

## ‘Uncharted Territory’ Local businesses struggle amid COVID-19 pandemic.

BY JEANNE THEISMANN  
GAZETTE PACKET

**T**he Alexandria City Council scheduled an emergency meeting March 18 to consider COVID-19 status, response and recovery initiatives following a news conference by Virginia Governor Ralph Northam declaring a public health emergency across the Commonwealth.

In his March 17 order, Northam announced that restaurants, fitness centers and theaters are prohibited from operating with more than 10 customers present. Violation of the order is a criminal offense although businesses may continue to provide carry-out and delivery options.

“This is uncharted territory,” said “Mango” Mike Anderson, partner in the HomeGrown Restaurant Group that operates six restaurants in Alexandria. “We’re trying to figure out how to survive, but a lot of places are not going to make it.”

As of Monday, Anderson indefinitely closed his newest restaurant, Whiskey & Oyster, in the Carlyle District, and is cutting staff at other restaurants.

“With the exception of Whiskey & Oyster, all of our other places are geared towards delivery,” said Anderson, whose restaurants include Pork Barrel BBQ, Holy Cow, the Sushi Bar, Sweet Fire Donna’s and Tequila & Taco. “We have set up safe, non-contact pick-up tents so customers can pick up food from their car. There has been a run on grocery stores so we want to fill any need that is there yet do everything we can to keep our staff and customers safe.”

As of March 18, 77 individuals have tested positive for the virus across the state, with five of those located in Alexandria. The Alexandria Health Department joined Northam in urging residents to comply with new federal guidelines not to gather in groups of more than 10 and for people older than 65 to self-quarantine.

Residents are advised to check with retailers and grocery stores for any amended hours of operation and to practice social distancing.



Several restaurants are offering curbside ordering and pick up, including Sweet Fire Donna’s in the Carlyle District.

ing. In grocery stores, use non-cash forms of payment whenever possible and wash all fruits, vegetables and other exposed foods with dish soap and water prior to consumption. Wash or sanitize hands immediately after handling cash or payment devices.

“Our business has been down about 35 percent,” said Alexandria Cupcake owner Adnan Hamidi. “But it’s too hard to gauge the long-term fallout since the city has been absolutely dead. We are still open and offering curbside pick up and waving delivery fees with a minimum purchase of \$25.”

On Wednesday, Amazon announced a donation of \$1 million to kick-start collaborative emergency COVID-19 response funds to benefit the four largest local community foundations across the Greater Washington region who are working to support vulnerable populations disproportionately impacted amid the coronavirus outbreak, including ACT for Alexandria.

ACT for Alexandria, Arlington Community Foundation, Community Foundation for Northern Virginia and the Greater Washington Community Foundation will each use these funds for grants to nonprofits addressing food insecurity, shelter and providing emergency financial assistance. In the near term, ACT will prioritize efforts

that focus on the needs of children and youth, low-wage workers, seniors and immigrants.

Dominion Energy Charitable Foundation is committing \$1 million to aid COVID-19 relief efforts both for national organizations, such as the American Red Cross, as well as address local needs.

Dominion has suspended all service disconnections for nonpayment. Residential customers previously disconnected due to non-payment may contact the company for assistance reconnecting service.

Small business owners like Anderson are working to find a balance between paying salaries and operating costs while keeping staff and customers safe.

“We’re trying to figure out the finances that will allow us to keep the doors open and survive until the end,” Anderson said. “It won’t be pretty but we’re hanging in there and just trying to figure out how to make it to the other end.”

As Alexandrians are staying at home and practicing social distancing, Visit Alexandria launched a new web hub called ALX at Home, which connects residents and nearby visitors with Alexandria restaurants, shops and attractions.

The website offers curbside beer-to-go to FaceTime shopping, and numerous ways to support the independent businesses.

ALX at Home features:

**Restaurant offerings**, such as Chop Shop Taco’s Home Meal deal that includes dinner for 4-5 people, zero-contact payment and pickup, a \$25 gift card and two rolls of toilet paper, and Bastille’s special menu for curbside take out with select wine bottles also available for \$25.

**Retail offerings**, including AR Workshop’s DIY kits to go and Old Town Books’ Writer’s Retreat care packages, virtual author workshops and more.

**Attraction offerings such as virtual tours** and a “Ride it Out” bike rental program from Unlimited Biking.

**Cocktail Corner** for Happy Hour at home with instructional videos from The Hour boutique.

**Puppy Love**, bringing a daily dose of cuteness from Alexandria’s four-legged friends.

To learn more visit ALXatHome.com.

Del Ray Business Association is also highlighting connections between

## Food for Students and Families

Alexandria Public Schools is continuing to provide food at no cost for any child and any family who needs it during the school closures. There are two ways to access food while schools are closed.

**Individual Meals to Go:** Any child - whether or not they are eligible for Free or Reduced Price Meals - can pick up a meal to go in a bag. Stop by the Chinquapin Drive side of T.C. Williams High School (door 14) between 8 a.m. and 1 p.m. to pick up a meal-to-go (8 a.m. - 10 a.m. for breakfast and 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. for lunch). You do not need to fill out any forms to pick up a meal-to-go.

**Family Meal Packs:** You can order a family meal pack online and pick it up at the drive through pick-up point outside Chinquapin Recreation Center (Chinquapin Drive side of T.C. Williams High School, door 14) between 8 a.m. and 1 p.m. the following day. If transportation is an issue, please remember to check the box to request free meal delivery. Fill out the form to request a family meal pack. [www.acps.k12.va.us/emergency-mealform](http://www.acps.k12.va.us/emergency-mealform)

**Food Resources in the City of Alexandria:** For food pantry locations and schedules in Alexandria, visit [www.hungerfreealexandria.com](http://www.hungerfreealexandria.com) or call \*703-662-1067.

tween small business and customers during the crisis.

“Any time a restaurant or a small business closes, so many customers come forward to say how much they wish they could have helped,” said Del Ray Business Association President Sue Kovalsky. “These are unprecedented times, and our business owners are leading the way in responding to this rapidly changing situation, always prioritizing the health and safety of their customers. We need to rally around our local businesses so they stay in business.”

See [www.visitdelray.com](http://www.visitdelray.com) for ideas and offers.

For more information about the COVID-19 coronavirus, visit [alexandriava.gov/Coronavirus](http://alexandriava.gov/Coronavirus).

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**SOLD**

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## Former Chief Samarra Dies at 74

Led APD from 1990-2006.

BY JEANNE THEISMANN  
GAZETTE PACKET

**F**ormer Alexandria Chief of Police Charles Samarra died March 17 following a three-month battle with a brain tumor. He was 74.

Samarra served as Chief of Police for 16 years from 1990-2006. Prior to his tenure in Alexandria, he spent 23 years with the District of Columbia's Metropolitan Police Department retiring as Assistant Chief.

"Charlie was a leader in public safety, not just in Alexandria but throughout the region," said former Police Chief David Baker, a close friend who served with Samarra both in DC and Alexandria. "He was respected for his intellect, integrity, vision and compassion for the people that worked for him."



**Former Alexandria Chief of Police Charles Samarra died March 17 at the age of 74.**



**Former Alexandria Chief of Police Charles Samarra, second from right, died March 17 following a three-month battle with a brain tumor. He was 74.**

Samarra was born Aug. 14, 1945. He lived in Marbury, Md., and was in a rehabilitation center in La Plata, Md., at the time of his death following complications from surgery.

"From state-of-the-art technology to affirmative action, Charlie transformed every unit that he

went to," Baker added. "He held some of the most prestigious positions in DC, rising to Assistant Chief because of his commitment to excellence."

Assistant Chief of Police Don Hayes said in a statement: "[Chief Samarra] brought with him extensive police experience and was a

respected public safety leader in the region. During his tenure with the City he improved officer training, professional development, leadership and the department's budgetary performance. He was innovative in his approach to policing and brought our department into the 21st century."

Samarra is survived by his wife Mary and son Chad.

"I have known Charlie since 1980," Baker said. "He was a teacher, leader, mentor and friend all wrapped into one. This is a tremendous loss."

Memorial service and funeral arrangements are pending.

## All Five Inova Hospitals Earn Highest CMS Five-Star Quality Rating

**A**ll five of Inova Health System's hospitals have been rated with 5 out of 5 stars in the most recent Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) Five-Star Quality Rating System report.

Inova is the only health system in the country comprising more than 3 hospitals where all are 5 star rated.

A CMS five-star quality rating is based on extensive data that measures patient experience, infection rates, readmissions and mortality.

Inova Health System's 5 Star hospitals are Inova Fairfax, Inova Fair Oaks, Inova Alexandria, Inova Mount Vernon and Inova Loudoun

Hospital.

CMS, the top health agency of the federal government, created the Five-Star Quality Rating System as an evidence-based evaluation reflecting a hospital's standard of care. The rating system is based on quality measurements that have real meaning for patient health and well-being, including safety, timeliness and effectiveness of care.

"A relentless focus on our patients and putting their needs at the center of every aspect of our work at Inova has earned this exclusive CMS recognition. I am incredibly proud of our team members and their commitment to

safety, clinical excellence and delivery of an exceptional experience every time, every touch," said J. Stephen Jones, MD, President and Chief Executive Officer, Inova.

CMS hospital rating results, including up to 51 patient quality measures, are accessible on its Hospital Compare page. The resource was created to help consumers, their families, and caregivers compare and evaluate hospital quality to set expectations and better inform their decision about a healthcare provider.

### About Inova:

Inova is Northern Virginia's leading nonprofit healthcare pro-

vider, recognized in 2019 by U.S. News & World Report, which named Inova Fairfax Hospital the #1 hospital in the Washington, DC region.

All five Inova hospitals were awarded 'A' grades for the fall 2019 Leapfrog Hospital Safety Grades, recognizing Inova's achievements in protecting patients from harm and providing safer healthcare. Each of Inova's five hospitals hold 5-star ratings from the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS), distinguishing Inova as the highest rated large health system in the U.S.

Our mission is to provide world-class healthcare – every time, ev-

ery touch – to each person in every community we have the privilege to serve.

Inova's 18,000 team members serve more than 2 million individuals annually through an integrated network of hospitals, primary and specialty care practices, emergency and urgent care centers, outpatient services and destination institutes. Inova is home to Northern Virginia's only Level 1 Trauma Center and Level 4 Neonatal Intensive Care Unit. Its hospitals have a total of 1,800 licensed beds.

More information and statistics about Inova can be found at [www.inova.org](http://www.inova.org).

### BULLETIN BOARD

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

#### 2020 CENSUS EFFORTS

Councilman Canek Aguirre is encouraging residents to participate in Census volunteer efforts to raise awareness about the 2020 Census and reach Alexandria's hard-to-count populations. Aguirre serves as Chair of the City of Alexandria's

Complete Count Committee. A list of upcoming volunteer opportunities can be found below:

- ❖2020 Census Information Session – Saturday, March 28, 3 p.m., Barrett Branch Library, 717 Queen Street, Alexandria.
- ❖2020 Census Information Session – Monday, March 30, 7 p.m., Duncan Branch Library, 2501 Commonwealth Avenue, Alexandria.
- ❖2020 Census Information Session – Saturday, April 11, 11 a.m., Burke Branch Library, 4701 Seminary Road, Alexandria.

#### SATURDAY/MARCH 21

**CASA Info Session.** 9 a.m. At Martha Washington Library, 6614 Fort Hunt Road, Alexandria. Fairfax Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) provides volunteer advocates to abused and neglected children referred by the Fairfax County Juvenile and Domestic Relations Court. The first step to becoming a CASA volunteer is to attend an information session. RSVP to [sgoldberg@casafairfax.org](mailto:sgoldberg@casafairfax.org) as space is limited. Note: check for cancellation.

#### THURSDAY/MARCH 26

**Community Meeting.** 6-8 p.m. At T.C. Williams High School Cafeteria,

3330 King Street, Alexandria. Community Meeting and Open House for The High School Project. An update regarding ideas emerging around future programming and the use of the site. Note: check for cancellation.

#### MONDAY/MARCH 28

**ADU Community Meeting.** 7 p.m. At the Beatley Library, 5005 Duke Street, Alexandria. The City of Alexandria will begin a series of community meetings to inform residents about accessory dwelling units (ADUs) and ask for feedback on how to implement a successful Adu

program. Part of the outreach efforts will also include a short survey that will launch to gauge resident opinions on Adu implementation options. A third meeting to discuss the findings of the initial open houses and survey will be held in early April. An Adu, commonly referred to as an "in-law apartment" or "granny flat" is a second, separate living unit. ADUs can be built by converting a basement into an apartment, adding an addition to an existing house, building an apartment over a garage,

SEE BULLETIN, PAGE 5



## PEOPLE



Alexandria Town Crier Ben Fiore-Walker, second from left, joins Marie Huddle, Joan Renner and John Coles at the Sips For Saints fundraiser March 13 at The Atrium.



Enjoying the Alexandria Central Rotary Club's March 13 Sips For Saints fundraiser are Ronal Butler, Alexandria Symphony Orchestra conductor James Ross, Vera Jones, Nyree Wright and Martha Lloyd.

# Sips For Saints

Rotary Central holds fundraiser for local charities just before group restrictions.



**F**riday the 13th was a lucky night for local charities as the Alexandria Central Rotary Club held its second annual Sips For Saints Fundraiser March 13 at The Atrium in Old Town.

The event featured food and beverage tastings from dozens of local restaurants along with raffle prizes from Alexandria retailers.

Irish step dancers from the O'Neill James School of Irish Dance provided entertainment.

Proceeds from the evening support the

**Tempo Restaurant owner Wendy Albert participates in Sips For Saints March 13 at The Atrium.**

PHOTOS BY  
JANET BARNETT  
GAZETTE PACKET

mission and charitable projects of the Alexandria Central Rotary Foundation. Those include promoting peace and conflict resolution, the prevention and treatment of disease, maternal and child health, literacy, providing clean water and sanitation, and developing economic opportunity for those in need.

Alexandria's newest Rotary club was founded in 2018 and meets Wednesday evenings at Glory Days Grill. [www.alexcentralrotary.org](http://www.alexcentralrotary.org)

—JEANNE THEISMANN

**Dancers from the O'Neill James School of Irish Dance entertain the crowd at Sips For Saints March 13 at The Atrium**



Dr. Elisabeth Palmer-Johnson, Marian Pegram and Paul Kentes get in the Irish spirit at the second annual Sips For Saints fundraiser sponsored by the Alexandria Central Rotary Club March 13 at The Atrium.



Paul Kentes, right, checks the raffle ticket of a guest at Sips For Saints March 13 at The Atrium.



# NEWS

## Avoiding Scams and Misinformation

Remain vigilant for scams related to COVID-19. You may receive fake phone calls or emails with malicious attachments or links to fraudulent websites, to try to trick you into revealing sensitive information or donating to fraudulent charities or causes.

Exercise caution in handling any email with a COVID-19-related subject line, attachment, or hyperlink, and be wary of social media pleas, texts, or calls related to COVID-19. Do not reveal personal or sensitive information in email, and do not respond to email solicitations for this information.

mation.

Avoid clicking on links in unsolicited emails from unofficial sources, and be wary of email attachments.

Use trusted sources, such as government websites ending in .GOV like coronavirus.gov (CDC), vdh.virginia.gov, and alexandriava.gov/Coronavirus.

Verify a charity's authenticity before making donations.

Businesses and organizations should review information about risk management related to COVID-19.

## For Questions about Coronavirus

For questions about COVID-19, call the Alexandria COVID-19 Information Line at 703.746.4988, weekdays from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m.

Virginia residents can also call the Virginia

Department of Health public information line, 877-ASK-VDH3, for questions about the novel coronavirus situation.

If you have chest pain or shortness of breath, call or text 911.

### BULLETIN BOARD

FROM PAGE 3

converting an existing detached garage, or building a new backyard cottage. An ADU is distinguished from renting out part of a house because it is a totally separate living unit, with a separate entrance, bathroom, and kitchen. For more information, visit the project webpage at <https://tinyurl.com/AlexADU> or contact Sam Shelby, Urban Planner, 703-746-3865. Note: check for cancellation.

### FREE TAX PREPARATION

The City of Alexandria is offering free tax

preparation to qualifying residents. Taxpayers are eligible if their income is below approximately \$35,000 for individuals and \$55,000 for families. Expert volunteers from Community Tax Aid, Inc. will ensure that taxpayers apply for all applicable credits and deductions — especially the Earned Income Tax Credit and the Child Tax Credit, which people often don't realize they are eligible to receive. Sessions will be held on Saturdays from 9 a.m. to noon, and Wednesdays from 6:30 to 8 p.m., from now through April 11, at the Department of Community and Human Services (2525

SEE BULLETIN, PAGE 8

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# OPINION

## A Time to Look Through Others' Eyes

BY KERRIE WILSON  
CEO CORNERSTONE

**L**ike you, this past week was spent as sessing risk and evaluating business options, trying to determine the best course of action in the face of COVID-19 for my family, and for the people we serve at Cornerstones through the many dedicated employees and volunteers who make our work possible.

No doubt, you have already read posts by nonprofit, philanthropic, and government agencies. This is going to be an unprecedented event in our nation's history, and every person, family, business and institution is called on to consider what they can contribute for the greater good. We are in this together.

Here's a start. If you were well-organized and had the means to stock up on cleaning supplies and hand sanitizers, consider what your family needs for the next couple of weeks and donate the rest to a safety net organization. Cornerstones and other front-line nonprofits are open for business. We need to wipe down the doors and keyboards, disinfect the kitchen, meal service counters and dining tables, and children's play space and cots.

**AT CORNERSTONES**, we are taking the health and safety of our employees seriously, but our business compels us to look out for the "rest of them." Whenever you hear "first responder," remember that's not just our criti-

cal public safety and health officers. It's also the social workers, teachers, health care workers, community organizers from nonprofit and government agencies on the front lines in any crisis.

Many people who turn to Cornerstones have jobs that can't provide work at home or alternative schedule; they don't receive paid leave benefits and must go to work or lose their job, even if they are at risk. Or maybe ignore self-care because they need a paycheck to face an urgent issue today.

Early last week, worried parents began calling Cornerstones about securing a safe place for their young children, or a location where school-aged youth can access the internet, keep up with classroom work, eat lunch, and be under the watchful eye of a caring adult. These hardworking parents don't have telecommuting op-

tions. Then began the desperate calls from people already living on the edge - families and individuals who are behind in rent and now facing the stress and fear of losing hours, their jobs, and more. In that same period, I spoke with a Cornerstones care manager and her client, who offered a rather humbling perspective on this crisis. For some in our community, this is just another trauma to endure - homelessness and poverty, chronic illness, racism, and lack of hope. It is good to look through others' eyes from time to time.

**TODAY**, there are 100+ homeless men, women, and children staying at our Embry

Rucker Community Shelter in Reston, or on a mat or cot in our winter overflow and hypothermia programs. These individuals don't have the same options for self-quarantine or social distancing when one is dependent on residential facilities like shelters. And Cornerstones, county social workers, and nursing staff are right there with them, providing daily care and support.

As a business leader, I'm trying to make sense of the official guidance, while balancing public health and individual risks against the greater good of our daily work. It has not been easy.

I hope for now we have "gotten it right" with the many modifications Cornerstones has made to minimize risk while sustaining basic needs.

If you have the flexibility to work from home or in an office space that allows for social distancing, I hope you'll do your part to minimize additional exposure to yourself and those around you. And as you consider the greater good, please do what you can to check on elderly or school-aged neighbors who may need a watchful eye, a meal, or other support. Be prepared to pitch-in with financial support to nonprofits that have to stretch tight budgets and staff resources to keep serving our community.

And most importantly, please take care of you and your loved ones and remember those who need our help, are ill and will be diagnosed, and those who take on additional risk during this time.

**Cash reserves will help buffer the coming recession.**

plus a two percent bonus for state employees this year and a two percent raise next year along with increased State Trooper compensation. It also contained an historic \$84 million investment in early childhood education, \$46 million for new school counselors, and \$180 million in school construction, plus \$80 million in free community college tuition for the Governor's "G3" program for low income students studying certain fields.

Overall, Fairfax County was poised to receive an additional \$185 million for K-12 over the next two years, Prince William is budgeted for \$122 million and Stafford \$56 million. This could be in jeopardy if revenues fail. We also budgeted major investments in higher education, increases in Medicaid reimbursements and water quality funding.

The budget also contained several of my requests for the 36th District prerogatives. First, it requires the Commonwealth to collaborate with Fairfax and Prince William Counties to study the extension of the Blue Line from the Franconia-Springfield Station to Lorton, Woodbridge, Potomac Mills and potentially Quantico. Second, the budget funds the creation of the Prince William County Public Defender's

SEE VIRUS CRISIS, PAGE 7

## Unprecedented Virus Crisis

BY SEN. SCOTT SUROVELL  
(D-36)

**O**n Thursday, we passed the Senate Budget and nearly as soon as it was passed, the coronavirus situation exploded. While this virus crisis is unprecedented, our budget was well-structured and balanced as required by our constitution, and we are prepared for a recession.

Virginia has its largest cash reserves in the history of the Commonwealth - over \$2 billion. We have been building this reserve both because of constitutionally required deposits to our Revenue Reserve or "Rainy Day" Fund, but also because analysts have been warning us about a likely recession for years even though until last week, we were in the longest economic expansion in American history.

Our outside bond rating agencies have been warning us that much of American economic growth has been generated by government stimulus versus underlying solid economic fundamentals. For example, the Trump tax cuts from 2017 and additional federal government spending accounted for about 1.1% of the country's Gross Domestic Product over the last three years. Some of Virginia's productivity was generated by the \$1 billion annually invested



through Medicaid Expansion.

There have been warning signs present for the last twelve months. For example, the "inverted yield" curve - when short term money can be borrowed at higher interest rates than long term money - has predicted every recent recession. The American yield curve inverted in January, and the markets briefly paused and then went on speculating. We cautiously

budgeted and planned for a recession with significant reserves.

While legislators are beginning to talk among ourselves and with the Governor's Office about next steps, the Governor has significant authority to make budgetary decisions without legislative approval if revenues do not meet forecasts. There some actions that could require a special session such as unemployment benefit extensions, temporary Medicaid expansions, limitations on liability, minimum income payments or sick leave expansions. We will see where things go.

Unfortunately, the final budget has some important policy changes in it which are now likely in jeopardy. It assumed three-percent revenue growth which allowed for a two percent pay increase for teachers in the first year and a two percent increase in the second year,

COMMENTARY

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**Gazette Packet**

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## OPINION

# We Are Here For You

BY DEL. PAUL KRIZEK

**T**ogether, as a community, a Commonwealth, and a nation, we are all facing a truly unprecedented situation. The global coronavirus pandemic is affecting all of our families, our houses of worship, charities and businesses, our communities — our very way of life. During this time, I want to let you know that your elected leaders are working tirelessly together to keep open the channels of communication, mostly via social media (Facebook, Twitter and email) and newspapers like this. We are committed to updating you on what's happening and what you should and can do. As the Coronavirus (COVID-19) situation continues to evolve, we are in communication with the Governor's office and state health officials to monitor and disseminate developments of the outbreak.

First and foremost, my heart goes out to anyone who's been impacted by the virus, both directly and indirectly. My thoughts are especially with those who are sick, to whom I extend my heartfelt wishes for a full recovery. Like many of you, I am especially concerned for our elderly, like my



parents who live with me. And, I am truly inspired by the selfless healthcare workers, emergency responders, and government and charity workers who are on the front lines working tirelessly to care for people in need and keep us as safe as possible.

I also want to alert you to the many scams circulating out there. As the coronavirus public health emergency continues, scam artists are taking advantage of the situation. This includes everything from selling products that supposedly will prevent, treat or cure the virus, to asking for donations to aid people who are sick. These are some tips and ways to protect yourself from coronavirus scams:

- ❖ Ignore any offers, online or otherwise, for coronavirus vaccines, prevention, treatment or cure.
- ❖ Be wary of an email that claims to be from the U.S. Center of Disease Control or the World Health Organization. Visit these two organization's websites directly to get the latest information.
- ❖ Do not click on any links from unknown sources. This could lead to downloading a virus on your computer or phone.
- ❖ Thoroughly research any organizations

**Pandemic is affecting our families, our houses of worship, charities and businesses, our communities — our very way of life.**

or charities purporting to be raising funds for victims of the coronavirus.

❖ Look out for "investment opportunities" surrounding the coronavirus.

Read more about price gouging, how to stay aware and how to report scams on the Fairfax County Emergency Information site at <https://fairfaxcountyemergency.wpcomstaging.com/>

In these turbulent days ahead, I encourage you to stay calm and careful, curtail your interactions with others, and practice excellent personal hygiene behavior. As the

Governor said on Tuesday, "I am asking Virginians to be a part of the solution." It is imperative that we slow the spread of the virus so as not to overwhelm our healthcare system and provide the time necessary to better combat it and treat the illness. Virginians are resilient, adaptable, and have the expertise to overcome this crisis. I am confident that we will get through this together.

You can follow me on Facebook and Twitter, along with my colleagues, for the latest state and local news.

## Virus Crisis

FROM PAGE 6

Office creating twenty-five new attorney positions along with ten support staff. Third, there is a \$3 million grant for the U.S. Army Museum which was saved largely due to the efforts of Del. Mark Sickles.

The budget also funds my request to remove a barge from Belmont Bay which is a navigation hazard. It also included my request to restore two staffing positions at Mason Neck State Park and to require the Virginia State Parks to collaborate with Stafford County Public Schools on a new

environmental education program at Widewater State Park.

The Governor is continuing to take actions to make more testing for COVID-19 available and coordinate our response to this crisis. Please stay tuned to my twitter feed ([www.twitter.com/ssurovell](http://www.twitter.com/ssurovell)), official Facebook ([www.facebook.com/surovell](http://www.facebook.com/surovell)) and my blog, The Dixie Pig ([scottsurovell.blogspot.com](http://scottsurovell.blogspot.com)), where I will post continued updates.

Please stay safe over the coming weeks and if you have any questions, feedback or ideas, please email me at [scott@scottsurovell.org](mailto:scott@scottsurovell.org).

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## News

# Social Distancing and Other Coronavirus Guidelines

❖On March 17, the Governor and the State Health Commissioner issued an order declaring a public health emergency in Virginia and prohibiting restaurants, fitness centers, and theaters from operating with more than 10 customers present. Violation of the order is a criminal offense. Businesses may continue to provide carry-out and delivery options.

❖On March 17, Governor Northam recommended that individuals with chronic health conditions or age 65 or older should self-quarantine, because they are at increased risk of severe illness from COVID-19. He encouraged neighbors and friends to stay in touch and regularly check in with high-risk individuals.

❖On March 16, President Trump issued a recommendation calling on Americans to follow the direction of state and local authorities. The White House recommendation also includes staying home when sick; working from home whenever possible; avoid-

ing social gatherings of more than 10 people; avoiding discretionary travel and shopping trips; and avoiding eating or drinking in restaurants, bars and public food courts. The recommendation encourages the use of drive-through, pickup or delivery options when patronizing local businesses.

❖Individuals should modify regular activities in public by practicing social distancing by maintaining six feet of personal space whenever possible, and frequently wash their hands and use hand sanitizer. Individuals should also utilize alternative greetings to handshakes, such as elbow bumps or bows.

❖City employees are working remotely to the extent feasible while maintaining core services. The City encourages all employers to maximize telework opportunities for employees whenever possible, both to increase social distancing and to help reduce the impact of school closures.

<https://www.alexandriava.gov/Coronavirus>

## BULLETIN BOARD

FROM PAGE 5

Mount Vernon Ave.). Persons seeking tax preparation assistance will be seen on a first-come, first-served basis, and electronic filing will be provided. Spanish-speaking volunteers will be available. The following documentation is required: a social security card for each family member; photo ID for the taxpayer (and spouse, if filing jointly); W-2 forms and other source of income

records; receipts or records for expenses such as child care and education; and, if possible, a copy of last year's tax return. Note: check for cancellation.

### GRANT HELPS SCHOOL

George Washington Middle School in Alexandria received an \$11,000 grant as part of No Kid Hungry Virginia's recent \$32,000 investment

across the state to support alternative school breakfast models, known nationwide as Breakfast After the Bell programs. Accessing traditional breakfast service in the cafeteria before the start of the school day can be challenging for youth. Breakfast After the Bell provides breakfast in a way that's more convenient to students, resulting in more students starting their day off eating a

SEE BULLETIN, PAGE 14

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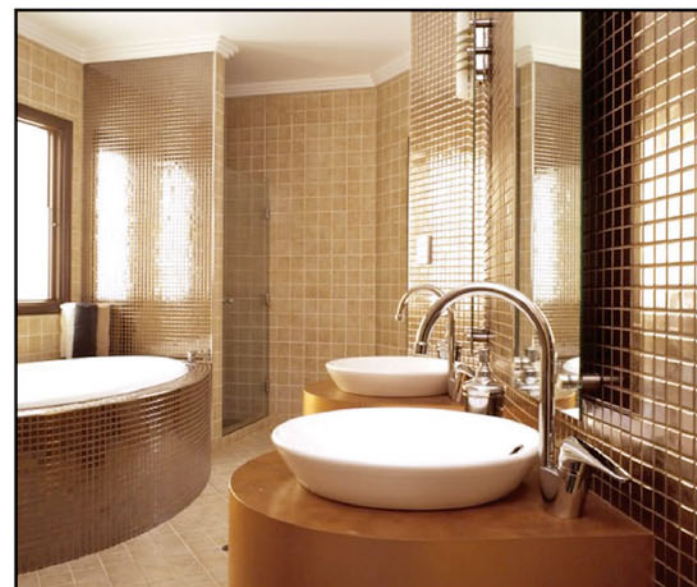
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## NEWS



PHOTO BY MIKE SALMON/THE CONNECTION

With bicycling events gaining popularity in Fairfax County, such as the Tour De Mount Vernon here at the Workhouse in Lorton, lawmakers are looking for ways to increase safety for bicyclists and pedestrians.

## House Passes Bike and Pedestrian Bills Aimed at Safety

### New Assembly makeup allows for more safety legislation.

BY MIKE SALMON  
THE CONNECTION

Stopping for a pedestrian or bicyclist in the crosswalk may be Driving 101 for most drivers, but not all. It's become such an issue, Del. Kay Kory (D-38) partnered with Del. Ken Plum (D-36) to address the issue with House Bill 1705. That bill was among seven bills passed recently to increase the safety for pedestrians and bicyclists across the state.

Kory has been working on a crosswalk bill since 2011, and finally found an opportunity to get it passed with new Democratic majorities in office. "There were no objections," she said.

The bill contains language that clarifies the duties of vehicle drivers to stop when yielding to pedestrians at clearly marked crosswalks, whether at midblock or at the end of any block; any regular pedestrian crossing included in the prolongation of the lateral boundary lines of the adjacent sidewalk at the end of a block; or any intersection when the driver is approaching on a highway where the

maximum speed limit is not more than 35 miles per hour.

"It's a big issue," said Shawn Newman of the Fairfax Advocates for Better Bicycling (FABB). "We've had a number of incidents," he added, noting that cyclists and pedestrians are "vulnerable road users."

Plum got some safety ideas from Reston cyclist Bruce Wright who discussed the unsafe situation at the W&OD Trail and Wiehle Avenue. "Some people stop and some people don't stop," Plum said. With HB 1705, he's looking at the educational function to go along with enforcement. It's not all about penalizing. "We're trying to educate people as well," he said.

Kory mentioned the possibility of signs at the crosswalks, or looking into other methods that signal drivers. In Charlottesville, she said, they use a flashing light at crosswalks. "I think it makes sense, I want to look into it," she said.

Senator Scott Surovell sponsored another vulnerable road users bill (SB 437) that increases the penalty for drivers who carelessly

SEE HOUSE PASSES, PAGE 14

## Speed Photo Enforcement Comes to Virginia

HB 1442 authorizes state and local law-enforcement agencies to operate photo speed monitoring devices, defined in the bill, in or around school crossing zones and highway work zones for the purpose of recording images of vehicles that are traveling at speeds of at least 10 miles per hour above the posted school crossing zone or highway work zone speed limit within such school crossing zone or highway work zone when such zone is indicated by

conspicuously placed signs displaying the maximum speed limit and that such photo speed monitoring devices are used in the area. The bill provides that the operator of a vehicle shall be liable for a monetary civil penalty, not to exceed \$100, if such vehicle is found to be traveling at speeds of at least 10 miles per hour above the posted highway work zone or school crossing zone speed limit by the photo speed monitoring device.

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For more information, visit [alexandriava.gov/Census2020](http://alexandriava.gov/Census2020).



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# ENTERTAINMENT

## Amid Economic Crisis, Elizabeth's Counter Brings Sweet, Savory Hope

BY HOPE NELSON  
THE GAZETTE

For Rob Krupicka, it's a time of highs and lows in the restaurant business: The excitement of launching a new concept quickly became overshadowed by the trepidation of navigating hospitality in the time of coronavirus. As the familiar Sugar Shack reinvents itself as the plant-based Elizabeth's Counter, uncertainty rules the day — even as many in the community are excited to try the new menu.

“One one hand, it's exciting to roll out something new that customers have told us they're excited about,” Krupicka said. “On the other hand, I'm looking at my sales numbers trying to figure out if I can keep my stores open.”

Restaurants and cafes operate on a razor-thin margin on a good day. To add a sweeping vacuum of sales such as the coronavirus has brought to the mix is a recipe for

discomfort at best, disaster at worst. Already Krupicka has temporarily suspended operations at his store in the District.

“None of those are fun decisions; they're the kind of decisions you make when you don't have a choice,” he said. “We went from having two weeks of amazingly good catering sales ... to having catering business die this last week.”

But despite the downturn, Krupicka says, Elizabeth's Counter's transformation continues. Contrary to what some might have thought, the doughnuts that made Sugar Shack such a sweet-tooth mecca are remaining — indeed, just this week, an Irish-whiskey-filled variety was available for St. Patrick's Day — and will be joined by a plethora of other, more savory, menu options, with a veggie-leaning flair.

“We've been thinking about adding a food concept for over a year. After a lot of research and time, we came to the conclusion that plant-based was the right answer for us,” he said.



While the soft-open menu will evolve and grow as Elizabeth's Counter settles in over the next few weeks, there are plenty of options at the outset to whet the appetite.

“We're starting out with some great burgers and bowls that are just fantastic,” Krupicka said.

Included in the mix: The Hanson's Burger, a Beyond patty with pickles, griddled onions, aioli

and more; and the Down Home, a vegan fried chicken sandwich with pickles and slaw. Add some Brussels sprouts (a recipe on loan from sibling Captain Gregory's) or some fries and the meal is complete.

“I've mostly heard really positive feedback from people who are excited to have a fast-casual plant-based place to go,” Krupicka said.

And in this time of social distancing, Krupicka says there are

### IF YOU GO

Elizabeth's Counter, 804 N. Henry St.  
Hours (may fluctuate as circumstances change): 6 a.m.-noon Monday-Tuesday; 6 a.m.-7 p.m. Wednesday-Sunday.

Try this: “I would order the Brussels sprouts bowl,” says owner Rob Krupicka, highlighting the bowl that brings a hint of sweet along with the savory. “We basically took the famous Brussels sprouts that Captain Gregory's has been serving for four years and turned it into a bowl.”

many ways to feast on Elizabeth's Counter's offerings while still staying safe. Too, there are many things customers can do to keep restaurants on their feet while facing down widespread economic struggles.

“Keep buying. What I'm telling folks is ... if you're worried about keeping your social distance, which we should all be following that instruction, then order it online, order it on UberEats ... or order it on our website and come pick it up. We'll either do curbside for you or you come in and it will already be packaged for you,” he said.

In the meantime, Krupicka says, they're just taking it day by day.

“I don't think any restaurant knows what to expect right now. We're trying to survive, make sure our staff is OK, make sure our customers are OK,” he said.

Hope Nelson is the author of “Classic Restaurants of Alexandria” and owns the Kitchen Recessionista blog, located at [www.kitchenrecessionista.com](http://www.kitchenrecessionista.com). Email her any time at [hope@kitchenrecessionista.com](mailto:hope@kitchenrecessionista.com).

### CALENDAR

**Editor's Note:** Be aware that many events could be cancelled as precaution to the spread of COVID-19. Please check before heading to events.

Submit entertainment announcements at [www.connectionnewspapers.com/Calendar/](http://www.connectionnewspapers.com/Calendar/). The deadline is noon on Friday. Photos/artwork encouraged.

#### ONGOING

**Plant Clinic.** March 17 to Oct. 27, Tuesdays from 7-8:30 p.m. At Beatley Central Library, 5005 Duke Street, Alexandria. Extension Master Gardeners are staffing a plant clinic every Tuesday evening, beginning March 17 and ending October 27. A plant clinic is a place to get lawn and gardening advice, help in dealing with plant diseases and insect pests, soil test kits, and free flower and vegetable seeds.

**“The King's Shadow.”** Now thru April 19. 8 p.m. At The Lab at Convergence, 1819 N. Quaker Lane, Alexandria. In this season, Shakespeare's Histories: “The King's Shadow” runs January 2nd - April 19th, 2020; “Richard the Second” runs January 2 - April 18, 2020; “Henry the Fourth, Part 1” runs January 30 - April 18, 2020; “Henry the Fourth, Part 2” runs February 13 - April 19, 2020; and “Henry the Fifth” runs March 12 - April 19, 2020. These plays follow the troubled passing of the English crown from the philosopher King Richard II, to the conqueror King Henry IV, to his rogue son, Prince Hal. With his father's deeds looming over him, Hal indulges in a reckless adolescence that tarnishes his reputation. But when the time comes to rule, Hal



### Celebrating Diversity

March 30-May 3, at Scope Gallery, 105 North Union Street, Ground Floor, Studio 19 of the Torpedo Factory, Alexandria. Scope will be joining in this year's BunnyFest at the Torpedo Factory Art Center, a celebration of bunnies, displaying rabbit-ware and bunny sculptural pieces. The April 11 event, which runs from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m., hopfully highlights the artistry of long-eared friends and includes live demonstrations, hands-on activities and visiting rabbits from Friends of Rabbits Rescue. Hours are Monday through Sunday from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Thursday, April 9 and Friday, April 10 are late-night closings of 9 p.m. Call Scope Gallery at 703-548-6288, visit [www.scopegallery.org](http://www.scopegallery.org).

**Marsha Lederman (Arlington, VA), “Flora” with underglaze painting.**

### “By the Seashore”

March 20 to April 4, Wednesdays thru Saturdays, 10 a.m.; 10:30 a.m.; 11:30 a.m. At the Convergence Main Building, 1801 N. Quaker Lane, Alexandria. “By the Seashore” takes us on a magical journey to a place children love to visit — the beach! Young audience members are invited to explore all the amazing things we find on the shore, in the ocean, and in the sky; from birds and fish, to sand and water, and everything in-between. Using an imaginative mix of puppetry, movement, and sound, this sensory-filled production is specifically designed for babies and young toddlers. Tickets are \$8. Discounts for groups and active duty military families are available. Purchase tickets here: <http://www.artsonthehorizon.org/by-the-seashore-2020> or call 571-549-1270.

**Arts on the Horizon presents “By the Seashore” from March 20 to April 4.**

must take control of how history will remember him, unite his country, and become the legendary King Henry V. Tickets are \$35. Contact [boxoffice@bravespiritstheatre.com](mailto:boxoffice@bravespiritstheatre.com) or [www.bravespiritstheatre.com](http://www.bravespiritstheatre.com).  
**Life Drawing Sessions.** Now thru Dec. 9. At Del Ray Artisans, 2704 Mount Vernon Ave., Alexandria. Looking for a chance to hone your figure drawing skills? Del Ray

Artisans offers a range of open life drawing sessions for just this purpose. Just drop in for the session and bring your supplies to draw or paint the live models. Fee ranges from \$8-\$12. All skill levels are welcome. Visit [DelRayArtisans.org/life-drawing](http://DelRayArtisans.org/life-drawing)

**Tell Me a Story Art Exhibit.** March 6-29. Opening reception Friday, March 6 from 7-9 p.m. At Del Ray



Artisans Gallery, 2704 Mount Vernon Ave., Alexandria. Have you ever looked at a piece of art and your imagination immediately starts to wander? Narrative art tells a story, either as a moment in an ongoing story or as a sequence of events unfolding over time. A picture is worth a thousand words; Tell Me a Story will take you on an imaginative journey. Gallery hours are: Thursdays

12-6 p.m., Fridays 12-9 p.m., Saturdays 12-9 p.m., and Sundays 12-6 p.m.

The gallery is free, open to the public, and accessible. Visit [www.DelRayArtisans.org/exhibits](http://www.DelRayArtisans.org/exhibits).

**Student Art Exhibit.** Now thru March 28. At the Gallery at Convergence, 1801 N. Quaker Lane, Alexandria. The Alexandria All City High School Art Exhibition hosted by the Convergence Arts Initiative returns Feb. 7 – March 28 for its fifth year. 2020's experience will feature 90 Alexandria high school students representing six high schools including public, private, and independent spanning over 10 different mediums of art. Returning for 2020's collaborative event are students from Bishop Ireton, Episcopal High School, T.C. Williams, St. Stephen's and St. Agnes School, Commonwealth Academy, and The Howard Gardner School. Artists Reception: Friday, Feb. 21 from 7 – 9 p.m.

#### BEGINNING MARCH 1

**Water Taxi to the Wharf.** Departs from the Alexandria Marina, 1 Cameron St., Alexandria. Monday through Sunday, beginning March 1. Cruise from Old Town Alexandria to Washington, D.C., to stroll among the cherry blossoms and take part in events of the National Cherry Blossom Festival, including the Blossom Kite Festival. Potomac Riverboat Company by Hornblower offers a 25-minute direct water taxi from Old Town to The Wharf development in D.C. From the dock at The Wharf, it is a 10-minute walk to the cherry blossoms at the Tidal Basin. The water taxi docks at the

SEE CALENDAR, PAGE 11



# ENTERTAINMENT

**Editor's Note:** Be aware that many events could be cancelled as precaution to the spread of COVID-19. Please check before heading to events.

FROM PAGE 10

Transit Pier, 950 Wharf St. SW, near the Tidal Basin, the National Mall, Hains Point and a Capital Bikeshare station. Departures beginning at 6:40 a.m. weekdays and 10 a.m. weekends; Admission: starting at \$13 one-way; \$21 round-trip for adults. Call 888-809-7109; Visit [potomacriverboatco.com](http://potomacriverboatco.com)

## NOW THRU MARCH 23

**"Head Over Heels."** 8 p.m. At Ainslie Arts Center | 3900 West Braddock Road, Alexandria. "Head Over Heels" is a celebration of love set to the music of the Go-Go's. Based on Sir Philip Sidney's Arcadia, the royal family risks losing their "beat" and must journey to discover the key to their realm's survival. Like in most musicals, it may have been in them the whole time. With hits like, "We Got The Beat," "Mad About You," "Vacation," and "Our Lips are Sealed," you'll be dancing along in your seat. Tickets \$30/\$40. For tickets, visit <https://www.monumentaltheatre.org/shows-events>

## NOW THRU APRIL 5

**March Flora/Fauna Exhibition.** At The Art League Gallery, 105 N. Union Street, Alexandria. Meet the artists and art patrons at the opening reception March 12 from 6:30 – 8 p.m. The Art League is ushering in Spring with two nature-themed exhibits guaranteed to delight the senses and inspire creative fun. March Flora/Fauna features artwork from members that explores plant and animal life, and the delicate balance of the natural world. They are thrilled to be partnering with The Enchanted Florist, who will be creating floral arrangements to compliment the exhibit and fill the gallery with a hint of spring. The arrangements will be available for sale, with 10 percent of the proceeds going to support Outreach programming. Outside the Lines is a dynamic, interactive exhibit created by illustrator and Art League instructor Chris Bonnell. For it, he reimagines popular D.C. and Alexandria landmarks taken over by lush plants and fantastical animals. Visit the website:

<https://www.theartleague.org/blog/2020/01/16/march-flora-fauna-exhibit/>

## MARCH 13 TO 31

**March 150 Special Exhibition and Art Sale.** At Target Gallery, the Torpedo Factory Art Center, 105 N. Union Street, Alexandria. Sneak Peek: Friday, March 13 – Saturday, March 14 until 5 p.m. Opening & Art Party: Saturday, March 14; 7 – 10 p.m. with VIP access beginning at 6 p.m. Torpedo Factory Art Center's annual exhibition and art sale, March 150, returns to Target Gallery for the 10<sup>th</sup> year. Proceeds benefit



**"Henry the Fifth" will be performed March 14 to April 19 at the Lab at Convergence in Alexandria.**

## "Henry the Fifth"

March 14 to April 19, presented by Brave Spirits Theatre at the Lab at Convergence, 1819 N. Quaker Lane, Alexandria. The final chapter of The King's Shadow is about to begin. "Henry the Fifth" completes the first season in Brave Spirits Theatre's two-year project to stage Shakespeare's eight history plays about the Wars of the Roses. During a tumultuous period of less than 100 years, England experienced civil war and political upheaval as the throne switched hands nine times. Shakespeare dramatized these events over the course of his career in eight remarkable plays: Richard the Second, Henry the Fourth Part 1, Henry the Fourth Part 2, Henry the Fifth, Henry the Sixth Part 1, Henry the Sixth Part 2, Henry the Sixth Part 3, and Richard the Third. From March 14 through April 19, audiences can see these first four plays, The King's Shadow, in repertory. Richard the Second, Henry the Fourth Part 1, Henry the Fourth Part 2, and Henry the Fifth follow the troubled passing of the English crown from the philosopher King Richard II, to the conqueror King Henry IV, to his rogue son, Prince Hal. But when the time comes to rule, Hal must take control of how history will remember him, unite his country, and become the legendary King Henry V. Tickets are \$35. Visit [www.bravespiritstheatre.com](http://www.bravespiritstheatre.com)

future exhibitions and programs at Target Gallery and the Art Center. All work in the exhibition is created on gallery-supplied 10" x 10" panels and is priced at \$150. About 200 original works are created by artists of every ability from the greater metropolitan area. Professional, emerging and amateur artists participate with artworks featuring a diversity of topics and media, including painting, photography, etching, mixed-media, fiber and more.

## MARCH 14 TO APRIL 19

**"Henry the Fifth."** Presented by Brave Spirits Theatre at the Lab at Convergence, 1819 N. Quaker Lane, Alexandria. The final chapter of The King's Shadow is about to begin. "Henry the Fifth" completes the first season in Brave Spirits Theatre's two-year project to stage Shakespeare's eight history plays about the Wars of the Roses. Tickets are \$35. Visit [www.bravespiritstheatre.com](http://www.bravespiritstheatre.com)

## FRIDAY/MARCH 20

**Art on the Vine.** 7 to 10 p.m. At The Art League Gallery, Torpedo Factory

Art Center, 105 N. Union St., Alexandria. The Art League's acclaimed local sommelier curates an artistic wine-tasting experience inspired by the art in The Art League's gallery. Enjoy the party and discounts on wine and artwork that night. Admission: \$45. Call 703-683-2323 or visit the website: [theartleague.org](http://theartleague.org)

## MARCH 20 TO APRIL 4

**"By the Seashore."** Wednesdays thru Saturdays, 10 a.m.; 10:30 a.m.; 11:30 a.m. At the Convergence Main Building, 1801 N. Quaker Lane, Alexandria. "By the Seashore" takes us on a magical journey to a place children love to visit — the beach! Young audience members are invited to explore all the amazing things we find on the shore, in the ocean, and in the sky; from birds and fish, to sand and water. Using an imaginative mix of puppetry, movement, and sound, this sensory-filled production is specifically designed for babies and young toddlers. [www.artsonthehorizon.org/by-the-seashore-2020](http://www.artsonthehorizon.org/by-the-seashore-2020) or call 571-549-1270.

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				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

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Off the shore with a view of Mount Vernon, Joe Wright scans the river for trash.



Joe Wright of Fort Hunt, G7 eco-citizen winner, meets Ambassador Philippe Etienne and receives G7 AWAKE watch for his sustainability efforts in the Potomac River.

PHOTOS BY MIKE SALMON  
THE GAZETTE PACKET

# Local Resident Moonlights as a Floating Trash Picker

Cleaning up the Potomac got Joe Wright international recognition.

BY MIKE SALMON  
THE GAZETTE PACKET

**W**hen Fort Hunt resi-dent Joe Wright left the office to get his lunch the other day, he saw a can floating in a creek right off the Potomac River, and since he is the “SUPGarbageman,” it was only natural that he’d stop, launch his paddleboard into the creek and retrieve the can. While he was at it, he got a few other pieces of trash from the waters too. That’s what self-proclaimed SUP Garbagemen do.

“If I hadn’t forgotten my lunch, I wouldn’t have seen that,” he said. “I usually have my board with me just in case.”

Since last May, Wright has made cleaning up garbage out of the Potomac River his mission. When he’s not working, that’s how he spends the remaining daylight hours

a couple days a week, on a stand-up paddleboard, retrieving garbage out of the Potomac River, and its tributaries around Mount Vernon and National Airport. “It’s never ending,” he said.

“It’s your trash, I just pick it up,” is his jingle on the website. He’s not looking for notoriety or fame, he just wants trash reduction to be the focus. His mission: “Haul trash out of our waterways and raise awareness by sharing my finds with the world,” he says on his website. “I want people to see anyone can do it,” he said.

SUP, for “stand-up paddleboard,” can present a challenge, but Wright has only fallen once when the rudder hit something underwater. He wears a wetsuit in the colder months and noted that he doesn’t get that wet, but every once in a while the water does wash over the surface of the board. This April will be his first Earth Day,

but he doesn’t have big plans. Afterall, being the garbageman is a full time Earth Day role. “I think I just live Earth Day,” he said.

Wright’s efforts with trash have attracted some outside attention as well. Some see him on the water and think he’s just paddling around, and maybe fishing in the warmer months, but somehow the company “Werner Paddles,” got word, and sent him a paddle, and a sponsorship. “They’ve reached out to me,” he said, and all he has to do is to attach their link to his web posts. Werner has a healthy waters section in their company and Wright’s efforts go right along with that. Werner is also linked to the Sierra Club, American Rivers, American Whitewaters and other outdoor organizations. “Taking responsibility to protect the places we paddle, we created our Healthy Waters initiative,” Werner said.

Somehow, the folks at the French Embassy in Washington, D.C. heard about him too, and made him a “G7 Eco Citizen.” Wright met with the French ambassador Philippe Etienne in December. In the pic-

ture of Wright with the ambassador, Wright is wearing the G7 AWAKE watch, which is a 100% sustainable product made from recycled fishing nets that was worn by President Emmanuel Macron and world leaders at the G7 summit.

In addition to his international recognition, Wright has nearly 1,000 followers on his social media channels, and uses social media as a platform for his efforts. He has a website, Facebook and Instagram accounts. Several online publications have run stories about him, and others are using video as well.

Wright wouldn’t call himself an environmentalist, and didn’t grow up in a “green,” house, but he does date his efforts back to walks around the neighborhood in Florida where he grew up. His mother would point out trash, and link each piece of trash to the letter it started with, so this was a reading lesson as well. “That made me realize how much trash is on the ground,” he said.

On instagram, SUPGarbage.Man  
Online [www.supgarbageman.org](http://www.supgarbageman.org)

It’s easier out on the river in warmer weather, but he has a wet suit for the colder months.



Back at the marina in Mount Vernon, the trash from the river adds up.



# Talking to Children about Coronavirus

**Sharing developmentally appropriate information can ease fears.**

BY MARILYN CAMPBELL  
THE CONNECTION

From school closures to travel bans, the rapid spread of coronavirus has led to a time of unprecedented uncertainty. Feelings of anxiety and fear are rampant, particularly in children, say educators. Helping them feel grounded and having open and honest conversations can soothe feelings of angst.

"Stick to routines and schedules when possible," said Karen Kunz, Middle School Counselor at St. Stephen's & St. Agnes School. "Children thrive with clear structure and schedules. Even with school closures, start to imagine what a schedule might look like at home."

A child's age will affect the approach that a parent might take. "Keep in mind, depending on their developmental level, children will comprehend and be concerned about different things regarding the coronavirus," said Linda McKenna Gulyn, Ph.D., professor of psychology at Marymount University.

Those who are of kindergarten age or younger might feel an unrealistic fear of the virus because of the ego-centrism and magical thinking which are common for that age group, says Gulyn.

"School-aged children probably have a concrete understanding of how this virus is transmitted and understand well the importance of washing their hands," said Gulyn. "Their frustration will come from refraining from favorite activities such as sports or music events, school, or socializing in groups of kids."

Assuring children that there will be a return to normalcy soon and answering their questions honestly, logically and respectfully is the approach Gulyn suggests.

"Teenagers understand the basics of the virus, but they could get caught up with myths associated with coronavirus, especially because there is a lot of true and false information online," she said. "I've observed that in my own teenage sons. Monitor and discuss what they are hearing and help them learn to distinguish fact from fiction about corona."

For this age group, living with a heightened level of uncertainty can evoke strong emotions. "Teens will be very frustrated and annoyed by restrictions placed on group activities that they love, especially those that involve time with peers," said Gulyn. "Be sympathetic to your teen about those frustrations."

"For older children, monitor the amount of social media and internet access they are consuming," added Kunz. "Social media sites can easily aggravate and heighten anxiety and worry by sharing misinformation."

While information about the virus is moving rapidly and details are evolving, maintaining a sense of normalcy can be challenging. "Stay calm and carry on," said Susan DeLaurentis, Director of Counseling and the Lower School Counselor at St. Stephen's & St. Agnes School. "Modeling calm and reasoned reactions to stressful events help children manage their own anxiety. They look to parents and other adults



PHOTO BY MARILYN CAMPBELL

**Turning hand washing and the use of hand sanitizer into a game or a competition for younger students can help them find joy in a stressful situation, says Susan DeLaurentis of St. Stephen's & St. Agnes School.**

to see their verbal and non-verbal reactions, and will often follow suit."

"School nurses, school counselors, school psychologists, and school social workers can support these discussions and follow up with students who may need additional support," added Lucy H. Caldwell, director of news and Information, Fairfax County Public Schools (FCPS). "In addition to talking with children about the importance of washing hands, covering coughs and sneezes."

When discussing COVID-19, stick to basic facts in a developmentally appropriate fashion, advises DeLaurentis. "Reassure your children that we are doing exactly what we should do right now," she said. "Also, using the fact that children don't seem to be as affected by the virus is a fact that can be reassuring to children."

"As a parent or caregiver, your first concern is about how to protect and take care of your children and family, added Kurt Larrick, Assistant Director of the Arlington County Department of Human

Services "Some basic knowledge is a great place to start." It can be comforting to highlight the actions that children can take to protect themselves, suggests DeLaurentis. "Emphasize what children can control in the situations they are in," she said. "They can wash their hands, and even turning that into a game or a competition for younger students can help them find some joy in a stressful situation."

Find a balance between staying informed and information overload and monitor the amount of time children are exposed to news about COVID-19, says DeLaurentis.

"Younger children often cannot comprehend the information they hear on the news," she said. "They may misunderstand or misinterpret the news they hear, and often this misinformation can lead to more fear and anxiety."

**"Social media sites can easily aggravate and heighten anxiety and worry by sharing misinformation."**

**— Karen Kunz, Middle School Counselor, St. Stephen's & St. Agnes School**

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Clerk of the Court

By:

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## Feeling Pale By Comparison



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

In a peculiar way, my cancer treatment and all has sort of gotten lost in the coronavirus talk. With so many changes to our regular lifestyle occurring on a daily basis, it feels as if nothing else matters. Granted, one's health is the most important consideration, but now the talk is about everybody's health. Nevertheless, how do I throw caution to the wind and interact with my environment when doing so might endanger the very stability I've worked over 11 years to maintain? I mean, I have to live my life, but will there be a cost to do so? I realize that the good of the many outweigh the good of the few but Spock was speaking from outer space. How do I, while in and out of treatment down here on Earth not worry about myself?

I realize life will go on for almost all of us, but will there be consequences for those unable to secure proper care? Will decisions be made about allocating resources because demand has far outstripped supply? How does life for cancer patients undergoing treatment fit into this new paradigm where so many people might need some kind of medical care? Will there even be enough health care professionals to administer the kind of life-sustaining treatment many of us seriously-diagnosed patients have come to expect and need?

Unfortunately, only time will tell, and there may very well be little of it in the interim, during which we can anticipate and plan accordingly. So many decisions will likely be made by the powers that be that might not exactly consider my set of cancer circumstances. In a way, I might be collateral damage. There simply might not be enough room and medicine and staff and all to accommodate my needs. It's nothing personal. It's just business, or rather the lack thereof. With so much of the world's population affected while going about their usual and customary routine, who, what, where and how will there be any prioritization? Moreover, what about people who are already sick and challenged by a weakened immune system (like yours truly), will the competition from newly diagnosed coronavirus patients overwhelm our health care system?

I can't assume that life will go on as it always has. That would seem to be incredibly naive. I need to proactively make the necessary arrangements and/or contingency plans. I can't presume that being a cancer patient will always get me through the door. I'd like to think I take priority. But it might not be about priority, it might be about availability and a dwindling supply not able to keep up with demand.

Still, going down this rabbit hole of fear, anxiety and worry doesn't help either. As I have since the date of original diagnosis, back in late February, 2009, I need to make the best of a bad/challenging situation. I need to roll with the punches and be prepared for any eventuality and take the good with the bad and vice versa. Normal left the building a long time ago for me. The problem is that building to which I metaphorically refer is the very building where I get my ongoing medical treatment. And though I don't anticipate being kept away from that building, the reality is that it's out of my control.

As with anticipating the results of CT scans and lab results, all in good time, or bad. I need to keep the same positive attitude as I always have because though I might be at greater risk than many of you regular readers, we are all at risk, apparently. As such, if there is indeed anything to be gained by so many people being so similarly affected, the reality is that there are strength in those numbers and even though it may feel that right now the whole world is upside down, things eventually will right themselves. They always do. I just hope I'm still smiling when the dust settles.

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

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

#WeAreAlexandria



OPEN SUN 3/22, 2-4

### Belle Haven | \$1,455,000

Modern design meets historical architecture in this spacious 3-level, 4-bedroom, 3.5-bath, colonial home with 2-car garage. Landscaped, fenced back yard, patio and deck. Close to Old Town, airport and Amazon HQ. 1904 Belle Haven Road  
**Susan Craft 703.216.4501**  
[www.SusanCraft.com](http://www.SusanCraft.com)



### Alexandria | \$899,900

5-bedroom, 3.5-bath home in the heart of Alexandria City! 4 bedrooms/2 baths upstairs and large rec room with bed and bath on walk-out lower level. Family room and kitchen overlooking private yard. Large deck and fabulous yard!  
**Jen Walker 703.675.1566**  
[www.JenWalker.com](http://www.JenWalker.com)



### Alexandria | \$684,900

Picture perfect 3-bedroom, 2-bath brick cottage on a large corner lot. Features updated kitchen, living room with wood-burning fireplace, two renovated baths and gorgeous hardwoods. Large yard with raised deck platform.  
**Wendy Santantonio 703.625.8802**  
[www.WendySantantonio.com](http://www.WendySantantonio.com)



### Beverly Estates | \$980,000

Remodeled and expanded home with gorgeous kitchen, big family room, four real bedrooms plus office, living room, dining room, two remodeled full baths, screened porch, patio and flat backyard. George Mason Elementary.  
**Leslie Wilder 703.798.7226**  
[www.3wilders.com](http://www.3wilders.com)



### Del Ray | \$879,900

3-bedroom, 1.5-bath detached home. Charming screened porch opens to light-filled home. Spacious living room leads to dining room and kitchen. Private landscaped yard with deck & slate patio. A short walk to "The Avenue."  
**Jen Walker 703.675.1566**  
[www.JenWalker.com](http://www.JenWalker.com)



### Rosemont Park | \$825,000

Circa 1920, this 3-bedroom, 3-bath Rosemont farm house is waiting to be returned to its original condition. Located on a quiet side street, yet right around the corner from Braddock Metro. Minutes from Del Ray & Old Town shops & restaurants.  
**Betty Mallon 703.989.8548**  
[www.BettyMallon.com](http://www.BettyMallon.com)



### Waynewood | \$829,000

This 5-bedroom, 3-bath house on a corner lot is generous in size with lovely features throughout. Nice hardwoods on upper level, recessed lighting, 3 fireplaces, bonus room on lower level and a garage! Walk to two parks and bike path.  
**Tracy Dunn 571.212.3658**  
[www.tracybdunn.com](http://www.tracybdunn.com)



### Braddock Heights | \$879,000

Spacious, open concept living. Lots of windows allow for sunlight to stream in with a great view of the backyard: flat and fully fenced. 4 bedrooms and 2 baths on two levels. All new carpet on lower level. Walk to George Mason Elementary.  
**Laurel Conger 703.577.6899**  
[www.LaurelConger.com](http://www.LaurelConger.com)



### Fords Landing \$1,639,000

Beautiful 2,660 SF end unit brick townhome features 3 bedrooms, 2 full, 2 half baths and a spacious 2 car garage. All in

the sought-after waterfront community of Fords Landing. Just steps to the Potomac, parks and all the shopping and dining King Street has to offer. Contact Kristen for a private virtual tour!

**Kristen Jones 703.851.2556**  
[www.KristenJones.com](http://www.KristenJones.com)



### Old Town \$1,139,000

Fabulous Potomac River views from this sophisticated 3-bedroom, 3.5-bath brick townhouse set in a lovely enclave. Light filled rooms,

hardwood floors, 2 fireplaces, main floor bedroom, and family room with French doors opening to the brick patio. Generous living room with river vista adjoins the dining room.

**Babs Beckwith 703.627.5421**  
[www.BabsBeckwith.com](http://www.BabsBeckwith.com)



### Cameron Station \$889,000

Just Listed! Alexandria's Thriving West End! Sparkling Alexandrian/Stony Hurst model! 3 levels, 4 bedrooms,

3.5 baths. Den walks out to private patio. Entertainment kitchen & great room walks out to deck! En-suite master with awesome bath! 2-car garage with driveway parking, too! 4912 John Ticer Drive

**Cindy Clemmer/Craig Schuck 703.966.0403**  
[www.clemmerandschuckhomes.com](http://www.clemmerandschuckhomes.com)



### Old Town \$852,500

Charming 1790 historic 2 bedroom, 2 updated bath home in the heart of Old Town offers renovated stainless chef's kitchen,

original floors, fireplace, skylights, and custom built-ins. Master suite with vaulted ceiling and custom cabinetry. Spacious family room with French doors open to a sunny brick patio and garden.

**Babs Beckwith 703.627.5421**  
[www.BabsBeckwith.com](http://www.BabsBeckwith.com)

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