2011, the City of Alexandria directed transportation planners to design and operate the entire right of way to enable safe access for all users, regardless of age, ability, or mode of transportation. This has worked well on King Street. I believe this will work well on Seminary Road.

I fully understand that the issue is contentious but as citizens we must rely on city staff and leaders to make the right decisions, which are not always the most popular.

I believe many of the opponents to this plan are being swayed by misinformation and fears about traffic that simply will not materialize. I want to reduce the traffic on our roads like everyone else. What we cannot afford to do is bury our collective heads in the sand and insist the status quo is optimal simply because we fear better practice alternatives that involve change.

To go forward to the next phase without making these critical changes would risk setting a dangerous precedent of street engineering by popularity contest, rather than applying city policies and best practices.

Jesse Strauss
Alexandria

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NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING is hereby given that Alexandria Renew Enterprises (AlexRenew) will hold a PUBLIC HEARING on its PROPOSED OPERATING AND CAPITAL BUDGET for the FISCAL YEAR ENDING JUNE 30, 2020 on Tuesday, June 18th, 2019 at 6:00 p.m. The meeting will be held at AlexRenew's Environmental Center Building located at 1800 Limerick Street, Alexandria, VA. The proposed budget is available for examination by the public online at www.alexrenew.com and during regular business hours at the above address. Copies will be made available upon request - phone (703) 549-3381 ext. 2260. May 2nd and June 6th.

Alexandria Renew Enterprises
BY: William Dickinson
Secretary - Treasurer

Legals

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Obituary



John Lloyd Seaman, a longtime resident of Alexandria, was born 09-10-38 and passed away 04-22-19 at the age of 80. He is survived by his wife of 55 years, Gunnel Seaman; his son, Olof Seaman; daughter, Maria McNeley; 3 grandchildren; and 1 great granddaughter. His memorial service will be held at Christ Church, 118 N. Washington St., Alexandria, VA 22314 on Friday May 3rd at 1:30 pm. A reception will follow the service. In lieu of flowers please donate to American Cancer Society, in memory of John L. Seaman.

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As Luck Has Had It



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

Aside from the fatigue I experienced a few columns ago, this immunotherapy infusion is, and has been, quite manageable.

My biggest take away so far is that I've had no real quality of life issues, as had been the case with my previous chemotherapy/alimta infusions. With that drug, I had post-infusion eating challenges and for nearly a week after the fact, felt less than mediocre.

Moreover, I wouldn't say I felt like I had cancer, but I certainly was reminded of it — if that makes any sense.

And even though I do have some minor side effects from my current immunotherapy infusion, I am reminded nevertheless, that I have cancer. Not because of how I feel, as was the case previously, but because of how I look — and because of what I feel.

I am referring to my "Adam's apple" tumor. Not only can/do I 'look' it all the time but quite often, depending on how I move my head: forward/downward, I can feel it too.

I have to tell you, feeling it as I do, and looking at it as often as I do: every day, is unsettling.

My whole approach to this living-with-cancer life has been to compartmentalize it a la Jerry Seinfeld and "the vault." Out of sight has helped keep some things out of mind. And when things are out of mind, it's much easier to make believe.

And making believe has been one of my methods of "operandi" since Feb. 20, 2009. That's the date (you bet I remember) when my internal medicine doctor called me at work with the results of my previous week's biopsy: "malignant," he said.

Up until that call, the previous six weeks' diagnostic pursuit had been interesting in a curious kind of way wondering what all the goings on were about and when all these inconveniences would end. And not for a minute during this entire process did I ever think I'd be diagnosed with a "terminal" disease: non-small cell lung cancer, stage IV. I figured, to the extent I figured at all, that the process would result in much having been done about nothing.

Boy was I wrong!

I still remember — and laugh when I recall the phone conversation I had with my thoracic surgeon after he had received the results of my PET scan: "You lit that thing up like a Christmas tree," he said.

Presuming that wasn't good news, I replied: "I hear there are false positives all the time which is why these scans aren't used a lot." (A perfect example of a little knowledge in the wrong mouth.)

I can't recall if the doctor snickered before he said the following: "Well, then your scan was a world record false positive." I don't know if I grasped the obvious at that point but soon a surgical biopsy was ordered and the rest is Kenny-with-cancer history, a history with which many of you regular readers are all too familiar.

And that's a familiarity which I hope has not bred contempt. Because even though it's my life — and I'm stuck with it (as the old saying says), it need not be yours. I can well imagine and appreciate how living with and/or seeking out negativity is not likely to improve any one's lot in life. (I try to avoid it every day.)

To that end, I have always tried to tread lightly and write with a soft touch since I've been cancer-centric beginning June 10, 2009, when I published my first column on the subject: "Dying To Tell You, Sort Of." And in so doing, I've tried to see the light amid the darkness and be thankful for any in between.

I can't say it's been fun, but it's funny how things have turned out: alive and reasonably well, 10-plus years later.

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

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News

Expansion

FROM PAGE 5

study. But the city government would give some leeway in zoning restrictions, allowing a facility up to 60 feet tall, or 4-5 stories, on that site.

HONING PROGRAMMING & SITE SELECTION

Toward defining new high school programming, which in turn will drive space requirements and site selection, the administration will establish an advisory "Educational Design Team." The team will comprise 11-15 school personnel, including student representatives. In developing their recommendations, the team will consult with "Industrial Advisory Boards," which will comprise community representatives from business, government, higher education and nonprofits.

The administration says it will evaluate site options according to a weighted index of both qualitative and quantitative factors, including: promotion of the "educational vision," land/building availability and price, ability to address capacity deficits at other grade levels, community support or opposition, local economic impact, etc.

Zoning at George Washington Middle School would allow about 500,000 square feet of facility space, which is more than enough to accommodate the schools' needs, said School Board member Michelle Rief.

"[Could we] build another high school at G.W. and build another middle school somewhere else?" she asked.

G.W. and Francis Hammond middle schools both have zoning allowances for facilities larger than current T.C. Williams King Street and Minnie Howard.

BUDGET IMPLICATIONS

The city and schools' budgets allocate about \$15 million in FY 2020 (begins July 1) for project planning and \$103 million in FY 2021. They also set aside \$30 million for land acquisition, which the high school project could end up tapping into.

However, budgeted project costs could change within the next year.

"The design and the programming are going to have to inform what our [FY] 2021 request [to the city for funding] will be. It will be modified somewhat from what's in the [budget] now," said Anthony.

City Manager Mark Jinks said: "I have always considered the \$119 M more as a large interim placeholder than a precisely calculated amount. ... The high school solution/sites are not yet fixed and when that is better known a more firm calculation could be made. The Virginia local government system which bifurcates taxation and funding from the educational decision making creates interesting dynamics which is why it is vitally important to have a solid working relationship between the City and Schools (both at the staff and elected levels) so the discussion of needs and funding can occur collaboratively rather than occur as if on two separate planets. I think that the City and the Schools should be able to find an acceptable balance between educational facility needs and funding realities."

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McEneaney Associates has always had one motto in mind... not to be the biggest, but the best. This year marks our 39th year in Alexandria, and we are celebrating our investment in helping to build our town into the thriving community it is today. To learn more about our Associates and our firm, visit www.WeAreAlexandria.com

#WeAreAlexandria



Old Town | \$1,779,000

This circa 1877 all-brick Victorian gem is fully detached on a double lot with an exquisite lush walled garden and 2 off-street parking spaces. Formal entertaining spaces perfect for small or larger gatherings. Please call today for a private showing!

Colleen Coopersmith 703.338.2930
www.ColleenCoopersmith.com



OPEN SUN 5/5, 2-4

Del Ray | \$779,900

4-bedroom, 1-bath classic bungalow! Warm hardwoods throughout. Kitchen, dining, living rooms, 2 bedrooms & full bath on main floor. 2 upper bedrooms. Deck & unfinished lower level with walk-out to flat backyard. Walk to Metro & "The Avenue." 206 E Nelson Avenue

Jen Walker 703.675.1566
www.JenWalker.com



OPEN SUN 5/5, 2-4

Arlington/National Landing | \$1,499,000

Views Beyond Compare! This double unit condo (2,800 SF) offers an open floor plan perfect for elegant entertaining! Features include 3 bedrooms, 3 baths & views of all that is Washington, DC. Two car spaces & 4th of July fireworks convey! 1200 Crystal Dr #1413-1414.

Janet Caterson Price 703.622.5984
www.JanetPriceHomes.com



Del Ray | \$649,900

3-bedroom, 2-bath townhouse offers plenty of living space. Main level features a living & dining room and kitchen. Finished lower level rec room and full bath. Enjoy the large fenced yard and screened-in porch. Metro and "The Avenue" just blocks away!

Jen Walker 703.675.1566
www.JenWalker.com



Old Town | \$435,000

This one has it all! Steps away from Braddock Rd Metro and 6 blocks to King St! Gorgeous condo is on the quiet side of the building with 2 ample bedrooms and garage parking. Updated kitchen & spacious living areas with walkout to balcony overlooking courtyard.

Kim Peele 703.244.5852
www.ThePeeleGroup.biz



OPEN SUN 5/5, 2-4

Springfield | \$539,900

Recently refreshed, this 4-bedroom home sits on a large corner lot with fenced yard and patio. New flooring on the main level and carpeting on the upper level. Living room with fireplace. Lower level den, bedroom, full bath and utility room. 8021 Ellet Road

Richard McGuire 703.627.1985
www.RichardMcGuire.net



OPEN SUN 5/5, 2-4

Alexandria \$385,000

Amazingly bright townhouse in South Kings Station. This 2-bedroom, 2.5-bath has been meticulously maintained. The master offers double closets, skylights and vaulted ceilings. Cozy lower level with fireplace and fenced back yard. Close to Huntington Metro. 6522 Brick Hearth Court

Rebecca McCullough 571.384.0941
www.RebeccaMcCullough.com

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