



PHOTOS BY JANET BARNETT/GAZETTE PACKET

Runners take to the course of the 44th annual Alexandria Turkey Trot Nov. 28 in Del Ray.

Fowl Play Thousands turn out for 44th annual Turkey Trot.

BY JEANNE THEISMANN
GAZETTE PACKET

They came, they saw and they conquered. More than 6,000 runners awoke in the pre-dawn hours on Thanksgiving Day to take to the streets of Del Ray in the 44th annual Alexandria Turkey Trot.

"This was a record-breaking year for the Turkey Trot," said Gayle Reuter of the Del Ray Business Association, one of the sponsors of the race. "We had over 6,000

"This was a record-breaking year for the Turkey Trot."

— DRBA member
Gayle Reuter

registered runners, raised over \$6,000 for ALIVE! and collected over 2,200 pounds of canned goods."

Co-sponsored by the Del Ray Business Association and DC Road Runners Club, the Thanksgiving Day race

serves as a fundraiser for Alive! with runners donating canned or non-perishable food items as part of the registration.

The 5-mile USATF-certified course led runners through the streets of Del Ray and Rosemont, beginning and ending at George Washington Middle School.

Jack Taylor, a self-made busi-

nessman, philanthropist and owner of Jack Taylor's Alexandria Toyota, served as Grand Marshal. He has been recognized as a Living Legend of Alexandria and is a past recipient of ACT for Alexandria's Legacy of Service.

"There is no one in Alexan-



A Turkey Trot runner stretches before the start of the Thanksgiving Day race in Del Ray.

'Open, Honest Discussions About Race'

School division focuses on equity amid persistent racial bias.

BY BRIDGETTE ADU-WADIER
GAZETTE PACKET

Students and teachers in Alexandria still face racial bias, and now school officials are working with social justice advocates to expand training sessions and restorative justice practices.

That's some of the aftermath of an alarming racial equity survey conducted this year to prevent race and socioeconomic status from being predictors of academic success or opportunity. The survey assessed areas of racial inequity in five categories: educational instruction, engagement, physical integration, social-emotional environment and learning opportunities.

"Race is often an elephant in the room but it's rarely addressed," said Student Services Chief Julie Crawford.

Alexandria City Public Schools is a minority-majority school division, where only one out of four students is white. Hispanic students are 36 percent, and black students are 27 percent. Almost 60 percent of students in Alexandria qualify for free or reduced-price meals, an indication that they live in poverty.

At the elementary school level, minorities and whites are spread out, some with a majority Black and Hispanic population like John Adams Elementary School and

some with a majority white population like Matthew Maury. The demographics are less balanced at the middle school level; 75 percent of students at Francis Hammond Middle School identify as Black or Hispanic, with fifteen percent identifying as white. There are considerably more white students at George Washington Middle School, with the minority population comprising 52% of all students.

In September, the Alexandria School Board voted 6 to 3 to expand T.C. Williams High School instead of opening a new high school. Equity and access to educational opportunities were the two of the most popular reasons for sup-

porting the decision. "With one high school, we will be able to ensure all students have access and are fully engaged in a high quality learning environment," said Superintendent Gregory Hutchings. "It will allow us to acknowledge that regardless of your circumstances, regardless of your ZIP code..."

Employee biases and perceptions contribute to inequities in school discipline, according to school division suspension data. Black and Hispanic students are suspended at a disproportionately higher rate compared to white students. That has stayed consistent for several years, and students notice this disparity.

SEE RACE, PAGE 11

"Race is often an elephant in the room but it's rarely addressed."

— Student Services Chief
Julie Crawford on the
racial equity audit

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Hilary G., *Seller Client*

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WEEK IN ALEXANDRIA

Scottish Origins

Alexandria's Christmas Walk dates back to mid-1960s, a time when the YWCA had a colonial theme for the festivities. Then, in 1970, everything went plaid. That was the year that the Christmas Walk became the Scottish Walk, a theme chosen to celebrate the city's Scottish founders.

The kickoff that year happened Friday night in Market Square with a program titled "All Hail to Christmas." The next morning, Scottish pipers and drummers wearing kilts opened the doors of various places on the walk, starting at the "Scotland House" at 607 South Washington Street, where the owners accepted the traditional sprig of heather as a formal salute to Christmas.

At noon, the pipers gathered at the stops of the Old Presbyterian Meeting House, where the public was invited for a service of carols and anthems with a message from **William Sengel** (father of longtime Commonwealth's Attorney **Randy Sengel**) on the contributions of the Scots in Alexandria.

A Scottish menu was also the theme of the luncheon served at Christ Church that year, including a rib-sticking Tartan Hot Pot along with smoked salmon and anchovy butter. Tickets were only \$3.50, and that included a fashion show.

As the Campagna Center prepares for the 50th anniversary of the Scottish Walk, those humble origins many years ago have grown into a holiday juggernaut that attracts visitors from across the region.

"2020 is not only the 50th anniversary of the Scottish Walk, it's also the 75th anniversary of the Campagna Center," said **Andrew Palmieri**, chairman of the board of directors. "So it'll be a really big year for us."

Planeando Para el Futuro

It's rare that planning for the future has been such a high-stakes endeavor. But the arrival of the new Amazon headquarters in Arlington is creating an unprecedented sense of uncertainty in Arlandria, a neighborhood of Latino residents that hugs the southern border of Arlington.

Housing values are expected to skyrocket, and the cost of living is also expected to rise dramatically. All of that is creating pressure in a neighborhood where the median household income is about \$54,000 and 77 percent of children speak Spanish at home. City officials are responding by conducting a series of neighborhood sessions, including an inaugural event that was conducted entirely in Spanish.

"I cannot remember the last time the city held a meeting entirely in Spanish," said Councilman **Canek Aguirre**, Alexandria's first Latino member of City Council.

"I can confirm it was our first planning meeting that was conducted entirely in Spanish," added City Manager **Mark Jinks**.

"Wonderful," responded Aguirre. "This is an area that's going to be highly impacted considering the arrival of Amazon and Virginia Tech. Their voices are going to be very important in this planning process."

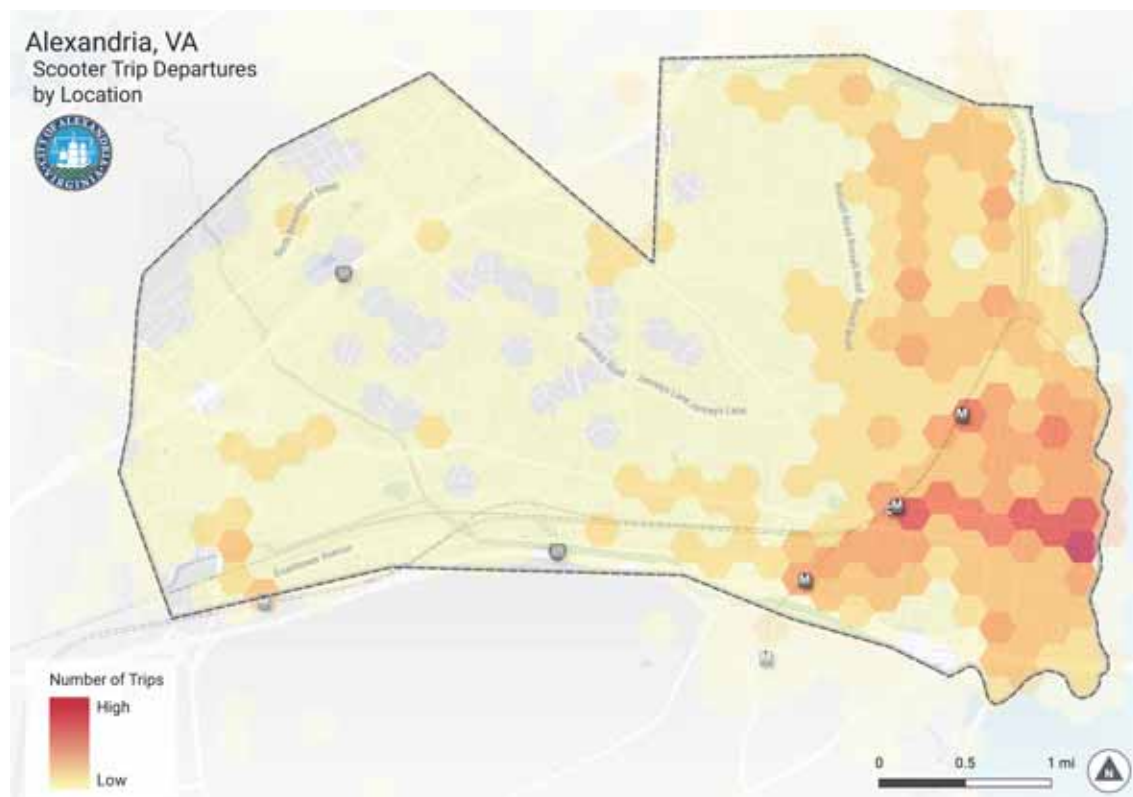
Transgender Moment

Two years ago, Virginia elected its first transgender member to the oldest lawmaking body in the New World: **Danica Roem**. Since that time, the august chamber has dropped gender-specific titles in favor of more neutral language and people started adding gender identifiers to their Twitter profiles. Now Alexandria may be on the verge of having its own transgender moment.

Councilman **Mo Seifeldin** says he's preparing an amendment to the city's Human Rights Code to add gender identity and transgender status, which he says is long overdue. He plans on formally introducing it later this month.

"No one should have to be left out of the Human Rights Code," said Seifeldin, announcing the proposal last week. "This is acknowledging a person's basic humanity."

— MICHAEL LEE POPE



Responding to concerns that the vast majority of scooter availability is in Old Town, the City Council is considering a proposal to require scooter companies to deploy 10 percent of all scooters west of Quaker Lane and another 10 percent west of Interstate 395.

Scooting into 2020

City Council considers extending dockless mobility pilot program.

BY MICHAEL LEE POPE
GAZETTE PACKET

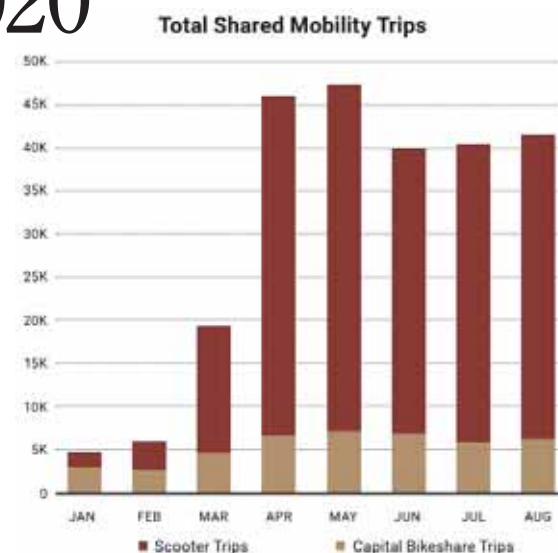
Alexandria is bitterly divided over scooters, and a recent survey showed that the city is just about evenly split between people who hate the dockless mobility program and people who love it. That's the backdrop for members of the Alexandria City Council, who are now considering extending the pilot into next year. A public hearing on the issue is scheduled for Dec. 14.

At issue are thorny questions about sidewalks and equity, vexing policy issues that confront a city grafting 21st century technology onto 18th century streets. Perhaps the trickiest question is whether scooters should be allowed on sidewalks. If scooters follow the same rules as bicycles, they would be allowed on almost every sidewalk in the city. But council members are considering a plan to forbid them on sidewalks in parts of Old Town and along Mount Vernon Avenue in Del Ray. The no-go zone in Old Town would be from the waterfront to West Street and from Montgomery Street to Wilkes Street.

"For enforcement purposes, it needed to be something that is clear and crisp," said City Manager Mark Jinks, "something that could be easily remembered."

But how will tourists know when and where they are allowed on sidewalks? And how can the Alexandria Police Department possibly monitor and enforce this newly created sidewalk prohibition? What happens when scooters become more popular on the sidewalks of Del Ray? These remain open questions as council members prepare to vote on potentially extending the pilot program.

"I don't know how realistic the enforcement is," said Councilman Mo Seifeldin, a vocal critic of the pilot program. "If it's there and we don't put constant enforcement, we're going to be hearing from the residents."



More than 230,000 scooter trips were reported from January through August. The average trip time was 10 to 15 minutes, and the average distance was just under a mile. Scooter companies report about 15,000 active users in Alexandria.

Council members are also likely to hear from residents about a lack of equity. Responding to a concern that the vast majority of scooter availability is in Old Town, the City Council is considering a proposal to require scooter companies to deploy 10 percent of all scooters west of Quaker Lane and another 10 percent west of Interstate 395. That would flood parts of the city that have yet to see any scooters at all, although it flies in the face of the business model that balances supply and demand.

"My concerns is not about their business model," said Councilman John Taylor Chapman. "We need to make sure all of our residents have equal access."

But requiring hundreds of scooters in areas where there is less demand could cause another problem: unused scooters sitting idle. Anticipating neighborhood complaints about pristine rows of untouched scooters clogging the public right of way, council members are trying to navigate the need for equity with the demands of the marketplace.

"There's a concern with being overly rigid here," said Mayor Justin Wilson. "We don't want to cause more problems than we solve."

Important Work of Journey Films

BY ASHLEY SIMPSON
GAZETTE

Once a year, the National Academy of Television Arts and Sciences honors the best of the small screen with highly-coveted Emmys. And while most every actor, director, and producer dreams of winning one of these awards, it is an honor bestowed upon very few.

"And the Emmy goes to..."

Martin Doblmeier, the owner and president of Alexandria-based production company Journey Films, knows what it's like for your name to follow. On Tuesday, June 25, Doblmeier won the regional Emmy Award for Best Historical Documentary Film for a film he produced earlier this year, *Backs Against the Wall: The Howard Thurman Story*. This award-winning documentary chronicles the life of Civil Rights-era theologian Howard Thurman – an important spiritual mentor to Martin Luther King Jr.

Doblmeier and the rest of his Journey Films team knew they had an award-worthy subject on their hands with *Backs Against the Wall*. Still, they were humbled by the accolade – a confirmation of sorts that they had successfully captured Thurman's story.

"It is difficult to put in words what winning an Emmy means for everyone,"

Doblmeier said. "Filmmaking by its very nature requires a lot of time spent quietly in dark rooms making hundreds of creative decisions you hope will connect to the audience. It is an art form so there is no right or wrong answer. You must hope the way you see your subject will be shared by others. And an Emmy helps to validate all the hundreds of hours everyone has worked on this film."

The National Capital Chesapeake Bay Chapter of the National Academy of Television Arts and Sciences is the entity responsible for reviewing and recognizing the remarkable works of television art that come from Maryland, Virginia, and the District of Columbia. This year marked the chapter's 61st year of awarding Emmys.

As producer, Doblmeier was a two-time Capital Emmy winner before accepting the honor for *Backs Against the Wall*. And although each of his films take viewers on a different journey, they all leave viewers feeling inspired – and hopefully, more in touch with their hearts and souls.

"All of our films focus on topics around religion, faith, and spirituality," Doblmeier said. "The news around religion these days is often negative. Yet, with *Backs Against the Wall*, here is a story about a man whose religious convictions and spiritual explorations had a profound and positive impact that still reverberates today. I think that is worth celebrating."



Martin Doblmeier won the regional Emmy Award for Best Historical Documentary Film for *Backs Against the Wall: The Howard Thurman Story*

This year, *Backs Against the Wall* was up against three other strong contenders for the historical documentary category – including *Washington in the '90s*, produced by WETA-TV, a Washington DC member television station of the Public Broadcasting Service.

"You can never expect to win at this level," Doblmeier. "There are always so many other good films and filmmakers out there that you can't take anything for granted. Still, we felt we had a strong submission, so we just hoped for the best."

Like *Washington in the '90s*, all of Journey Films's documentaries play on public television. Since 2011, Journey Films has

partnered with Maryland Public Television (MPT), making it possible to widely spread important messages through film.

"The work of Journey Films has always focused on stories that address profound theological content and presents that content with the sophistication and intelligence that funders and audiences have come to expect," Kate Pearson, MPT's Managing Director of Programming and Acquisitions, said. "We enjoy our partnership with Journey Films because of its track record of more than 25 award-winning films focused on religion, faith, and spirituality. The subjects

SEE JOURNEY FILMS, PAGE 7

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For Whom the Bell Tolls

Salvation Army kicks off Red Kettle Campaign.

BY JEANNE THEISMANN
GAZETTE PACKET

American Legion Post 24 kicked off its participation in the 2019 Salvation Army Red Kettle Campaign Nov. 16 in Market Square.

"This is the 10th year that Post 24 has been supporting the Salvation Army's Red Kettle fundraising drives in Old Town," said Post 24 Commander Henry Dorton. "Our volunteers include Legionnaires, their family members and friends."

The Salvation Army's national headquarters are located in Alexandria and a Citadel Corps on Mount Vernon Avenue in Del Ray provides social services and programs for the local community.

"The Red Kettle program gives volunteers the opportunity to interact directly with the public and helps get everyone in the holiday spirit," Dorton added. "Most importantly, it raises funds to help meet the basic year-round needs of our less fortunate local neighbors."

Now in its 129th year, The Salvation Army's Red Kettle Campaign is one of the oldest and largest charitable campaigns in the world. Last year's campaign for the National Capital region raised \$1.2 million, helping 73,874 individuals through a range

of services that included emergency social service assistance, homeless nutrition, transitional shelter, an anti-human trafficking shelter, comprehensive substance abuse treatment, disaster relief and programs for youth and seniors. This year's goal is \$1.3 million.

"I always say that bell-ringing is the easiest and most fun way to do something good for your community," Dorton said. "After staffing a Red Kettle for the first time, most everyone decides to volunteer again, either that season or the following year."

New this year is "Kettle Pay," allowing shoppers without cash to make a Red Kettle donation electronically via Apple Pay or Google Pay. Near Field Communication devices and QR codes located on each Red Kettle sign allows donors to "bump" or scan their phones to make a digital donation. Electronic donations will be distributed to local Salvation Army units based on the donor's billing ZIP code and an email receipt will be sent directly to their phone.

Donations are also accepted online at Give.SalvationArmyUSA.org, or by texting KETTLE to 91999.

"This is also a great way for students to fulfill community service hours," he added.

"It's important to remember that the money raised here, stays here," Dorton said. "Donations are used to support our local community through day care, food pantries, homeless services, soup kitchens and music programs." To volunteer as a "bell-ringer" with the American Legion contact Henry Dorton, henrydorton@verizon.net or 703-618-5610.

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PEOPLE

'Friendsgiving'

Hundreds turn out for community dinner.

More than 300 children and families gathered at the Charles Houston Recreation Center Nov. 25 for the third annual "Friendsgiving" dinner sponsored by the Alexandria Police, Fire and Sheriff's departments and the Department of Recreation, Parks and Cultural Activities.

"Friendsgiving is a great way for us to give back to the community," said Police Chief Michael Brown. "The APD family a big part of this and we really enjoy seeing people come out and sharing in those Thanksgiving blessings."

Brown was joined by Sheriff's Office Lieutenant Sean Casey, acting Fire Chief Corey Smedley and recreation department volunteers in visiting with members of the community and sharing a Thanksgiving meal.

"Our Friendsgiving dinner is an opportunity for the community, law enforcement and fire department personnel to sit down and have a meal together," said Department of Parks, Recreation and Cultural Activities Outreach Coordinator Michael Johnson. "It's a great evening and shows that everybody is human regardless of what job they do."

In addition to the Friendsgiving meal, the Keith Burns Foundation and Old Town residents Hazel and Ronald Rigby donated turkeys and meal baskets for designated families in need to take home for Thanksgiving Day.



Geneva Matthews, center, joins Lieutenant Sean Casey and Police Chief Michael Brown at "Friendsgiving" dinner Nov. 25 at the Charles Houston Recreation Center sponsored by the Police, Fire and Sheriff's Department and the Department of Recreation, Parks and Cultural Activities.



PHOTOS BY JANET BARNETT/GAZETTE PACKET

All smiles are Candace Mitchell, Traci Smith, Cheryl Henry and Candace Kennedy as they prepare to serve a holiday meal at "Friendsgiving" Nov. 25 at the Charles Houston Recreation Center. The dinner was sponsored by the Police, Fire and Sheriff's Departments and the Department of Recreation, Parks and Cultural Activities.



Kids enjoy a holiday meal at the Nov. 25 "Friendsgiving" dinner at the Charles Houston Recreation Center.

Taste for Giving

Rotarians raise \$75k for local nonprofits.

BY JEANNE THEISMANN
GAZETTE PACKET

It was a night filled with food and fun as hundreds turned out for the Rotary Club of Alexandria's Taste for Giving gala, raising more than \$75,000 for local nonprofits.

Held Oct. 25 at the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office, the event featured tastings from 15 Alexandria restaurants and wine and beer from local businesses. Live music, raffles and silent and live auctions added to the festivities all in support of the local community.

"Each year Taste for Giving grows larger and generates more proceeds to help those in need," said Rotary Club president Sharon Meisel. "I am so proud of our Rotary Club members and their commitment to Alexandria. Rotary brings us all together and builds community."

Proceeds from the event will fund more than 35 grants to nonprofit organizations in the Alexandria community that advance literacy for children and adults and improve the lives of children, youth, seniors and others with special needs.

Volunteers at the event included staff of the nonprofits that are supported through



PHOTO BY NOLAN FORNESS

Rotarians Connie Hammell and Amy Curtis tend bar at Taste for Giving Oct. 25 at the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office.

the Rotary Club grants.

Applications for the 2020 grants will be available on the Rotary Club of Alexandria's website beginning January 1, 2020, with a submission deadline of February 28, 2020. Grant monies raised at Taste for Giving will



PHOTO BY NOLAN FORNESS

Acting Fire Chief Corey Smedley with Rotary Club of Alexandria President Sharon Meisel at the organization's Taste for Giving fundraiser Oct. 25 at the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office.

be awarded at the club's annual Contribution's Day Luncheon in June.
www.rotaryclubofalexandria.net



PHOTO BY JEANNE THEISMANN/GAZETTE PACKET

Rotarian Janet Barnett, left, serves wine to an attendee at the Taste for Giving fundraiser Oct. 25 at the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office.



PHOTO BY JEANNE THEISMANN/GAZETTE PACKET

Restaurantier "Mango" Mike Anderson, bottom right, poses for a photo with friends at the Rotary Club of Alexandria's Taste for Giving fundraiser Oct. 25 at the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office. Anderson had three of his restaurants represented at the event, including Tequila & Taco, Sweet Fire Donna's and his latest Whiskey & Oyster.

PEOPLE

Important Work of Journey Films

FROM PAGE 4

of the films as well as those interviewed in these documentaries are extraordinary men and women who are passionate about their ideas. Public television viewers are drawn to these biographies.”

This partnership with MPT is integral to Journey Films being able to bring important new perspectives to people all over the country.

“One of the things I am most proud of is that our work allows us to bring before a wide national television audience stories that may otherwise go un-

told,” Doblmeier said. “Howard Thurman was a remarkable character who had a significant impact on the political and social fabric of our country. Yet many people know little or nothing about his life and contribution. Now, through the film, hopefully millions will come to discover the value of his life.”

Indeed Thurman’s story is well on its way to affecting millions.

“Viewer response was terrific for the Howard Thurman documentary locally as well as nationally,”

SEE JOURNEY FILMS, PAGE 17

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OPINION

We Were the Bull Dogs: Parker-Gray School

BY CHAR McCARGO BAH

In 1870 there were two public schools for colored children in Alexandria, Virginia: Snowden School was for Colored Boys and the other was Hallowell School for Colored Girls. Those two schools were the only public schools for colored children in Alexandria. The other option was going to a private school, which was beyond the means of many colored people during that period.

THE OTHER ALEXANDRIA

By the early 1900s, the two colored schools were overcrowded and in need of repairs. The colored community pressured the school board and the City of Alexandria for a new coed school. In 1918, the City of Alexandria School Board announced that a new coed school will start in September 1920, its name would be Parker-Gray. Hardly any school equipment or supplies were given by the City of Alexandria, but the colored community was still proud to have their own new school. The colored churches, parents and teachers raised funds to purchase furniture, school supplies, typewriters, curtains and other school necessities before the first day of school.

For 45 years, Parker-Gray educated the colored population in



CREDIT OF THE PICTURE TO THE ALEXANDRIA PUBLIC SCHOOL ARCHIVES

Parker-Gray School 1920 - 1965.

Alexandria, giving them great career opportunities. Those students became doctors, lawyers, judges, a Brigadier General, first colored NBA player, college and high school coaches, Federal and State government workers, first colored chairperson of the Alexandria School Board, teachers, scientists, musicians, military career military and businessmen and businesswomen.

In June 1965, Parker-Gray High School closed its doors and in September 1965 it became an integrated middle school. Most of the students that attended Parker-Gray High School felt the loss of a school and a unique experience. They said it was not just a school but an extended family. They said

their teachers cared about their future, and that they were in a safe nurturing environment throughout their high school years. The old Parker-Gray alumni felt the new school lacked the family bond they had with their principal, teachers and friends.

By 1975, several Parker-Gray alumni had a discussion on starting a Parker-Gray Alumni Association. In August 1976, the newly Parker-Gray Alumni Association had their first three day reunion since the closing of Parker-Gray High School. Many former students, teachers and staff attended the events. From that time on, and every other year, Parker-Gray Alumni Association had a reunion to celebrate their Parker-Gray

School experience and to award scholarships to selected recipients.

In 2020, the Parker-Gray Alumni Association will be celebrating their 100-year-anniversary of Parker-Gray School. The Alumni Committee is planning a host of events for Aug. 15, 2020 in the Waterford in Springfield at 617 Commerce Street, Springfield, VA 22150. All inquiries for the 100th Anniversary of Parker-Gray School should be made to Mrs. Alice Thompson at 703-549-8178.

Arthur Dawkins from the class of 1952, wrote the "Parker-Gray Victory Song:"
Fight Bulldogs, For Pee – Gee
Fight for Our Colors, The Dear Old Blue and White
Rah! Rah! Rah!
Yea, Bulldogs, fight for Pee – Gee
Fight on Zealously,
We Praise Thy Name, Dear Parker-Gray
Fight on to Victory.

The old Bulldogs will again sing their Parker-Gray victory song on August 15, 2020, come out and join them.

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

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Improving Safety on GW Parkway

Dear Editor:

The National Park Service is conducting a study of the George Washington Memorial Parkway to determine how to improve safety between Old Town Alexandria and the Mount Vernon Estate. Tuesday evening, they hosted a meeting at Walt Whitman Middle School to update residents and address questions and concerns. The meeting started with an open house in the cafeteria where various maps and charts were displayed, followed by a meeting in the auditorium that was conducted by Parkway Superintendent Charles Cuvelier. The meeting was quite informative and gave the community an opportunity to provide input and receive important information.

Proposals to enhance safety on the Parkway have included installation of speed cameras, use of roundabouts, otherwise known as traffic circles, enhanced enforcement of traffic laws, pavement

markings, traffic signals, and other possible features. The Superintendent made it clear that traffic signals are not and will not be considered because they take away from the scenic character of the Parkway which is an absolute requirement. It also appears speed cameras would be difficult to implement, given the expense and lengthy regulatory process as well as the question of how tickets would be adjudicated. The Superintendent explained that revenues generated from tickets would not go to the National Park Service. Rather, they would go into the general treasury under control of Congress. I also note that traffic tickets on the Parkway are adjudicated at the Federal Court in Alexandria and prosecuted by the U.S. Attorney for the Eastern District of Virginia. They are unlikely to cede their authority to a third party vendor and may not have the resources to prosecute hundreds of speed camera tickets.

During the program, some comments were given by Gregory T. Monahan, the Acting Chief of the U.S. Park Police. Among the ques-

tions he was asked were some concerning actions of the Park Police who were involved in the death of Bijan Ghaisar. Since the internal investigation is underway and State prosecution may be considered, he was unable to provide any detailed comments. At the request of an audience member, a moment of silence was given in memory of Mr. Ghaisar. Mr. Monahan detailed enhanced enforcement that has been undertaken over the past several months which he explained has resulted in a 35% reduction of accidents.

From the start of this process, my view has been that the solution to the safety issues is two-fold: (1) Enhance pavement markings on either side of the Alexandria Avenue stone bridge to eliminate incidents in which trucks and buses impact the bridge. This can also include narrowing to one lane on either side, eliminating the right hand lanes in each direction so that all traffic travels through the bridge at its greatest clearance. (2) Increase enforcement of existing traffic laws. We all know that there is typically only one patrol

car patrolling the Parkway from Old Town to Mount Vernon. Once we pass the patrol car going the other way, speeds dramatically increase. Adding more patrol cars and increasing enforcement through use of speed measuring devices will educate the public that there is more than one patrol car that may be encountered.

Under no circumstances should speed cameras be employed. We cannot lose sight of the fact that we live in an area frequented by tourists. We don't want tourists to visit our community and then return home to find a speed camera ticket in their mailbox. Speed enforcement must be overt. If someone is speeding on the Parkway, the Park Police need to pull them over and give them a ticket then and there. It appears, based upon the comments of Acting Chief Monahan, that enhanced enforcement is bearing fruit. Good news.

There is no need to over complicate what needs to be done. Two more things: First, I note that the studies prepared to date do not address the exit to Boulevard Drive

SEE LETTERS, PAGE 9



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

Published by Local Media Connection LLC

1606 King Street
Alexandria, Virginia 22314

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A Connection Newspaper

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



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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

FROM PAGE 8

East just north of Wellington Road. Motorists turning left onto that exit in the southbound direction create a traffic hazard that needs to be addressed. Second, the materials provided do not separately break out accident statistics for the stone

bridge. Those statistics would be helpful in driving enhanced paving markings on either side of the bridge. Thank you to Superintendent Cuvelier for holding the meeting.

Jay Spiegel
Mount Vernon

Tax Collections

Regarding the “Tax Cheats” blurb at www.alexandriagazette.com/news/2019/nov/15/alexandria-council-notebook/, I wanted to clarify the context based on complaints we’ve received.

The small dollar write-offs only amount to \$17,640, averaging \$5.68 from each of 3,105 accounts. For perspective, this is 0.0035% of City tax collections. As the docket item explained, this is a common practice for Virginia localities under state law. The law does not require publication of names in newspapers, and that’s not a cost-effective strategy given the expense of traditional advertising.

Our collection rate for 2014-

2018 has been 99.7%, which reflects the use of a broad array of collection tools including:

- ❖ Delinquent letters
- ❖ Telephone calls
- ❖ DMV registration holds
- ❖ State Set-Off Debt Income Tax seizures
- ❖ Boots and tows (beginning in FY20, use of orange levy stickers)
- ❖ Bank liens
- ❖ Wage liens
- ❖ Placement with collection agencies (at no cost to the City)
- ❖ Payment plans
- ❖ Judgments, other legal action

Craig T. Fifer, MPA

Director
Office of Communications
& Public Information
City of Alexandria, Virginia

Special Interest Investments

To the editor:

Thanks to the Gazette Packet for documenting which special interests have invested in which winning Democrats representing Alexandria. We can rest assured that, as Mark Twain remarked over a century ago, we have the best government money can buy! I guess wealthy special interests invest in politicians about the same way they invest in stocks and, without batting an eyelash, politicians take egregious amounts of money from them.

At the Nov. 26 meeting with city council, several of Alexandria’s members of the legislature behaved like giddy tots at a birthday party blurt-ing out précis of all the legislation they’d like to pass now that they have the majority. At least the libertarian Kochs and tea-party Uihleines, who are giving mega-money for ideological reasons, but Del Mark Levine told Alexandria’s city council on Nov. 26 he would like to restrict such contributions, but apparently deep pocket economic interests investing in candidates who will carry water to advance their profit-making ventures are ok

with Democrats representing us in the legislature.

To city council’s credit, it included support for the redistricting constitutional amendment which Del. Levine supported last time, but it looks like he might not this time. He claims the judiciary can’t be trusted, even though the courts have found the legislature can’t be trusted and ordered various legislative districts redrawn. I guess redistricting reform is only needed when the Democrats aren’t the ones gerrymandering.

Allowing the voters to overturn legislative enactments is an effective way to deter and correct legislative excesses. When Rob Krupicka was delegate, he offered a constitutional amendment which would allow voters to petition a law to referendum, which the Republicans rejected in committee. Now comes the time, with the shoe on the other foot, that they and the rest of us will rue their shortsightedness as the Democrats take their newfound majority to legislative excess.

Dino Drudi
Alexandria

Getting Bills Ready for The 2020 State Legislature

BY SEN. SCOTT SUROVELL (D-36)

The 2020 Virginia General Assembly will convene in about a month and legislators are now preparing bills to propose. Many constituents and advocacy groups are proposing legislation.

Two weeks ago, I reported on some of the bigger issues we are likely to tackle. In this column, I am covering a few of the bills that I will introduce. I will discuss more in future columns.

In the 2018 and 2019 sessions, we came very close to passing legislation prohibiting drivers from having a phone in their hand in a moving vehicle. In the last session, we approved legislation to prohibit this in construction zones, but the Speaker killed it by ruling Governor Ralph Northam’s attempt to widen it to all highways not germane. It will pass this session.

I will propose several predatory lending reforms. Using Native American tribes as fronts, online lenders continue to make loans over the internet in Virginia at over 400 percent interest rates and requiring far off tribal arbitration for disputes. Other states have enacted consumer protections, including steps to rein in interest rates, fees, collection practices and repeat loans.

I will introduce bills to curb firearm violence. The Unite the Right March in Charlottesville coupled with the four armed men who appeared at the Alexandria Farmer’s Market in September underscore the need for local governments to have the ability to prohibit firearms at permitted public events. Second, suicide is the leading cause of firearm death in Virginia. One of my bills will allow people to place themselves on a “do-not-sell” list for firearms so they cannot be sold a gun if they have a moment of weakness. Third, Virginia’s Department of Game and Inland Fisheries is still allowing permittees to license duck blinds in counties and areas where duck hunting is illegal under local ordinances. I will introduce legislation to fix this along with Del. Paul Krizek (D-44).

I will introduce a bill to create a new Public Defender’s Office for Prince William County and the cities of Manassas and Manassas Park. Virginia currently has 25 public defender offices, but Virginia’s

second-largest jurisdiction does not. A public defender’s office will professionalize defense representation, improve justice outcomes and cost taxpayers little more than funding private court-appointed counsel.

In the late 1990s, Virginia required the use of alternative sentencing analyses to inform judges when convicted defendants should be considered for non-prison sentences. Over time, judges have ignored these recommendations more than followed them. I will carry legislation requiring the state to assemble data on judicial use of this data and require probation officers to provide findings about the costs of various sentencing alternatives to the courts before a judge renders a final sentence in a case. This would hopefully encourage more informed decision-making and better outcomes.

Virginia’s civil justice system should also be modernized. Virginia and Mississippi are the only states in America that do not allow class action lawsuits. Virginia also still adheres to ancient doctrines that punish largely innocent collision victims, and we have not adjusted Virginia’s auto insurance minimum policy limits since the 1970s when medical care cost a fraction of today’s cost and the average car cost 25 percent of today’s vehicles. This allows wrongdoers to escape responsibility and leaves innocent collision victims holding the bag for their own injuries.

Virginia’s three boards governing mental health professionals issued regulations prohibiting therapies that attempt to change one’s sexual orientation, known as “conversion therapy.” We need to put that prohibition into law to ensure that it will not be reversed. I will introduce that bill.

For the last four sessions, I have introduced legislation to address the lack of available driving permits for many of my immigrant constituents. Since 2014, Maryland and the District of Columbia have allowed driving permits to anyone who can show that they pay taxes, pass a driving test and pay fees. My bill has died in committee by one vote each year. I am hopeful the new majority will mean a better outcome.

It is an honor to serve as your state senator. Please email me at scott@scottsurowell.org if you have any questions or feedback

Legislative Drafting Update

BY DEL. PAUL KRIZEK

The 2020 General Assembly session is fast approaching, and my team and I are busy preparing. The 2020 session will be a “long session.” running 60 days, from Jan. 8 to March 7, where Gov. Northam’s budget will be considered in addition to the thousands of bills that Virginia legislators will introduce. This Thursday, Dec. 5th, marks the deadline to submit legislation to be drafted in time for session.

My 2020 legislative agenda aims to make voting easier, our roads safer, our Commonwealth’s environment cleaner and healthier, and ensure that our government works better for all of us. I will continue to push for better worker protections and benefits, pay increases for teachers, and to adequately fund education (early childhood through higher education). Here are just a few highlights:

My first two bills that I have introduced for this

session are HB 15 and HB 16, which would require seat belts on school buses and require all passengers to use a seat belt in motor vehicles, respectively. I have endeavored to pass these two pieces of legislation every year I have been elected, and I believe that we can finally get them passed into law in 2020. HB 15 requires new buses purchased by school systems to include seat belts when they replace their current fleet, and for seat belts to be included in all school buses in the Commonwealth by July 1, 2038. According to the National Highway Traffic Administration, there were 54 fatalities of school-age children between 2006-2015. Having seat belts or restraints in these buses statistically could have saved the lives of 27 young children. The number of children injured is even higher. While buses do a good job of protecting against front and rear impacts, their safety designs do not protect against side impacts or rollovers. Protecting our children on their way to and

SEE KRIZEK, PAGE 18

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VDOT Virginia Department of Transportation

**I-395 / Seminary Road HOV Ramp
City of Alexandria**

Public Information Meeting

**Monday, December 9, 2019
6:30 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.**

Presentation begins at 7 p.m.

Inclement weather date: Thursday, December 12, 2019

T.C. Williams High School, Minnie Howard Campus
3801 West Braddock Road
Alexandria, VA 22302

Find out about an operations analysis assessing the traffic and safety impacts and benefits of converting the I-395 and Seminary Road Ramp in the City of Alexandria from a High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV)-only ramp to a High Occupancy Toll (HOT) ramp. This south-facing reversible ramp at Seminary Road falls within the limits of and provides access to the newly-opened I-395 Express Lanes facility and currently operates as an HOV and transit-only ramp. Transurban, VDOT's private operator of the 395 Express Lanes, has proposed converting this ramp from HOV to a HOT lanes ramp. The ramp would continue to provide access to the 395 Express Lanes, but would be available to vehicles with fewer than three occupants who pay a toll, and for free to vehicles with three or more occupants.

In compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and 23 CFR 771, VDOT has received guidance from the Federal Highway Administration that if the modification was to proceed, no additional environmental documentation would be required for converting the I-395/Seminary Road Ramp from an HOV-only ramp to an HOT-ramp. The findings documented in past Environmental Assessments (EA) and subsequent Findings of No Significant Impacts (FONSI) from Federal Highway Administration, remain valid.

There are no property or right of way impacts as a result of converting the I-395/Seminary Road ramp from HOV-only to a HOT ramp.

Stop by between 6:30 p.m. and 8:30 p.m. to view displays and learn about the project. A presentation will begin at 7 p.m. Project staff from VDOT and Transurban will be available to answer questions.

Review project information at the VDOT website (www.virginiadot.org/395expresslanes), at the information meeting, or during business hours at VDOT's Northern Virginia District Office at 4975 Alliance Drive in Fairfax. Please call ahead at 703-259-2381 or TTY/TDD 711 to ensure appropriate personnel are available to answer your questions.

Give your written comments at the meeting, or submit them by **December 31, 2019** to Mr. Abi Lerner, Virginia Department of Transportation, 4975 Alliance Drive, Fairfax, VA 22030, or email 395expresslanes@VDOT.virginia.gov. Please reference "I-395/Seminary Road HOV Ramp" in the subject line.

VDOT ensures nondiscrimination and equal employment in all programs and activities in accordance with Title VI and Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. If you need more information or special assistance for persons with disabilities or limited English proficiency, contact VDOT Civil Rights at 703-259-1775.

State Project: 0395-96A-206, P101, UPC:108361

WELLBEING

Maintaining Peace on Earth (and at Home)

Preserving your family's wellbeing during the holidays.

By MARILYN CAMPBELL
THE CONNECTION

For many, December will be filled with sugar-laden holiday parties, lengthy-shopping trips and long lines for a chance to sit on Santa's lap. For families that thrive on routine, holiday merriment can lead to schedule disruptions that throw a family's rhythm into disarray. Maintaining the wellbeing of both parents and children during the season takes a bit of advanced planning. "Children, just like adults, need both energetic time and rest time embedded throughout the day," said psychologist Carolyn Lorente, Ph.D. of Northern Virginia Community College and Belle Point Wellness Center. "During the holidays, this natural rhythm can easily get disrupted."

Keep the holidays in the proper perspective and remember that the season is for a finite period of time and one's normal routine will be restored, says therapist Carol Barnaby, LCSW-C "The biggest stress that people often have is feeling that they are being judged by others if their children are having a hard time. I tell my patients to focus on the things that they can control and remember, other people have once been in their shoes."

Providing opportunities for an emotional outlet can help with mood stabilization. "Make sure that [children] have enough outdoor play paired with quiet down time throughout their day," said Lorente. "Model for them how to find a quiet space to retreat to when things start to heat up."

When parents are able to exhibit a sense of tranquility during a period of chaos, children often mimic this emotional response. "Remain calm and stay patient," added Joanne Bagshaw, PhD Professor of Psychology Montgomery College. "Emotions are contagious, and your ability to remain calm under pressure is great role modeling for young children and can help prevent strong emotions from escalating."

When in new and unfamiliar social settings, some children need more time than others to adjust to the social demands, says Lorente. "Know your child," she said. "Some will make these transitions quite easily



PHOTO BY MARILYN CAMPBELL

The merriment of the holidays can disrupt a family's sense of wellbeing.

while many will find this challenging. Remember that our first job is to teach. And children learn best by watching how we handle the stressors of the season."

In fact, reflecting on a child's temperament can serve as a guide for parents as they navigate the impact of a disputed schedule. "This is a time to go with what you know about your child," said psychologist Stacie Isenberg Psy. D. "Some kids can push bedtime and sugar every so often, with little to no negative effects. If this describes your child, stay later than usual and enjoy the special occasion. If this is not your child, you and your child are likely to become miserable by pushing the limits that night and very likely the next day or maybe two."

Returning to normalcy as often as possible can preserve a family's wellbeing during the holiday season, suggests Jerome Short, Ph.D., professor of psychology at George Mason University. "Maintain household routines leading up to holiday events, such as regular meal, play, and bed times for children," he said. "Plenty of sleep, including naps, helps children with their attention spans, mood regulation, and self-control of their behaviors,"

"Put limits around bedtime and sugar consumption that match your child's physiological and emotional abilities and you'll all have the best experience," added Isenberg.

Nutrition plays a role in mood and behavior especially during the holidays. "Keep some protein heavy snacks handy, like cheese sticks, or nuts if your child doesn't have allergies," said Bagshaw. "Snacks filled with protein can help stabilize blood sugar, and young children's moods."

Explaining to a child what they can expect at holiday event can mitigate meltdowns. "Make a plan with your partner and set realistic expectations on how long you will stay at events," said Barnaby. "This is often the best thing couples can do to manage stress and frustration that leads to conflict. Take turns in managing the children so that each of you can have some fun."

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‘Open, Honest Discussions About Race’

FROM PAGE 1

“If a black student is walking around without a pass, then the automatic assumption is that they’re skipping class,” said T.C. Williams senior Mikaela Pozo, who recently participated in an Agenda Alexandria panel on school overcrowding. “If a white student is without a pass, then the automatic assumption is that they’re doing nothing wrong.”

Students not identifying with a gender reported being less happy with their education in the social emotional aspect. They reported a smaller proportion of positive responses, showing concern for safety and student support systems.

When schools officials started the training sessions in 2017, they discovered teachers and administrators were uncomfortable discussing race and socioeconomic privilege.

“One time, in a conversation, one of my colleagues said, ‘Well, you know, she’s white.’ And I said, ‘That’s not a disease,’” said Crawford. “It goes both ways. There’s not a comfort level when

discussing racial issues.”

This discomfort with racial discussions and implicit biases may result in barriers to opportunities for students.

“Recently, a student of color informed me that she had been discouraged by her counselor from taking an Advanced Placement course, with the counselor saying it might be too rigorous for her despite the fact that she had maintained an A/B average,” said Hutchings.

After five years of work, the school system plans to expand their equity plan across the district, continuing equity training sessions with teachers, administrators and stakeholders. Professional learning trainings include sessions about using literature to teach about Muslim and Arab cultures and working with immigrant families.

Additionally, the trainings will be geared towards ensuring staff ability to understand and interact with students of other cultures, and types of racism and advantages or disadvantages students may face.

Some staff, such as those at Jefferson-Houston School, already began discussions on restorative practices over the summer during professional development trainings, according to school officials.

Restorative practices, a method of resolving conflicts between students and staff in schools, may be more prevalent in classrooms. Community-building circles, one of many restorative practices, are already used as a way to build a positive classroom community. Groups like Tenants and Workers United view it as an effective alternative to suspensions.

“I do think it would be beneficial to have restorative practices,” said Pozo, who is working on Operation Integration, an organization dedicated to education equity and immigration justice.

“You’re addressing the root cause of the problem instead of making the assumption that they’re just a bad student and they should be punished.”

Tenants and Workers United, a community organization in Alexandria representing minorities

and immigrants, has been campaigning for restorative practices at T.C. Williams for six years. The youth members and organizers are developing a new survey specifically for students to give their input on their experiences with restorative practices, and academic and emotional support for students. The survey would be shorter than the equity survey the school officials created, and would give a student-driven evaluation of each school’s community climate.

“Our young people feel that there needs to be more relationship building and they have been working to make sure that is key,” said Ingris Moran, lead organizer. “We want to create a survey that’s really easy to answer and isn’t 100 questions long.”

This winter, Tenants and Workers United will start meeting with school officials to develop this new survey on restorative practices for T.C. Williams, which may be integrated into the next division-wide racial equity audit this spring.

Meetings with the School Board will comprise mostly students, along with school staff, the Alex-

andria NAACP and other grassroots organizations,

“This assessment will have more student voice,” said Gregory Baldwin, the school system’s climate and culture coordinator. “We’re making strides towards ending this school-to-prison pipeline.”

Graphics will be posted at www.AlexandriaGazette.com

Nearly half of both students and teachers agree that disparities exist in school disciplinary practices.

Students’ satisfaction with their education differs largely across schools, gender identity and race.

“Browner students are more likely to show up negative in the data,” said Cheryl Robinson, cultural competency coordinator. “That is a reality.”

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HOLIDAY ENTERTAINMENT

6 Dates to Circle for December

BY HOPE NELSON

Like families' social calendars everywhere, December is a hectic month in Alexandria's food and drink scene. From ugly sweaters to bar crawls to numerous events in between – and, of course, New Year's Eve – there won't be any empty space on your schedule for long.

Celebrate Repeal Day at Trademark, Dec. 5

In honor of the 86th anniversary of the repeal of Prohibition, Trademark in Carlyle is hosting a special happy-hour soiree. The evening will feature Prohibition-inspired cocktails and food, taking on a decidedly Roaring '20s vibe. Each special is \$9; order up and toast to the end of a bygone era (and whatever comes next). 2080 Jamieson Ave. 4-8 p.m.

"Classic Restaurants of Alexandria" Book Launch at Union Street Public House, Dec. 11

Think back to some restaurants of a bygone era in Alexandria: The Seaport Inn, Generous George's, even Burger Chef. And consider some longstanding culinary traditions, ranging from RT's to Dishes of India. Join author Hope Nelson (your humble "Appetite" columnist) to celebrate the launch of her new book, "Classic Restaurants of Alexandria," with an evening at

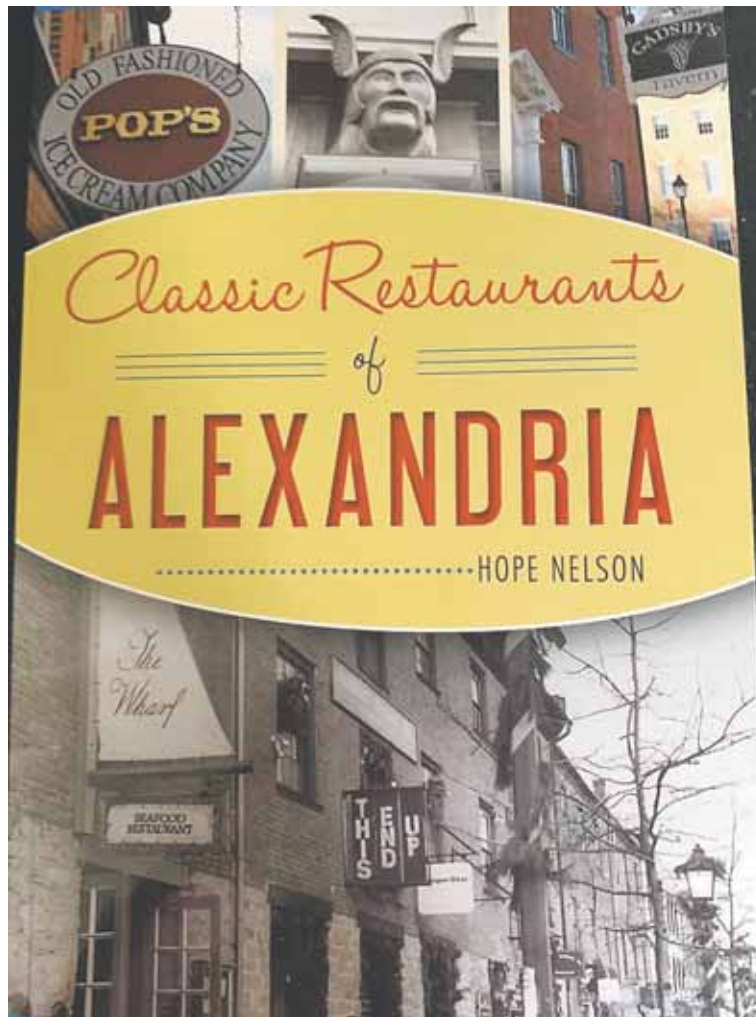


Join author Hope Nelson to celebrate the launch of her new book, "Classic Restaurants of Alexandria," with an evening at Union Street Public House. 121 S. Union St. Dec. 11, 6:30-8:30 p.m.

Union Street Public House. 121 S. Union St. 6:30-8:30 p.m.

Candy Cane Bar Crawl, Dec. 14

Lift a glass at more than a dozen of Del Ray's favorite restaurants to toast the holiday and raise funds for Community Lodgings – all in



one afternoon. It's time to pull that ugly holiday sweater out from storage, brush off the mothballs, grab a pint glass and get to work; holiday cocktails and beers will be plentiful at stops ranging from Hops n Shine to St. Elmo's Coffee Pub to Northside 10 and more. Check in at Lena's Wood-Fired

Pizza and Tap (401 E. Braddock Road) or RT's Restaurant (3804 Mount Vernon Ave.) 1-6 p.m. \$15 in advance; \$20 at the door.

Four-Course Beer Dinner at Live Oak, Dec. 18

Chantilly's Ono Brewing Company comes to town with plenty

of brews in tow to co-host a beer dinner at Live Oak Restaurant. In the dead of winter, enjoy the tropical tastes of Hawaii with Ono's craft beverages; paired with a four-course meal from Chef Justus Frank, it will be a much-needed island respite from the cold climes. 1603 Commonwealth Ave. 7 p.m. \$60.

Ugly Sweater Party at Hi-Tide Lounge, Dec. 20

Dec. 20 is Ugly Sweater Day, so break out your most festive jumper for this festival of plaid and garish colors. The Hi-Tide Lounge will offer up special happy hour deals while guests revel in the spirit of the (sweater) season. But bring your A-game: The judges will be eyeing the competition, and winning the "Best Ugly Holiday Sweater" prize nets you a gift card. 101 N. Union St. 7-9 p.m.

New Year's Eve celebrations, Dec. 31

Any Alexandrian who has lived in the city for at least one revolution around the sun will know that the port city does New Year's Eve right. From First Night festivities to midnight fireworks, Alexandria does enjoy a good festivity. Many of the city's restaurants are getting into the act, too: Vermilion, All have special deals going. (Keep an eye out for a New Year's Eve-specific calendar in these pages later in the month.)

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

CALENDAR

Submit announcements at www.connectionnewspapers.com/Calendar/ Photos/artwork encouraged.

ONGOING

Mount Vernon Farmers Market.

Wednesdays (through Dec. 18), 8 a.m.-noon at Sherwood Hall Regional Library, 2501 Sherwood Hall Lane. Visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/farmersmarkets.

Band Members Needed. Join the Mount Vernon Community Band, a group of players who enjoy playing many styles of band music in a relaxed atmosphere. Rehearsals are Tuesdays 7:30-9:30 p.m. in the Mount Vernon High School Band Room, 8515 Old Mount Vernon Road. No auditions. All instruments needed. Contact Eric Leighty directly 703-768-4172 or visit www.mvbands.com/join-us/.

Creature Comforts Art Exhibit.

Now thru Jan. 26, 2020. At VCA Alexandria, 2660 Duke Street, Alexandria. The "Creature Comforts" art exhibit at VCA Alexandria through the Gallery Without Walls program features artwork of the animals in our lives by Del Ray Artisans members. Showcasing animals that lift and fill our hearts is a popular theme at VCA Alexandria

and coincides with the winter holiday season in which creature comforts of all types are appreciated. Visit DelRayArtisans.org/exhibits/gww

Holidays and Christmas

THURSDAY-SATURDAY/DEC. 5-7

"The Nutcracker." At West Potomac High School, 6500 Quinther Road, Alexandria. Now in its 11th year, the West Potomac Academy Dance Program and Alexandria Community Nutcracker will present four performances of "The Nutcracker." Performances are scheduled for 5:30 p.m. on Thursday, December 5; 6:30 p.m.; on Friday, December 6; and 2:30 and 6:30 p.m. on Saturday, December 7. Led by a team of directors, including Gennifer Difilippo (Alexandria Community Dance), Courtney Betzel (West Potomac Academy), and Adrienne Taylor (Above the Barre), this adaptation includes music that incorporates traditional ballet dances, as well as jazz, contemporary, Hip Hop, Irish dancing, tap and gymnastics. The

cast ranges from three-year olds to adult dancers performing ballet, pointe, lyrical, tap, jazz, modern, and gymnastics. Visit <https://www.alexandrianutcracker.com/>

FRIDAY-SATURDAY/DEC. 6-7

The Scottish Christmas Walk Weekend.

At various Old Town Alexandria locations. The Campagna Center presents the 49th Annual Scottish Christmas Walk Weekend and Parade. The parade is Dec. 7 at 11 a.m. and begins at St. Asaph and Wolfe Streets and concludes at Market Square with a massed band concert. Admission: Free for parade and Heather and Greens Sales; \$180-\$290 for Taste of Scotland; \$40 for Holiday Home Tours. In 1749, the City of Alexandria was officially established by three Scottish merchants and named after its original founder, John Alexander, also of Scottish descent. Events of The Scottish Christmas Walk Weekend, provide vital support to Campagna Center programs that serve more than 2,000 children, teens, and adults throughout the year. Visit the website: <https://www.campagnacenter.org/scottishwalkweekend>

SEE CALENDAR, PAGE 13



The Holiday Open House will take place Saturday, Dec. 14 at River Farm in Alexandria.

Holiday Open House

Saturday/Dec. 14. 9 a.m.-2 p.m. At River Farm, 7931 East Boulevard Dr., Alexandria. Enjoy the American Horticultural Society's free holiday event featuring seasonal decor, food and drinks, music by the Southside Singers, and crafts from local vendors. The Garden Shop will be open. Free. Email Nora McDonald at nmacdonald@ahsgardening.org.

HOLIDAY ENTERTAINMENT

FROM PAGE 12

DEC. 6-22

DRA Holiday Market. The Market is Dec. 6-8; Dec. 13-15; and Dec. 20-22. Hours are Fridays 6-9 p.m. and Saturdays and Sundays 11 a.m.-6 p.m. At Del Ray Artisans Gallery, Nicholas A. Colasanto Center, 2704 Mount Vernon Ave., Alexandria. Handmade fine arts and crafts from local artists. The artists are presenting a variety of media, including botanical drawings, fiber/textiles, glass, jewelry, mixed media, mosaics, painting, paper crafting, photography, pottery/ceramics, sculpture, watercolor, wood turning, and more. Different artists each weekend. Free admission. Visit the website: DelRayArtisans.org/event/holiday-market-2019

SATURDAY/DEC. 7

Cookie Walk. Noon to 3 p.m. At the Old Presbyterian Meeting House, 323 S. Fairfax Street, Alexandria. Walk around tables brimming with homemade cookies and fill a box (or 2) with goodies. Great for holiday parties. Cost is \$10/pound of cookies. Visit the website: <http://www.opmh.org/events/6th-annual-cookie-walk/>

Torpedo Factory Art Center

Holiday Festival. 2-8 p.m. At Torpedo Factory Art Center, 105 N. Union Street, Alexandria. The Art Center joins in the fun on Alexandria's most festive holiday weekend of the year. Santa and Mrs. Claus arrive at 3:30 p.m. Music and singing fill the halls all evening. After sundown, the Holiday Boat Parade of Lights passes by The Art Center's doors. Visit artists on all three floors to find the perfect gift of art. Visit www.torpedofactory.org

Boat Parade of Lights. Parade begins at 5:30 p.m.; Dockside festivities 2 to 8 p.m. At Waterfront Park, 1 King Street, Alexandria. Parade viewing areas: Founders Park (351 N. Union St.), Alexandria City Marina (0 Cameron St.), Waterfront Park (1 King St. and 1A Prince St.), Point Lumley Park (1 Duke St.), Shipyard/Harborside Park (1 Wilkes St.), Windmill Hill Park (501 S. Union St.) and Ford's Landing Park (99 Franklin St.). Admission: Free; \$ for food/drink and some activities. Visit AlexandriaVA.com/boatparade

- Schedule in Old Town (2 to 8 p.m.)
- ❖ Holiday music and giveaways from 97.1 WASH-FM
- ❖ Letters to Santa postcard station from Penny Post
- ❖ Holiday ornament activity from AR Workshop Alexandria (2 to 4 p.m.)
- ❖ Bookmark making station from Old Town Books (4:30 to 8 p.m.)
- ❖ Torpedo Factory Art Center Holiday Festival
- ❖ Santa arrives by fireboat at the Alexandria City Marina (3:30 p.m.)
- ❖ Alexandria Holiday Boat Parade of Lights begins (5:30 p.m.)

SUNDAY/DEC. 8

Holidays on the Avenue in Del Ray. 6 p.m. At Pat Miller Neighborhood Square at Mount Vernon Avenue and E. Oxford Avenue, Alexandria. Kick off the holidays with a visit to Del Ray for the annual holiday tree and menorah lighting, featuring a special appearance by Santa Claus, who will lead carols and sit for photos with children. Continue the celebration and start your holiday shopping with a stroll down Mount Vernon Avenue, which will be illuminated by thousands of luminarias and feature storefront windows hand-painted for the holidays. Pick your favorite in the neighborhood business association's annual Christmas tree decorating contest. Visit the website: visitdelray.com



2019 Mary Graham Lasley Scholarship Competition Winner, harpist Morgan Short, will present Rodrigo's Concierto de Aranjuez.

ASO Presents Nutcracker & Ellington

Sunday/Dec., 2-3 p.m. At George Washington Masonic Memorial, 101 Callahan Drive, Alexandria. Audiences will enjoy the Nutcracker presented in two ways — favorite excerpts from Tchaikovsky's ballet and Duke

Ellington's version that swings. Stay after for a family-friendly reception. Cost: \$20-\$65 adult, \$5 youth, \$10 student. Visit the website: www.alexsym.org

FRIDAY/DEC. 13

Holiday Sing-Along. 7:30 p.m. At Del Ray United Methodist Church, 100 E. Windsor Ave., Alexandria. Experience a jolly good time at the always popular

— and free — Alexandria Holiday Sing-Along. You'll join in song with your neighbors as Conductor Mike Evans and the hometown Alexandria Citizens Band play your holiday favorites. Elisa Ravas will lead the singing. And to make it easy for everyone, we'll have the lyrics in brand new song books. Free tickets are available on eventbrite at: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/alexandrias-annual-holiday-sing-along-free-tickets-79959949361>

SUNDAY/DEC. 15

ASO Presents: Nutcracker & Ellington. 2-3 p.m. At George Washington Masonic Memorial, 101 Callahan Drive, Alexandria. Audiences will enjoy the Nutcracker presented in two ways — favorite excerpts from Tchaikovsky's ballet and Duke

Ellington's version that swings. Stay after for a family-friendly reception. Cost: \$20-\$65 adult, \$5 youth, \$10 student. Visit the website: www.alexsym.org

Handel's "Messiah." 4 p.m. At Rachel M. Schlesinger Concert Hall, NVCC Campus, 4915 East Campus Drive, Alexandria. Presented by New Dominion Chorale and Orchestra. The performance, conducted by Artistic Director Thomas Beveridge, will feature four vocal soloists who are known to Washington audiences:

Soprano Natalie Conte, Mezzo-Soprano Melissa Kornacki, Tenor Patrick Kilbride and Bass Jeffrey Tarr. Ticket prices are \$35 for adults, \$30 for seniors 62 and older, and \$15 for students ages 5 to 22. Group tickets are available for groups of 10 or more at \$25 per ticket. Visit www.newdominion.org.

Local Calendar

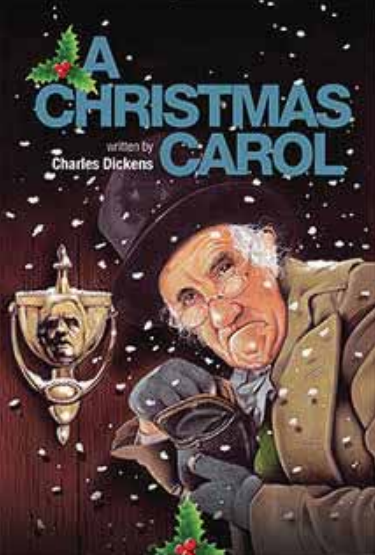
THURSDAY/DEC. 5

Gadsby's Tavern Fundraiser.

6 p.m. At The Little Theatre of Alexandria, 600 Wolfe Street, Alexandria. Gadsby's Tavern Museum Society is hosting a special performance of "A Christmas Carol." Enjoy a lovely family evening including a silent auction, appetizers and sweets, beverages including a champagne punch. Tickets are \$25. Reception at 6 p.m. with a Silent Auction and "A Christmas Carol" from 8-9:15 p.m. Free photo opportunities with Father Christmas. www.gadsbystavernmuseum.us/ or at 703-549-6242.


Kissing Ball Workshop.

6:30-8 p.m. At Lee-Fendall House Museum, 614 Oronoco St., Alexandria. Learn how to create your own traditional holiday kissing ball using fresh boxwood from the Lee-Fendall's own garden. The cost is \$20 per person. All materials are provided. Cost is \$20. A second Holiday Kissing Ball Workshop will take place on Sunday, Dec. 8 from 2 to 3:30 p.m. www.leefendallhouse.org



Ring in the holiday season with a return of the classic by Charles Dickens. A must for the entire family!

SHOW DATES:
December 6 - 22, 2019



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www.thelittletheatre.com

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HOLIDAY ENTERTAINMENT

LTA Presents “A Christmas Carol”

Follows Charles Dickens’ classic transformation of Scrooge during the holidays.

BY STEVE HIBBARD
THE GAZETTE

Continuing with its wonderful holiday tradition, the Little Theatre of Alexandria is again presenting Charles Dickens’ “A Christmas Carol” from Dec. 6-22, 2019. As everyone knows, the story follows Ebenezer Scrooge, a miserly Victorian humbug, as he travels with ghostly guides through Christmas past, present, and future to find the true meaning of the season.

According to Director Kelsey Yudice: “The story of ‘A Christmas Carol’ is such a special one, because it is a holiday tradition for many people around the world. Since this is such a well-known story, there is a little pressure as to how you will create it differently or similarly to others in the past. I am hoping to keep the heart and soul of the play, all while adding my own magical spin to it with the help of some Christmas ghosts.”

She added: “‘A Christmas Carol’ is enjoyable for all ages; great for those seeing it for the first time, or those who have seen the play a hundred times.” Co-producers Jim Howard and Carol Strachan added: “We love this time of year and ‘A Christmas Carol’ at LTA has become an Alexandria tradition. It is a lot of coordination of set build, painting, lights, sound, costumes, scheduling, playbill and staffing this production of over 50 backstage volunteers.”

Bob Chaves, who plays the lead role of Scrooge, said: “I have attempted not to mimic any of the dozens of portrayals of him that have been presented in film or on stage and instead have tried to make him a bit more sarcastic and not angry or mean-spirited. I hope the audience sees that. As Dickens said to his readers: ‘May it haunt their houses pleasantly.’”

He added that Director Yudice has spent a lot of time working with the entire cast discussing how all the characters interact, and why Scrooge is the way he is; and what might be behind his bitterness, “because ultimately, by the



“A Christmas Carol” rehearsals of the Cratchit family toasting Mr. Scrooge begrudgingly.



“A Christmas Carol” rehearsals of Belle (Emily Hemmingson) breaking off the engagement with Young Scrooge (Devin Walsh).

“A Christmas Carol” rehearsals of Scrooge (Bob Chaves) and the Ghost of Christmas Present (Tom Bethards).

end of the play we see him transform into a decent, caring human being. He just needed a big push in that direction,” he said.

James Senavitis plays the role of Bob Cratchit, who he compares to your neighbor who’s putting up Christmas decorations the day after Halloween. “He is the child in all of us that still races downstairs on Christmas day to see what is under the tree. He is a family man in the oldest fashion of the word ‘family.’”

He added: “What I hope the audience will take away from our ‘Christmas Carol’ is that, Christmas is about family. Family is why I wanted to do the show. I wanted to share a stage with my real-life wife (Aimee Meher-Homji) and

daughter (Arielle Senavitis).”

Erika Olander plays the role of Mrs. Cratchit, the wife of Bob Cratchit and mother of Tiny Tim. “I see her as a very strong and smart woman who could stretch her husband’s meager earnings to feed a family of eight. I’d also like to think she ‘wears the pants’ the family, even though it would be decades before women would wear actual pants!” she said.

She added: “My greatest challenge has been time management, by far. I am a full-time physician and had not done theater for many years due the demands of my work. After taking a new position with a clinic in Alexandria two days per week, I thought I’d take a look at the auditions for LTA. I

am so glad I did! I have been very busy, but performing is pure joy and a great stress relief.”

Kevin Broderick, who plays the roles of Jacob Marley, pawnbroker Joe and Poulterer, added: “I am very happy to be a part of this wonderful cast as we prepare 2019’s presentation of ‘A Christmas Carol.’ Our cast and crew is really drawing together as a team, and we’ve been working hard in our rehearsals to make this show everything it can be.”

Florence Ferraro added: “Like most of the people in this wonderful ensemble, I have multiple roles: a town beggar woman, a guest at Fezziwig’s Christmas party and the Ghost of Christmas Future. When I accepted the role of the

mysterious and typically completely shrouded Ghost of Christmas Future, I made sure that I would get to do a little dancing and cavorting with my castmates onstage; however, I was delighted to find that the Ghost of Christmas Future in this production will be played a bit differently. No spoiler-alert here. You will have to come to the show to see the changes!” The Little Theatre of Alexandria is presenting “A Christmas Carol” from Dec. 6-22, 2019. Show times are Wednesdays to Fridays at 8 p.m.; and Saturdays and Sundays at 3 and 6 p.m. Tickets are \$20. The venue is located at 600 Wolfe Street, Alexandria.

www.thelittletheatre.com.

CALENDAR

FROM PAGE 13

DEC 5-21

“Squeakers & Mr. Gumdrop.” At the Lab Theatre at Convergence, 1819 N. Quaker Lane, Alexandria. One snowy morning, Mr. Gumdrop prepares for his annual holiday party. When an unexpected and curious mouse

appears, Mr. Gumdrop’s routine is thrown for a loop. Can these two wildly different characters work together to get the holiday preparations done in time? This nonverbal production captures the magic of making new friends and sharing ideas to accomplish big goals. The show was written and directed by Arts on the Horizon members

Natalie Cutcher and Amanda Forstrom, was created for an audience of children ages 2-5. Show times are Dec. 5, 6, 10, 11, 12, 13, 17, 18, 19, and 20 at 10:30 a.m.; Dec. 7, 14 and 21 at 10 a.m. and 11:30 a.m. Tickets are \$10 for and can be purchased online at <http://www.artsonthehorizon.org> or at the door on the day of the performance.

DEC. 6-7

Holiday Pops Concert. Dec. 6-7 at 7:30 p.m.; and 2 p.m. Saturday. At Convergence, 1801 N. Quaker Lane, Alexandria. Alexandria Singers ‘Celebrate!’ Holiday Pops Concert. Join the Alexandria Singers for their annual holiday pops concert weekend as they weave pop and jazz arrangements of traditional holiday

classics with new tunes that will instantly become your holiday favorites. Admission: \$25 premium reserved seating; \$20 general admission; \$15 for groups of 10+, seniors, military and students; free for children 5 and under. alexandriasingers.com

SEE CALENDAR, PAGE 15

WWW.CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM

HOLIDAY ENTERTAINMENT

FROM PAGE 14

DEC. 6-8

Holiday Ceramics Sale. Pop-up Shop Hours: Friday, noon – 8 p.m.; Saturday, 11 a.m. – 8 p.m.; Sunday, noon – 5 p.m. At 722 King Street (formerly Geranio's), Old Town Alexandria. This highly anticipated pop-up shop features hundreds of original works for every taste and budget, handmade by new and experienced artists in the ceramics program. Their one-of-a-kind vessels and sculptures make wonderful gifts that are sure to be appreciated and treasured for years to come. Some stained glass and jewelry items will also be on offer. Visit www.theartleague.org or call 703-683-1780.

SATURDAY/DEC. 7

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.

Soldier's Christmas Open House. 12-4 p.m. At Carlyle House Historic Park, 121 N. Fairfax Street, Alexandria. After the Scottish Walk Parade, enter the museum gates and step back in time for a free open house in the spirit of the holiday

Winter Wreath Workshop. 1:30-3 p.m. At Green Spring Gardens, 4603 Green Spring Road, Alexandria. (15-Adult). Create a winter wreath to take home for your front door after Green Spring staff members demonstrate the dazzling possibilities. Greens, forms, ribbon and cones included in the supply fee. /Register online at www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/parktakes (code 4D0.44B2) or call Green Spring Gardens at 703-642-5173. \$39 program fee plus \$25 supply fee.

Scottish Country Dancing. 2:30-4



The Boat Parade of Lights will be held Saturday, Dec. 7 in Old Town Alexandria.

Boat Parade of Lights

Saturday/Dec. 7, Parade begins at 5:30 p.m.; Dockside festivities 2 to 8 p.m. At Waterfront Park, 1 King Street, Alexandria. Parade viewing areas: Founders Park (351 N. Union St.), Alexandria City Marina (0 Cameron St.), Waterfront Park (1 King St. and 1A Prince St.), Point Lumley Park (1 Duke St.), Shipyard/Harborside Park (1 Wilkes St.), Windmill Hill Park (501 S. Union St.) and Ford's Landing Park (99 Franklin St.). Admission: Free; \$ for food/drink and some activities. Visit AlexandriaVA.com/boatparade

Schedule in Old Town (2 to 8 p.m.)

- ❖ Holiday music and giveaways from 97.1 WASH-FM
- ❖ Letters to Santa postcard station from Penny Post
- ❖ Holiday ornament activity from AR Workshop Alexandria (2 to 4 p.m.)
- ❖ Bookmark making station from Old Town Books (4:30 to 8 p.m.)
- ❖ Torpedo Factory Art Center Holiday Festival
- ❖ Santa arrives by fireboat at the Alexandria City Marina (3:30 p.m.)

At The Athenaeum, 201 Prince Street, Alexandria. Free. The Royal Scottish Country Dance Society, Northern Virginia Branch, invites everyone to participate in a delightful afternoon of Scottish Country Dancing. Learn about this social dancing of Scotland, which dates back to the 1700s in villages of the Scottish Highlands. Everyone will dance to reel and jig tunes provided by fiddler Becky Ross, who will give participants the authentic sound of SCD.

The Tudors. 7 p.m. At Virginia

Theological Seminary, 3737 Seminary Road, Alexandria. In a new series of programs devoted to vocal polyphony, the Washington Bach Consort will transport you to 16th-century England with sacred motets of Tallis, Sheppard, Byrd, and others. Cost is \$35 (General) / \$10 (18 & Under). Visit the website: www.bachconsort.org.

DEC. 7-8

Watercolor Exhibition, Sale.

Saturday 4-7 p.m.; Sunday noon to 4
SEE CALENDAR, PAGE 16



The Scottish Christmas Walk Weekend includes a parade in Old Town Alexandria on Saturday, Dec. 7.

Scottish Christmas Walk Weekend

Friday-Saturday/Dec. 6-7, At various Old Town Alexandria locations. The Campagna Center presents the 49th Annual Scottish Christmas Walk Weekend and Parade. The parade is Dec. 7 at 11 a.m. and begins at St. Asaph and Wolfe Streets and concludes at Market Square with a massed band concert. Admission: Free for parade and Heather and Greens Sales; \$180-\$290 for Taste of Scotland; \$40 for Holiday Home Tours. In 1749, the City of Alexandria was officially established by three Scottish merchants and named after its original founder, John Alexander, also of Scottish descent. Through your support of the events of The Scottish Christmas Walk Weekend, you provide vital support to Campagna Center programs that serve more than 2,000 children, teens, and adults throughout the year. Visit the website: <https://www.campagnacenter.org/scottishwalkweekend>

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HOLIDAY ENTERTAINMENT



The 25th Anniversary First Night in Old Town Alexandria takes place Tuesday, Dec. 31.

First Night in Alexandria

Tuesday/Dec. 31, 6 p.m. to 1 a.m. At venues throughout Old Town Alexandria. This 25th Anniversary Celebration is the largest New Year's Eve party in the D.C. region that is safe and fun for the entire family and culminates with a fantastic fireworks finale over the Potomac River at midnight. Kids Karnivals: 6 to 9 p.m. at four warm indoor venues in Old Town, Del Ray and the West End. Live Entertainment: 7 p.m. to 11 p.m. at warm indoor venues throughout Old Town Alexandria. Rockin' on the River: 10 p.m. to 1 a.m. at Waterfront Park, 1 King St., Alexandria. Midnight fireworks: Potomac River at the foot of King St., Alexandria. All Access Admission: \$25 through November 30, 2019; \$30 December 1-30, 2019; \$35 December 31, 2019; Kids Carnival is \$5 for children ages 2-12 and free for parents and infants. Call 703-963-3755 or visit firstnightalexandria.org.

CALENDAR

FROM PAGE 15

p.m. At Hollin Hall Senior Center, 1500 Shenandoah Road, Alexandria. Local artists exhibit and offer for sale original watercolors.

SUNDAY/DEC. 8

Season's Treatings. Two seatings, one from 10-11:30 a.m. and another from 1-2:30 p.m. At Durant Arts Center, 1100 Wythe Street, #25334, Alexandria. Come and celebrate the season - and help raise money to support UpCycle Creative Reuse Center. Tickets include a pre-made gingerbread house, frosting and unlimited access to the expansive candy buffet. Unlimited numbers of supervising adults are welcome. \$25. www.upcyclecra.org/events.html

Del Ray Art Show. Noon to 6 p.m. At Stephen Lally Studio, 8 East Howell Ave., Alexandria. The 6th Annual Del Ray Holiday Sale/Show, 1-day studio show of work from seven artists (glass mosaics, fine jewelry, woodfired pottery, turned pens, paper mache masks, upcycle bags/scarves, and gourmet dog treats). Free. www.stephenlallypottery.com

Gardeners' Holiday Open House. Noon to 4 p.m. At Green Spring Gardens, 4603 Green Spring Road, Alexandria. Treat yourself to a day of holiday fun featuring decorations and seasonal displays, live music and a puppet show at the "Gardeners' Holiday Open House." Shop for holiday breads and ornaments and enjoy free refreshments, too. For the kids, don't miss the "Gardeners' Holiday Puppet Show" — a holiday presentation performed by a

professional puppet troupe. Shows run from 1 to 1:45 p.m. and again from 3 to 3:45 p.m. The puppet show is \$5 per person for audience members ages 2 to adult. Register in advance if you want to see one of the shows. Call 703-642-5173 or visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/green-spring.

Washington Metropolitan

Philharmonic. 3-5 p.m. At George Washington Masonic National Memorial, 101 Callahan Drive, Alexandria. Join WMP for delightful musical treats during the holiday season performing Vaughan Williams's version of Greensleeves with flutist Lynn Ann Zimmerman-Bell and Heidi Sturniolo on harp. Concertmaster Tim Kidder solos in Lukas Foss's melodious Three American Pieces, orchestrated by Foss for Itzhak Perlman. Principal tubist Karl Hovey explores Richard Strauss' romantic Horn Concerto, playing it on the tuba. Discover how Stravinsky evokes the world of commedia dell'arte clowns in Pulcinella. The concert operates with festive holiday selections from the Great American Song Book performed by soprano Elizabeth Kluegel. Cost: \$25; 18 and under free. www.wmpamusic.org

Folk Songs Concert. 3-5 p.m. At Carl Sandburg Middle School, 8428 Fort Hunt Road, Alexandria. The National Concert Band of America will perform "Folk Songs Reimagined: Music from Around the World." Traditional Eastern European Jewish dances and folk songs from England, Japan and the United States will be



A Nature Collage Workshop will take place on Dec. 13 at River Farm in Alexandria.

Nature Collage Workshop

Friday/Dec. 13, 10 a.m. to noon. At River Farm, 7931 East Boulevard Drive, Alexandria. Local artist/author Kathryn Coneway will lead a nature collage-making workshop. Participants will create an accordion book of collage images using translucent mulberry paper. Cost: \$65 AHS members; \$75 non-members. Info and registration: <https://bit.ly/2Xsayvn>

featured. Free. Visit the website: www.nationalconcertband.org
Concert at St. Luke's. 5 p.m. At St. Luke's Episcopal Church, 8009 Fort Hunt Road, Alexandria. Words & Music will return and present a candlelight concert "Star of the Morning". Through readings and



A Watercolor Exhibition and Sale will be held Dec. 7-8 at Hollin Hall Senior Center in Alexandria.

Watercolor Exhibition

Dec. 7-8. **Watercolor Exhibition, Sale.** Saturday 4-7 p.m.; Sunday noon to 4 p.m. At Hollin Hall Senior Center, 1500 Shenandoah Road, Alexandria. Local artists exhibit and offer for sale original watercolors. Many of the artists have displayed their work in venues throughout the District, Maryland and Virginia.

free to students 18 and under.
www.saintlukeschurch.net/events

MONDAY/DEC. 9

Author Talk: Nancy Noyes Silcox. 7 p.m. At Beatley Central Library, 5005 Duke Street, Alexandria. Join local author Nancy Noyes Silcox as she discusses her book, "Samuel Wilbert Tucker: The Story of a Civil Rights Trailblazer and the 1939 Alexandria Library Sit-In." Copies of the book will be available for purchase and signing.

TUESDAY/DEC. 10

Alexandria Police Foundation Fundraiser. 6:30-10 p.m. At The Little Theatre of Alexandria, 600 Wolfe Street, Alexandria. Fundraiser helps support the COPS, Kids and K9 programs with the Alexandria Police Department. It will include a pre-show reception, raffle items and a performance of "A Christmas Carol." Tickets are \$40/adults; \$25/kids 16 and under. Tickets include show and pre-show reception. Email: GinnyObranovich@alexandriapolicefoundation.org or call 703-746-1909.

Alexandria Harmonizers Carol Crawl. 7-9 p.m. Beginning at Market Square and ending in front of Chadwicks in Alexandria. Come hear the Harmonizers' annual Carol Crawl through Old Town Alexandria, as they stop to sing Christmas carols in various establishments along King Street, from Market Square to the waterfront, and end up at Chadwicks. Visit the website: www.harmonizers.org



PHOTOS BY JANET BARNETT/GAZETTE PACKET

Members of the Carney family prepare to run the 44th annual Alexandria Turkey Trot Nov. 28 in Del Ray.

Thousands turn out for 44th annual Turkey Trot

FROM PAGE 1

dria with a bigger heart than Jack Taylor,” said Del Ray Business Association President Sue Kovalsky. “On a day that is about giving, we’re thrilled to recognize his devotion to the City of Alexandria

and his incredible work with Alexandria non-profits.”

Earlier this year, T.C. Williams High School dedicated the Jack Taylor College and Career Wing in honor of his 25 years of generous donations to the Scholarship Fund

of Alexandria.

“It has been another wonderful year in Del Ray,” Reuter added. “We all feel so blessed to have such great businesses with such great support from the community and City.”



Christine Berry prepares daughters Ella and Charlotte for the annual Thanksgiving Day Turkey Trot Nov. 28 in Del Ray.



Chris Frazer, center, poses for a photo with visiting relatives at the Nov. 28 Turkey Trot in del Ray.

Important Work of Journey Films

FROM PAGE 7

Pearson said. “As the presenting station, MPT made sure that the film was released in time for Black History Month this past February. The sheer amount of public TV stations who aired it across the United States was a testament to the integrity of the film and, of course to Mr. Thurman and his huge impact on our culture. We could not have been prouder of Martin Doblmeier and his film already. Winning the Emmy Award was the icing on the cake. The point is that Journey Films’ work is critically important.”

Soon, audiences will be getting acquainted with another extraordinary Christian.

“We are in final edits with another biographical documentary in the series, this one on the great Catholic social radical, Dorothy Day,” Doblmeier said. “She was a remarkable character who began the

Catholic Worker Movement – a national newspaper and network of homes for the poor and destitute. She began both during the Great Depression and both are still in operation today.”

Doblmeier’s hopes are for the Dorothy Day documentary to air on PBS stations in March 2020 for Women’s History Month.

Doblmeier and the Journey Films team aren’t thinking about awards as they passionately execute their projects, though.

“Over the years, we have been honored with more than 30 awards for the films,” Doblmeier said. “However, our goal is simply to continue to create the best films possible and hope people discover something of value in them.”

To view any of Journey Films’s productions, visit www.journeyfilms.com. Also, their films are available on DVD, for purchase on their site or on Amazon.com.

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

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Obituary

Obituary

On November 7, Edward Abramson, 79, passed away peacefully in his home, surrounded by his family.

Edward grew up in Alexandria, Virginia, a town he loved and called home for most of his life. After returning from college and medical school (University of Pennsylvania and University of Virginia), he returned to Alexandria, eventually moving back into his childhood home. His father, Alfred Abramson, built the home and practiced medicine there. Edward followed in his footsteps, practicing Urology for over 40 years. He worked in the practice Alexandria Urological and performed surgery at Alexandria, Mt. Vernon and the former Circle Terrace Hospitals. Medicine and the care of his patients was truly Edward's calling and passion.

When he wasn't practicing medicine, Edward was a devoted husband to his wife, Lynn and father to his daughter, Lauren. He would also joke he had a son, Blizzard; a testament to his life-long love of dogs, specifically, Golden Retrievers.

He is survived by his wife, Lynn, daughter Lauren (Brigitte), sister Karen Cantor (David), nephews Brian Cantor (Kristen) and Neil Cantor (Shari) and great-nephews Coby, Nathan and Zach.

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False Sense of Security

By KENNETH B. LOURIE



I never want to look a gift-oncologist in the mouth or take a "stable"-type CT scan with a grain of salt, however; self-preservation is a funny instinct. It can change from day to day (heck, even hour to hour) and dominate your pre-occupation or intrude your thinking not at all. You can rationalize away the good, bad or indifferent (results) or irrationalize away the less-than-expected or the more-than-anticipated. Results from lab work and/or diagnostic scans are the axis on which your entire life revolves. You either roll with the punches or you get knocked down by them. For a cancer patient, the punches often keep coming.

The punches thrown in my direction occur bi-weekly when I have my pre-immunotherapy lab work for my every-other Friday 30-minute opdivo infusion. (Although the actual lab work and even the infusion is more of a jab.) The left hook/right cross combination occurs quarterly. That's when I slide through the computerized tomography scan and wait for results (as I had been for most of the last week). Since I have generally been asymptomatic - other than for miscellaneous side effects from the various medicines with which I've been infused, the tale of the tape, to continue the boxing references, happens when my oncologist emails the radiologist's report to me with a brief sentence summary: "a little worse" (this time), "stable," or something less discouraging that needs to be discussed at our next face-to-face appointment which generally is scheduled a week or so after the previous week's scan.

Regardless of what these mostly cryptic emails have said, until I hear exactly what my oncologist says, I am neither too high or too low. Granted, hearing "stable" is extremely encouraging whereas "a little worse, not so much. Nevertheless, the fight goes on. Cancer treatment is a series of actions and reactions (punches and counter punches, you might even say) so depending on how one's body reacts, determines what action is recommended. I am living proof, literally. Over my nearly 11 years of treatment, I have been infused with upwards of a dozen different medicines. Once one treatment loses its luster, we change to another hoping it will be more effective, and so on. It's science, not arithmetic. As such, any guarantees left the building with Elvis.

Being a cancer patient is not for everybody. One has to make the most of the least. It's easy to let the hard facts make you soft. Unless you find a way to be up, the cancer will take you down. Somehow, even when it's doing the worst to you, you have to be at your best. Being positive generates positivity in return. When I look at people, I try to smile so that they'll smile back (I'm being selfish, really). Do you remember George Costanza describing the look of disappointment on his mother's face when he told her he wanted to play the accordion? Like that, only the complete opposite.

When I interact with people, I don't want them to feel "poor, poor, pitiful me" to quote Warren Zevon from his song first sung in 1976. And I don't want them to see cancer either. I want them to see everything about me. I may be diagnosed with a terminal form of cancer: stage IV, non-small cell lung cancer, but I don't want to be defined by it. Just because I'm living with cancer doesn't mean it's who I am. It's what I have, that's all.

And what reminds most me that I have cancer and what challenges my reactions to it more than anything, is when I have these quarterly CT scans (and the annual MRI, too). As much as I try to fend off the possible effect on my mortality (my true sense of insecurity), I'd be lying if I said I was always successful. In truth, I'm always worried about it. How could I not be? I guess I'm not quite ready to throw in the towel. I suppose that means, regardless of what my oncologist says at our next meeting, I'm still ready to live and fight another day.

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

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OPINION

Krizek

FROM PAGE 9

from school is a priority of mine.

There are still too many people who don't wear their seat belts. Seat belts are the single most cost-effective traffic safety device in the event of an accident. Seat belts hold drivers and passengers in place, keeping them from being thrown forward into the steering wheel, windshield or being ejected from the vehicle. HB 16, courtesy of constituent Jonathan Tucker, a former West Potomac High School student, finally closes the backseat exemption and would require all passengers, regardless of age, in a motor vehicle to wear their seat belts. Under current Virginia law, there is no requirement to use a seat belt in the backseat of a vehicle if you are over 18. This makes Virginia one of only ten states with backseat exemptions for anyone over 18. According to the DMV, more than half of the people who died in Virginia crashes were not using their seat belts. In 2016, 304 unrestrained drivers or passengers were killed. The year before that it was 310, and in 2014, there were 256. This problem is acute here in Virginia where nearly 16% of drivers do not use their seatbelts.

You may have heard about the legislation passed during the last session (finally passed by Delegate Price, I first introduced this bill in 2018) to remove the Jim Crow-era minimum wage exemptions for newsboys, shoe-shine boys, ushers, doormen, and others. However, wage inequality in the Code of Virginia does not stop along racial lines, as workers with disabilities are also subject to these discriminatory subminimum wage standards. I am introducing a bill this year to eliminate the minimum wage exemption for disabled workers. This will include a 4-year phase-in period that will allow employers to adjust accordingly, which is similar to the timeframe other states have used when passing similar legislation.

It is my hope this year that we will eliminate many of the barriers to voting in Virginia in this next General Assembly session, including instituting automatic voter registration, same-day voter registration, and no-excuse in-person absentee voting. I strongly believe that voting should be made easier across the board, and that includes ensuring that it is free of charge to cast your ballot, however you decide to vote. Obtaining postage to return a mail-in ballot can be a barrier to voting for the homebound, elderly, those with limited access to transportation, and even to college students. I am introducing a bill this year to require that all absentee mail-in ballots include prepaid postage on the return envelopes. Sixteen other states currently provide voters prepaid return postage for mailed-in ballots.

As we head into session, I welcome your questions and feedback. Stay tuned, as over the next few weeks, I will publish more information about legislation that I plan to introduce. Please stay in touch by sending me an email at DelPKrizek@House.Virginia.Gov. Also, please come visit me during session in Richmond.

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