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Banks to the Rescue Small businesses wait for banks to get federal money for the Paycheck Protection Program.

BY MICHAEL LEE POPE
GAZETTE PACKET

Like many business owners across Northern Virginia, Cyrille Brenac is still waiting to hear back from his bank about his application to the Paycheck Protection Program. That's the \$350 billion program that was part of the \$2.2 trillion stimulus law designed to offer money to small businesses who can demonstrate they are keeping their employees. For Brenac, who lives in the Cherrydale neighborhood of Arlington, the money would help him rehire about 50 employees of his two French restaurants he laid off when the economy abruptly shut down as the result of the global COVID-19 pandemic.

"The good thing about this PPP is that I can pay them more than what unemployment would pay them," said Brenac. "Once the economy restarts — I don't know how but it will restart sometime — we can re-open. We won't have to hire new people and train them."

Brenac is one of the many business owners who is still waiting to hear back from his bank about the program, which has been overwhelmed by business owners desperate to get their hands on federal money to keep them afloat. The rollout of the program has been confusing for business owners and banks, who say it's been difficult to navigate a system beset by layers of bureaucracy and a changing set of rules. Demand for the taxpayer-backed federal money has been so



Burke and Herbert Bank in Alexandria has received about 1,000 applications for money from the Paycheck Protection Program, about 300 of which have been approved. Bank officials hope to start closing on the loans this week.

great that the Small Business Administration and the banks administering the program have had to improvise on the fly, changing the rules after the applications had already been submitted.

"It's kind of put us in an awkward posi-

tion," said Bill Reagan, executive director at the Alexandria Small Business Development Center. "We were giving businesses the best information we had, but that information began to change last week and we became concerned that what we had told them earli-

er was no longer applicable."

THE SMALL BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION was initially offering Economic Injury Disaster Loans of up to \$2 million, and after Congress approved the \$2 billion stimulus that included an advance of up to \$10,000. But then later clarification from SBA limited the advance to \$1,000 per employee with a maximum of \$10,000. That made the loan-forgiveness provision of the Paycheck Protection Program a better deal for many businesses. But those funds are limited to businesses with full-time employees or part-time employees, which excluded many businesses that have contract workers. That was a particularly hard hit to many people in the region's tourism industry, which relies on contract employees.

"I'm very disappointed that I'm not able to pay my 1099 people," said Wellington Watts, owners of Alexandria Ghost and Graveyard Tours. "If there is a failure at the attempt at helping the economy, it's that 1099 independent contractors are being left out in the cold."

Disaster loans have traditionally been administered directly from the Small Business Administration. Here in Alexandria, the largest dollar amount of disaster loans was from Hurricane Isabel in September 2003, when flood waters in Alexandria rose as high as 10 feet in some places. Most disaster loans issued in Alexandria were never paid back in full, according to records received in a pub-

SEE BANKS TO THE RESCUE, PAGE 4

COVID-19 Claims Life of Brian Miller City cases reach 248, 4 fatalities.

BY JEANNE THEISMANN
GAZETTE PACKET

Brian Miller, a past chair of the Alexandria Commission on Persons With Disabilities and member of The Alexandria Harmonizers, had a passion for travel. He had a goal of visiting 100 countries and started a travel blog to chronicle his adventures.

"I don't think of myself as brave, or a risk-taker," Miller said in a recent post. "I want to live a good long life, so I plan, I take care of



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

Brian Miller, a former chair of the Commission on Persons With Disabilities, died April 13 from the COVID-19 virus. He was 52.

myself, I avoid unnecessary dangers, I use hand sanitizer and wet wipes."

Despite his precautions, Miller's life was cut short when he died April 13 at Inova Alexandria Hospital after contracting the COVID-19 virus. He was 52 and one of four fatalities now attributed to the novel coronavirus in the City of Alexandria.


"What a loss," said Harmonizers director Bill Colosimo. "Brian was amazing ... as a skilled performing member of The Alexandria Har-

monizers and as a man who never thought of himself as disabled. But our collective memory can chalk up an immeasurable gain for

having known him, in whatever capacity we may have done so. He inspired me."

SEE COVID-19 CLAIMS, PAGE 8

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Keep Calm and Carry On

None of us has ever experienced anything quite like this pandemic, but it too shall pass.
We need to stay home and stay safe while being mindful of the needs of those
less fortunate in need of assistance.

Organizations in Alexandria Seeking Volunteers and Donations

GROCERIES TO GO - delivers groceries to Seniors 60+

UNITED COMMUNITY - volunteers needed at the Food Pantry

ACPS has arranged food for ANY 2-18 year olds and ANY family in need

ALEXANDRIA'S MEDICAL RESERVE CORPS - looking for volunteers to staff their call center

CARPENTER'S SHELTER - needs financial donations to provide services and food



New listings in Belle Haven, Old Town and Mount Vernon will be coming soon!

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This Week in Coronavirus

Ongoing synopsis of pandemic news pertaining to Alexandria.

By KEN MOORE
GAZETTE PACKET

Tuesday, April 14

Alexandria COVID-19 Cases: 248 (4 fatalities)
Virginia Cases: 6171

On April 14, the Alexandria Health Department confirmed seven additional cases of COVID-19 and two additional fatalities in Alexandria, bringing the total number of cases to 248 (including four fatalities).

Alexandria Health Department is contacting all people with confirmed cases of COVID-19 and providing them guidance to give to their close contacts (people who came within 6 feet of them for more than 10 minutes). Alexandria Health Department is also calling close contacts of confirmed cases in high risk settings (e.g. nursing homes, assisted living facilities, healthcare centers). All close contacts are asked to self-quarantine and actively monitor for fever and respiratory symptoms. If they start experiencing symptoms, they are advised to seek medical care if their symptoms are severe or if they are healthcare workers or first responders.

Monday, April 13

Alexandria Cases: 241
Virginia Cases: 5,747

Another Alexandria person who had tested positive for coronavirus died. "To respect the privacy of individuals and their families, the Alexandria health department will not disclose additional details about cases or fatalities unless there is a public health need to do so," according to the City of Alexandria.

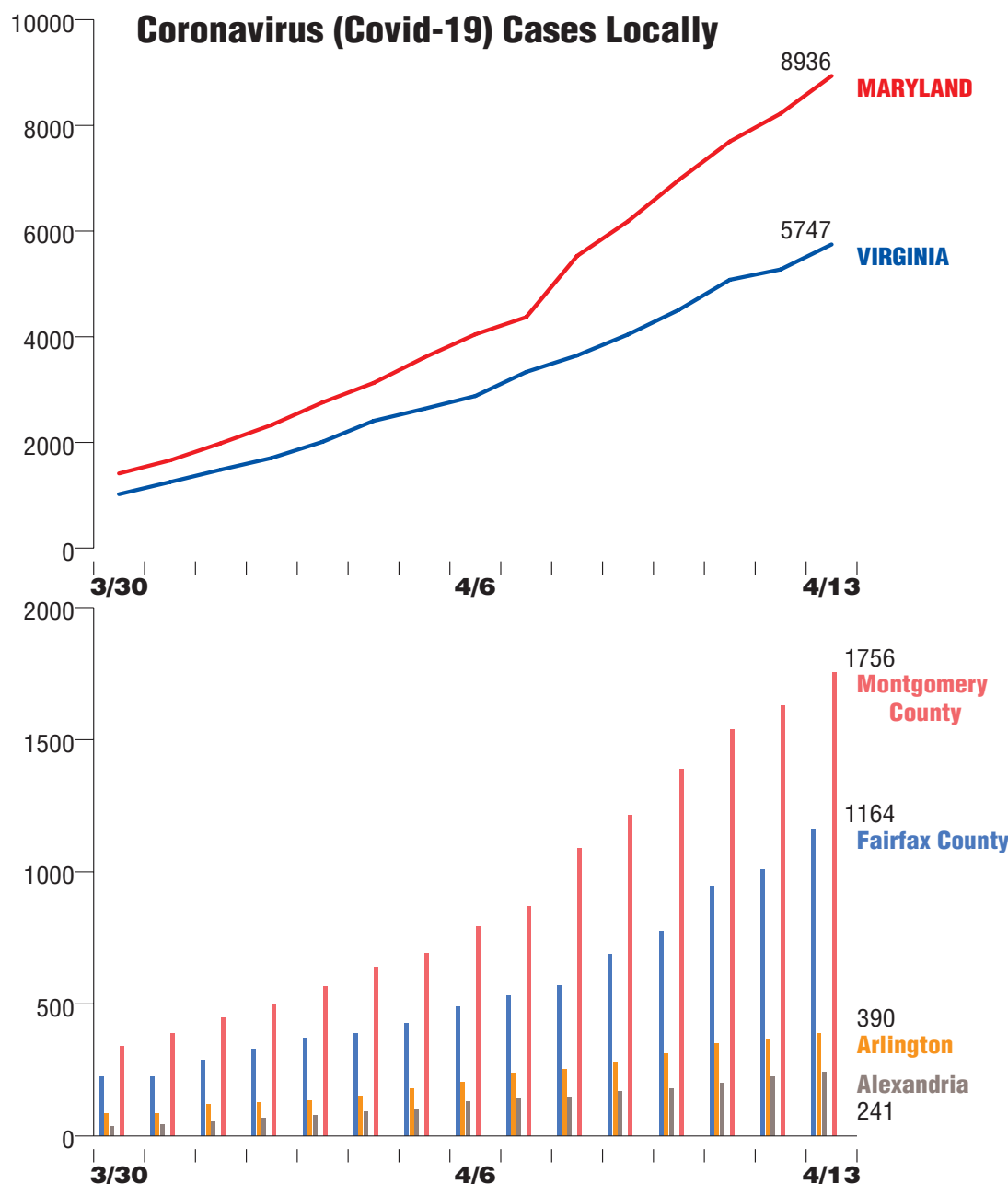
Virtual Virginia, the Virginia Department of Education's existing online learning system, will be expanded to allow every teacher in the Commonwealth to host virtual classes while schools are closed due to the coronavirus pandemic, said Virginia Gov. Ralph Northam. Resources include a platform that enables all Virginia public school teachers to share lessons and activities with their students through June 30.

Sunday, April 12

Alexandria Cases: 225
Virginia Cases: 5,274

Local Coronavirus Cases

Coronavirus (Covid-19) Cases Locally



Sources:
Virginia Department of Health <http://www.vdh.virginia.gov/coronavirus/>
Maryland: Maryland Department of Health <https://coronavirus.maryland.gov/>
Alexandria Source: City of Alexandria

GRAPHICS BY LAURENCE FOONG / COMPILED BY KEN MOORE

continue practicing physical distancing while in public and avoid unnecessary trips. See www.alexandriava.gov/Coronavirus#physical

Virginia Alcohol Beverage Control Authority will allow establishments with mixed beverage licenses, such as restaurants and distilleries, to sell mixed beverages through takeout or delivery. Northam also authorized the Virginia Alcoholic Beverage Control Authority to defer annual fees for licenses and permits that would be up for renewal through June. "Allowing restaurants and distilleries that remain open to sell mixed beverages with takeout or delivery orders will help them augment their revenue streams, so they can continue serving their customers and employing Virginians. These actions will give establishments with mixed beverage licenses greater flexibility to operate while their dining rooms are closed," Northam said.

On March 20, Virginia ABC adjusted licensing regulations to permit the sale of wine, beer or cocktails in sealed containers for curbside pickup, and delivery of those products to customers' homes without needing a delivery permit.

See story on Page 10

Tuesday, April 7

Alexandria Cases: 141
Virginia Cases: 3,333

Virginia Department of Health launched a Weekly COVID-19 Activity Report, a dashboard at www.vdh.virginia.gov/coronavirus/weekly-report/ showing the impact of the coronavirus pandemic in Virginia. The site provides data on the number of confirmed cases, hospitalizations, and deaths from COVID-19. The dashboard also includes regional data on emergency room visits; aggregate data by age, sex and race; and the overall status of the pandemic in Virginia. Data on age, sex and race is collected by individual healthcare providers as they see patients. Risk of COVID-19 infection is primarily based on individual exposure to the COVID-19 virus, not an individual's demographics.

Alexandria City Manager Mark Jinks announced revisions to his proposed Fiscal Year (FY) 2021 op-

SEE THIS WEEK, PAGE 4

Saturday, April 11

Alexandria Cases: 200
Virginia Cases: 5,077

Friday, April 10

Alexandria Cases: 181
Virginia Cases: 4,509

The National Institutes of Health (NIH) Vaccine Research Center seeks volunteers for research on potential vaccines against COVID-19. Eligible participants will receive one or more vaccinations and examinations, and be asked to monitor for physical re-

actions. Vaccinations administered as part of research studies may or may not be effective against COVID-19. Visit the NIH's page on how to volunteer for vaccine research studies. www.niaid.nih.gov/clinical-trials/how-volunteer-vaccine-research-studies

Thursday, April 9

Alexandria Cases: 170
Virginia Cases: 4,042

The City of Alexandria and the Alexandria Health Department strongly urge everyone to follow

state orders to stay home except for essential trips such as food purchases and medical care, and keep six feet apart from others when in public.

Wednesday, April 8

Alexandria Cases: 149
Virginia Cases: 3,645

The City's website lists Alexandria grocery stores that have provided information about separate shopping hours for customers at higher risk for COVID-19 infection complications. All residents should

Banks to the Rescue

FROM PAGE 1

lic-records request, and a 2012 report from the SBA's inspector general showed taxpayers were owed \$171 for delinquent disaster loans. Unlike those previous loans, though, the new Paycheck Protection Program was designed to be administered to banks, which would receive money from the federal government and issue it to business owners.

"You have to get money moving through the economy, and who can provide that money? Who knows how to do it best? Well, it's banks," said Frank Shafroth, director of the Center for State and Local Leadership at George Mason University. "You can assume there will be some fraud, but for the most part it's going to be by far the most efficient and effective way to get the economy coming slowly back."

BANKS SAY THEY'VE been overwhelmed with requests from businesses struggling to

make ends meet and desperate to help their employees from depending on unemployment insurance. Applications are coming from everything from nail salons and barber-shops to childcare facilities and professional photographers — all of whom have seen their business models destroyed by quarantine. Some banks are choosing to limit their loans to existing customers while others are accepting applications from business owners that are not existing customers. Officials at Burke and Herbert Bank are ready to start closing on about 300 loans, and they're hopeful the money will start flowing this week. So far, all of those loans have gone to existing Burke and Herbert customers.

"We're sensitive to those whose banks are not participating in the program, and we are taking applications from non-customers," said David Boyle, president of Burke and Herbert Bank. "But we're prioritizing our existing customers first."

Wells Fargo approved so many loans that they reached a cap of \$10 billion and stopped taking applications. Then the Federal Reserve took action to lift a restriction on the bank, allowing it to start taking applications again. To qualify for a PPP loan at Wells Fargo, an applicant would need an existing business checking account back in mid-February. That's an eligibility requirement the bank put in place to make sure they could verify applicants and make sure they have the ability to pay back the loan if they are unable to prove they are keeping all their employees.

"We are grateful for the modification to our asset cap to allow us to help more customers," said Manuel Venegas, a spokesman for Wells Fargo. "We are continuing to not only help more businesses through the process but also speed up the process so we can help more customers."

Richmond-based Atlantic Union Bank re-

ceived about 5,000 applications for more than \$1 billion worth of funding, a massive amount of paperwork to plow through before they started making submissions to the federal government. Like other banks in Virginia, Atlantic Union had to shift resources around to make sure they had enough employees to handle the massive workload. Then they had to navigate the federal bureaucracy at the Small Business Administration before they were able to start letting the money flow to businesses to help protect the paychecks of their employees.

"Nearly 90 percent of our non-branch workforce is working remotely, including our call centers," said Atlantic Union CEO John Asbury in a written statement. "Our teammates, including 200 over the weekend, worked tirelessly to put our clients at the forefront of this process, and it really showed in our ability to offer a smooth application process from day one."

This Week in Coronavirus

FROM PAGE 3

erating and capital budgets for the City of Alexandria, responding to the nearly \$100 million budget gap created by the economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. The revised proposal for a \$753.3 million operating budget in FY 2021 is 5.8% lower than the \$799.9 million operating budget Jinks proposed on Feb. 18, and represents a 1.6% decrease from the current-year operating budget. On April 18, the City Council will hold a public hearing on the budget and effective real estate tax rate. City Council will then hold work sessions on April 21

and April 27. For details about how to view these meetings or participate in the public hearing, check the listing at alexandriava.gov/Calendar a few days before each event.

Monday, April 6

Alexandria Cases: 130
Virginia Cases: 2878

The Alexandria Health Department reported the first death of an Alexandria resident who previously tested positive for the coronavirus.

The resident, who had been hospitalized, died from respiratory complications from

COVID-19.

Friday, April 3

Alexandria Cases: 77
Virginia Cases:2012

The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) released guidance encouraging everyone to wear cloth face coverings when it is difficult to maintain physical distance in public.

Monday, March 30

Alexandria Cases: 36
Virginia Cases:1020

Governor Ralph Northam issued a Stay at Home Order requiring all Virginians to stay home, with a few exceptions. Individuals are allowed to travel for essential services only, which includes going to the grocery store, picking up medication, caring for sick family members, and picking up items from restaurants and other essential retailers. The order remains in place until June 10, 2020. Northam requires all higher education to stop all in-person classes and instruction, and closes all Virginia beaches except for fishing and exercise.

BULLETIN BOARD

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

CITY SUSPENDS ENFORCEMENT

The City of Alexandria has suspended enforcement of residential parking zones, weekend meters, and inspection stickers. To assist vehicle owners who are now working from home, caring for others, or trying to ensure the flow of goods and services, the City has suspended enforcement of the following parking restrictions until further notice:

Time restrictions for the general public in residential parking permit zones. (Signs in these zones include the language "residential permit exempt.")

Weekend time restrictions and meter fees on blocks with pay stations. (Time restrictions and meter fees on blocks with pay stations will continue to be enforced on weekdays.)

Time restrictions for street sweeping. (Signs pertaining to these restrictions prohibit parking during a one-hour window on a particular day of the week.)

The prohibition against parking on the street for more than 72 hours.

The requirement to display a valid state inspection sticker.

For more information about parking, visit alexandriava.gov/Parking.

ALEXANDRIA LIBRARY UPDATES

Although library branches are closed, telephone support and virtual reference will continue Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Some additional specifics include:

In addition to live phone support, online chat service will be available Monday through Friday 8 a.m. to 11 p.m., Saturday 9 a.m. to 9 p.m., and Sunday 12 p.m. – 9 p.m.

Reference service is also available via Ask a Librarian on our website.

All meeting room bookings are cancelled until further notice.

All due dates on physical items you currently have checked out will be extended until the Library reopens. Please feel free to keep those items for now; however, the book drops will remain open for your convenience.

Overdue fines will be waived.

Holds will be suspended and unavailable.

No new interlibrary loan requests will be processed; customers should keep any loans currently in their possession until the library reopens.

No donated materials will be accepted until further notice.

WiFi will continue to be available and can be accessed in the parking lots.

The Talking Books service will continue to provide materials via mail to blind and physically handicapped customers.

Visit alexlibraryva.org and social media for real-time updates.

HOMELESSNESS SERVICES

Due to the Carpenter Shelter's temporary location, the new address for the Winter Shelter is 5701-D Duke St., Alexandria. The Winter Shelter will continue to operate from noon - 7 p.m. April 1 - 15. For anyone in need of transportation to the Winter Shelter, there are three pick-up locations:

6:20 p.m. Braddock Rd. Metro Station (Kiss & Ride).

6:30 p.m. Christ House.

6:40 p.m. City Hall.

Contact the Winter Shelter at 703-548-7500.

MONDAY/APRIL 27

Community Conversations: Transportation. 7:30-9 p.m. The General Assembly passed momentous legislation for transportation and transit in 2020. Mark your calendars for this webinar that discusses the impact of the legislation and opportunities to move clean transportation forward in northern Virginia. Webinar address: bit.ly/NOVA-Transportation.

COVID-19 FAQs AVAILABLE

The City and AHD have launched a web page to help answer many of the community's frequently asked questions about the COVID-19 Coronavirus. This is a continuously evolving situation and AHD guidance will change (sometimes rapidly) with the passage of time, a change in circumstances, and release of updated guidelines from the Virginia Depart-

ment of Health and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Visit the website: <https://www.alexandriava.gov/CoronavirusFAQ>

GOVERNOR REQUESTS MOVING MAY ELECTION

Gov. Ralph Northam requested the General Assembly move the May General Election and all special elections scheduled for May 5, 2020 to the November 3, 2020 General Election date to further mitigate the spread of COVID-19. The Governor is also exercising his statutory authority (§ 24.2-603.1 of the Code of Virginia) to move the June primary elections from June 9, 2020 to June 23, 2020. Moving the upcoming May elections requires action by the General Assembly. The plan the Governor is proposing includes the following measures:

There will be one ballot in November. Voters who are qualified in November will be able to vote in November. An individual who was not qualified in May but is qualified in November will be able to vote.

All absentee ballots already cast will be discarded. Virginians will have an opportunity to vote for local elected officials in November. Those officials whose terms are to expire as of June 30, 2020 will continue in office until their successors have been elected on the November 3, 2020 and have been qualified to serve.

WWW.CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM

News

OAR 12th Spring Fundraiser Held Online

By Shirley Ruhe
Gazette Packet

A number of Arlington non-profits cancelled their major spring fundraisers due to the pandemic. Instead of cancelling their 12th annual fundraiser, Offender Aid and Restoration (OAR) of Arlington, Alexandria and Falls Church decided to hold their annual Second Chance breakfast online.

Dr. Kathy Dwyer, Chair of the OAR Board and pastor of Rock Spring United Church of Christ, says it was challenging. They made the decision to go ahead less than two weeks before the April 2 event. She said OAR didn't have any audio-visual people on the OAR staff. Elizabeth Jones Valderrama, Executive Director of OAR, says it was a stressful experience. "But we were lucky to have a great team, and volunteers jumped in." She adds that they did a dry run the day before and found some glitches.

Jones Valderrama, says they
SEE FUNDRAISER, PAGE 14

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OPINION

Do Not Forget About People with Intellectual or Developmental Disabilities – And Those That Care for Them

BY RIKKI EPSTEIN
ARC OF NORTHERN VIRGINIA

The coronavirus crisis has made precariously-balanced lives exponentially more unstable.

Since Governor Northam issued the COVID-19 stay-at-home order for Virginia, I've been reaching out to families and individuals we serve. I wanted to check in, ask how they're doing, and reassure them that The Arc of Northern Virginia's services would continue. Many wrote back, sharing what this "new normal" is like for their household. Some even asked about other families. With every note I read, I am reminded of the genuine honor it is to serve those with intellectual and developmental disabilities on behalf of our amazing organization.

I lay awake in bed at night thinking (because that's what we all do now) about two sentiments that are common among many of the notes I've received. Nearly every family is struggling to find alternatives to necessary, often critical, support services. With a loved-one with an intellectual or developmental disability, life in normal times is a precarious balance. The disability alone robs one of the stability many of us take for granted.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Slippery Slope: We Risk Losing Our Liberties

Let us not forget that the right to a speedy trial is in the U.S. Constitution which the 14th Amendment makes binding upon the states. While the Constitution grants emergency powers in cases of invasion or insurrection, it does not, for good reason, allow suspending our rights for other alleged emergencies, regardless of state laws to the contrary. All over the world, "emergencies" and constitutions' emergency clauses have been too readily invoked by autocrats in such a way that these "emergencies", often long extended, end only with the autocrat in absolute control and the people's liberties effectively annulled.

Liberal Alexandrians need no explanation of the threat to liberty Pres. Trump might pose; regularly they scream in everyone's face about it. But Pres. Obama was no better; his "hope and change" mantra could only be fulfilled by dozens of abuses the courts overruled. The Patriot Act, whose FISA provisions have been consistently abused, illustrates the danger of loss of liberty, even if gradual, resulting from actions the government undertakes during emergencies.

Under the current emergency, our freedoms of worship, commerce, association, etc. have been impaired by a government which contributed to causing the crisis through a "certificate of need" process which denied hospitals the

It's like a game of Jenga, with many of the pieces missing to begin with. But this is no game. Life depends on that tower not falling over, and each wooden piece represents a critical support service. As long as the supports are in place, there's fragile stability. Now... start removing those supports...

Take away the piece that represents personal care attendants in the home, and you leave the work of caring for a family member with serious needs solely with the parents, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Parents are literally sleeping in shifts through the night.

Take away the piece that represents stable housing, and you have a family moving out of their apartment to protect their immuno-compromised child, saying "Elevators are terrifying repositories for anything picked up by the 896 other residents."

Take away the piece that represents structured education, and you have distance learning plans from some school districts that have been delayed, or worse yet non-existent for students with disabilities.

Take away the piece that represents physical therapy.

Take away the piece that represents job coaching.

Take away the piece that represents

right to build enough capacity, an under-resourced emergency preparedness agency, and a trade policy which did not provide for adequate access to critical medical supplies. Government policies which exacerbate emergencies then become justifications for extending the government's emergency powers. Although I am not suggesting equivalency, the most egregious historical illustration is the Reichstag Fire, where the Nazis allowed radicals into the building to burn it down, then used the fire to justify emergency powers establishing a brutal dictatorship. This is the "slippery slope" by which we risk losing our liberties.

The ACLU seems hot to let a potential car thief back out on the street, but does it care about the rest of us otherwise law-abiding folks whose rights have been curtailed? Why is the Libertarian Party, headquartered here in Alexandria, so silent in the face of a two-trillion dollar government power-grab? We would well recall Thomas Jefferson's advice: "... no one can oblige ... the persons who succeed him to the payment of debts he contracted ... [lest he] eat up [the resources] for several generations to come ... No generation can contract debts greater than may be paid during ... his own existence." This emergency benefits the age groups who dominate the decision-making levels of government, but its costs, such as paying off the two trillion, will be born by future generations.

Dino Drudi
Alexandria

speech therapy.

Take away the piece that represents occupational therapy.

Get the picture?

For many of these families, The Arc of Northern Virginia can help them put back some of those pieces. We can locate the resources that help restore a feeling of balance for families in need. It may be precarious, it may be temporary, but it keeps the house from falling down.

The second sentiment I heard in those notes is what finally allows me to sleep at night. It's a sense of hope. A sense of optimism borne out of the experience of facing previous tragedies and coming through them stronger and more resilient. "We'll get through this," was said over and over again. And in my heart, I know we will. Because we're in this together, and we draw strength from each other.

In this time of crisis, in this time of heightened anxiety, in this time of hardships for everyone, please don't forget those who live with hardship and anxiety nearly every day, and yet persevere. It is essential that we keep families together, programs running, and critically-needed services in place for our most vulnerable population.

We need to make sure EVERY MEMBER of our community makes it through this crisis.

Let's Not Forget the Climate Crisis in Time of Coronavirus

I am a member of a group of Alexandria Sierra Club members who have been advocating for the past 3 years for the city to take a strong stand on the crisis of global warming. The city council passed a climate emergency resolution last year and voted unanimously to adopt the

Environmental Action Plan 2040 (EAP) which among other things commits the city to reducing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions by 50% by 2030 and by 80-100% by 2050. Also included in the Environmental Action Plan and the initial city budget was funding for a Climate and Energy Task Force to set in motion a process for achieving these goals.

Now that we are engulfed in an unprecedented medical crisis, we recognize the need to commit resources to protecting our citizens from the virus and the huge economic impact of shutting down local businesses. We also want people to be able to take care of their loved ones in this difficult time. However, we must recognize that failure to combat the climate crisis will have an even greater and longer-term impact on public health and economic revitalization. These crises have in common that they disproportionately affect the most vulnerable among our city's residents: the elderly, the

SEE HELPING, PAGE 13



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NEWS DEPARTMENT:
gazette@connectionnewspapers.com

Editor & Publisher

Mary Kimm
mkimm@connectionnewspapers.com
@MaryKimm

Jean Card

Production Editor
jcard@connectionnewspapers.com

Jeanne Theismann

jtheismann@connectionnewspapers.com
@TheismannMedia

Janet Barnett, John Bordner,
Mark Mogle

Contributing Photographers
gazette@connectionnewspapers.com

Shirley Ruhe

Contributing Photographer and Writer
gazette@connectionnewspapers.com

Eden Brown, Michael Pope,
Hope Nelson

Contributing Writer
gazette@connectionnewspapers.com

ADVERTISING:

For advertising information
sales@connectionnewspapers.com
703-778-9431

Debbie Funk

Display Advertising/National Sales
703-778-9444
debfunk@connectionnewspapers.com

Tara Lloyd

Display Advertising, 703-740-7128
tlloyd@connectionnewspapers.com

David Griffin

Marketing Assistant
703-778-9431
dgriffin@connectionnewspapers.com

Classified & Employment
Advertising
703-778-9431

Publisher

Jerry Vernon
703-549-0004
jverson@connectionnewspapers.com

Art/Design:

Laurence Foong, John Heinly,
Ali Khaligh
Production Manager:
Geovani Flores

Editor Emeritus:

Mary Anne Weber

CIRCULATION
Circulation Manager:

Ann Oliver
circulation@connectionnewspapers.com

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OPINION

Changed Circumstances Require Governor's Red Pen

BY DELEGATE PAUL KRIZEK

Last Saturday night at midnight was the constitutional deadline for Governor Northam to act on the 1,291 bills that we sent to him from the General Assembly this session. In total, Governor Northam signed 1,021 bills, vetoed one bill, and has sent back 102 pieces of legislation with recommendations that my colleagues and I must review and vote on during the upcoming reconvened session on April 22nd. He had a very busy weekend with his red pen making numerous edits to the budget and legislation in light of the COVID-19 pandemic.

While the COVID-19 pandemic is ongoing and circumstances rapidly change, it is still too soon to know how much expected revenue Virginia has lost and will continue to lose. In addition, the current budget does not account for all the increased expenses that the COVID-19 response has and will cost Virginia. To reflect these unforeseen changes, Governor Northam has requested that the General Assembly approve a freeze of \$874.6 million in spending in the fiscal

year that will start on July 1st, 2020, and \$1.4 billion in the fiscal year that will begin on July 1st, 2021. He also adds an additional \$55.5 million for the Department of Emergency Management. We will also get the opportunity to vote on his helpful and important amendments to waive interest on state income tax payments submitted after May 1st, and to provide spending flexibility, and to allow virtual public meetings for Government bodies. Until we pass that amendment we must convene in person. The plan is to do so on the 22nd, but outside wearing masks and with at least 6 feet between us. Hopefully, for safety's sake, we can finish up quickly and if necessary, reconvene online from home if there are any amendments left to act upon.

With the new circumstances of life under this deadly pandemic, the Governor revisited many of our decisions and delayed some long-awaited initiatives our new Democratic majority fought for during the General Assembly session. The critical labor legislation that we worked hard to pass this session is delayed until May 1st, 2021. So, the first increase in the minimum wage from \$7.25 an hour to \$9.50 an hour, would not happen until May 1st, 2021. This is a change from the bill we passed that had it go into effect on Jan. 1, 2021. While this first increase is delayed, the remaining incremental increases will go into effect as originally proposed, topping out at \$12 an hour beginning in 2023. As I have stated before, this comes at a time when minimum wage workers are serving on the frontlines of this pandemic.

In addition to our accolades, these workers deserve living wages. Pay raises for teachers and other public employees will also be put on hold, as well as the hiring of much-needed school counselors. Indeed, the Governor has proposed 83 budget amendments to



freeze new spending initiatives that we approved when the economy was in far better shape.

To create a COVID-19 relief fund and ease the burden on restaurants and businesses that have had to reduce business or shutter their operations, Governor Northam has recommended a 35% tax on games of skill, otherwise known as "gray machines",

which we voted to ban during the session. If approved, this tax revenue could generate somewhere north of \$100 million to go towards funding a COVID-19 relief fund for small businesses, as well as housing and nursing home assistance. After one year, the delayed ban would be implemented and the games of skill would be banned. However, the likelihood is that these small businesses, mostly restaurants, truck stops, and small convenience stores, will still require this revenue. I anticipate that we will need to pass a new bill next session to regulate them so that they are not in places where there are children and don't create a host of mini-casinos.

Also significantly, Governor Northam signed sweeping new voting access laws into law that will make voting more accessible to all Virginians. These bills included allowing Virginians the option to vote early without an excuse up to 45 days prior to an election, and ensuring that mail-in ballots postmarked on or before the date of the election shall be counted. In-person voting hours were also extended, with polls now closing at 8 p.m. instead of 7 p.m. In addition, Election Day was officially made a state holiday, replacing Lee-Jackson Day. This move will give Virginians more time and opportunity to cast their votes.

Finally, Governor Northam signed the Clean Economy Act which will accelerate Virginia's transition to clean energy. This legislation requires Dominion Energy to be 100 percent carbon-free by 2045 and Appalachian Power to be 100 percent carbon-free by 2050. It requires nearly all coal-fired plants to shut down by the end of 2024. This legislation also advances offshore and on-shore wind projects. In addition to bills like my HB 502, which increased the penalty for delinquent litter taxes, these environmental actions will give Virginia a jumpstart on combating climate change and protecting our environment.

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3/30/2020

COVID-19 Claims Life of Brian Miller

FROM PAGE 1

Miller was born August 13, 1967, in Michigan and raised in San Diego. Blind from birth, he was one of the first wave of blind students to be mainstreamed into public schools with sighted peers.

"For a long time it was a world of scarcity," he would recall. "Lack of books, lack of proper instruction, and lack of understanding as to what blind children need to succeed academically."

Miller earned a degree in political science from San Diego State University and a Master's and a PhD in history from the University of Iowa. A job with the U.S. Department of Education's Rehabilitation Services Administration brought him to the D.C. area in 2004, when he settled in Alexandria.

"It's often said upon losing a friend that they were one of a kind, but this guy is truly in his own class," said friend and fellow Harmonizer Joe Cerutti. "Brian was a world traveler like no one I've ever known, often traveling to distant places few have ever heard of. We often view blindness as a form of disability, but for Brian it was his superpower."

Miller had been traveling in Jordan when his trip was cut short due to international virus concerns. He returned to Alexandria on Monday, March 16.

"A travel company in the U.K. had organized the trip and not canceled the tour in the midst of this pandemic," said Miller's friend Mariyama Cementwala. "Brian was mad at himself and really mad at the company because it triggered some irresponsible decision making."

Despite experiencing no symptoms, Miller decided to self-quarantine. Miller's best friend and co-worker August Martin visited Miller on March 20 to bring him some groceries.

"I was the last person to be with him before he went into the hospital," Martin said. "We went out for take-out and sat in my truck talking about his trip. He was fine at that time and not exhibiting any symptoms."

Miller began experiencing symptoms over that weekend and was advised by his doctor to stay at home. As his condition deteriorated during the week, Martin told him to call an ambulance. Miller was admitted to Inova Alexandria Hospital on March 28 and posted a Facebook update the next day.

"After more than a week of self-quarantining at home, and dealing with increasingly severe symptoms of COVID-19, yesterday I finally had to call the paramedics and have them take me to Alex-



Brian Miller, right, with best friend August Martin on one of their last dinners together at a local Five Guys.

andria Inova hospital where I am now checked in and I am under their care. I don't know yet if I actually have COVID-19, as the test results aren't back yet, but I don't have the flu, so it's very likely is COVID-19. The protocols and procedures were airtight, and the staff here have been unfailingly helpful and professional and kind. I just want to let people know that this virus is a monster, don't think that it is like the flu or that symptoms are mild. This has easily been one of the worst weeks of my life, certainly healthwise. This is a brutal, brutal virus, do not be indifferent or casual."

Miller was placed on a ventilator later that same day.

"Brian worked out and was in good health," Martin said. "But years ago he had donated a kidney. ... By last Saturday night doctors said they had little hope for his recovery."

Due to visitation restrictions, Martin said that the nurses would put a phone to Miller's ear so that he could hear well-wishes from family and friends.

"We organized a couple of group Zoom calls so he could hear our voices and know we were cheering him on," added Cementwala.

Martin received a call in the early morning hours of April 13 that Miller was suffering organ failure.

"The decision was made at that time to just make him comfortable," Martin said. "I told the hospital that Brian was my best friend and that he doesn't deserve to die alone. At the request of his family, they let me suit up in PPE



PHOTOS CONTRIBUTED

Brian Miller was an avid traveler and had visited 45 states and 65 countries. He died April 13 at the age of 52.



Brian Miller, second from right, was a member of The Alexandria Harmonizers.

and go into his room to say goodbye. I made calls to his family and friends and held the phone to his ear. I sang one of our cultural songs and held his hand until he passed at 12:55 p.m."

With news of his passing, tributes began pouring in.

"Brian Miller was a gem and made a significant difference in our community," said former Mayor Allison Silberberg. "He was a remarkable person, a superb Chair of the Alexandria Commission on Persons with Disabilities and a talented Alexandria Harmonizer. What a tragic and devastating loss for our community. We will never

know all that he would have accomplished for the sake of others."

Miller's remains were cremated and his ashes will be interred in Michigan. Memorial services will be planned at a later date.

"Brian was the bravest man I've ever known," Martin said. "He had no fear whatsoever. He wanted to see the world and nothing was going to stop him. His disability didn't hold him back – he saw through his blindness more than many of us see in our normal lives."

Survivors include Miller's mother and stepfather, Jane and Patrick McGinnis; father and stepmother Richard and Helen Miller; sister

and brother-in-law Cindy and Marty Wimer; and friend Masuma Ali. Condolences may be sent to the family at forbrianmiller@gmail.com and to Ali at m_ali_786@hotmail.co.uk. "I like to challenge myself, to deliberately put myself in strange places and force myself to puzzle my way out," Miller said in his final travel blog post. "Beyond the mountains there are more mountains."

There are more places to visit than one can ever hope to get to in one lifetime, that you will never see it all, and that's a good thing, because what would you have to dream about if you did?"

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Earth Day Is April 22 Special Earth Day Address from His Holiness Pope Francis to be included in Earth Day

With the 50th Anniversary of Earth Day (April 22) fast approaching, now more than ever we need to connect as a global community united in our fight to protect the health and welfare of the planet and its people.

In support of this global movement, religious leaders, environmental advocates, celebrities, musicians and government officials will be celebrating Earth Day with a variety of first-person video pieces demonstrating their commitment to our planet.

These messages, talks, teach-ins and performances will be part of Earth Day Network's robust 15-hour (9am ET to 11pm ET) live digital event on the homepage for the planet, earthday.org, as well as part of a comprehensive social media partnership with Twitter (#EarthDay2020), and as part of Earth Day Live.

The lineup of personal video messages for Earth Day 2020 includes:

- ❖ Ed Begley Jr., Actor, Environmentalist, Global Advisory Committee Member
- ❖ Zdeno Chara, Captain of the Boston Bruins
- ❖ Sylvia Earle, World-renowned Marine Biologist and National Geographic Explorer-in-Residence
- ❖ Zac Efron, Actor and Global Advisory

Committee Member

- ❖ Patricia Espinosa, UN Climate Change Executive Secretary
- ❖ Christiana Figueres, Former Executive Secretary of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change
- ❖ Jerome Foster II, White House Climate Striker and Founder of OneMillionOfUs
- ❖ Al Gore, Former Vice President, Global Environmental Advocate, and Award-winning Filmmaker
- ❖ Denis Hayes, Organizer of the first Earth Day, Board Chair Emeritus of Earth Day Network and President, CEO, The Bullitt Foundation
- ❖ Alex Honnold, Free Climber and star of Oscar-Winning Documentary, Free Solo
- ❖ Van Jones, News Commentator
- ❖ Licypriya Kangujam, Youth Climate Activist and Founder of The Child Movement
- ❖ Anil Kapoor, Award-winning Actor, Producer, and Global Advisory Committee Member
- ❖ Ricky Kej, Grammy-Winning Musician

and Global Advisory Committee Member

- ❖ John Kerry, 68th Secretary of State, Global Advisory Committee Member, Founder of World War Zero
- ❖ Thomas Lovejoy, Senior Fellow at the United Nations Foundation and Professor of Environmental Science and Policy, George Mason University.
- ❖ Bill McKibben, Founder of 350.org
- ❖ His Serene Highness Prince Albert II of Monaco, Global Advisory Committee Member

“The Earth is our environment to protect and the garden to tend to.”

— His Holiness Pope Francis, Earth Day 2015

❖ Paul Nicklen, National Geographic Filmmaker, Photographer and Marine Biologist

- ❖ Kyra Sedgwick, Actress, Producer, Director, and Global Advisory Committee Member
 - ❖ Alexandria Villaseñor, Founder and Executive Director of Earth Uprising
 - ❖ Rev. Lennox Yearwood Jr., President and CEO of the Hip Hop Caucus and Global Advisory Committee Member
- “This unprecedented time has stopped us all in our tracks,” said Kathleen Rogers,

President of Earth Day Network. “As each of us ensures that those around us are safe and well, it is in a momentous opportunity to examine our individual and collective relationship with the natural world and how our activities impact the planet. The way forward is hopeful, and we have an opportunity to forever change how we interact with the environment in our own backyard and our community at large.”

Earth Day 2020 on Earth Day Network is a multifaceted program intended to activate individuals to support their planet in a safe and responsible way during the coronavirus pandemic. Titled “24 Hours of Action,” Earth Day Network will reveal an action an hour that individuals can do to support our planet. Earth Day 2020 also includes a 15-hour digital Earth Day Live program on earthday.org, featuring long-form and short-form content with interactive programming, live appearances by religious leaders, celebrities, musicians, as well as live teach-ins with preeminent scientists and advocates.

In addition, individuals can participate in Earth Challenge 2020, a global citizen science initiative that will help build an open source database on air quality and plastic pollution using an app on your smartphone from the safety of your home.

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Now Legal: Cocktails to Go!

BY HOPE NELSON
GAZETTE PACKET

Cocktail lovers of the city, rejoice! Last week, Gov. Ralph Northam announced a change in the alcohol beverage control laws that temporarily allows restaurants to sell mixed drinks via delivery or takeout orders during this period of social distancing. While beer and wine had been permitted for several weeks, mixed drinks and cocktails were noticeably absent until the first minute of April 10, when the regulations were lifted.

Mayor Justin Wilson was spotted at 12:00:01 a.m. on April 10 in front of Pork Barrel BBQ, picking up the first legal carryout mixed-drink since the policy change. The drink – reported to be a “Wilson’s Rum Runner” – was the first toast to the new rules.

Over the past week, restaurants all over town are getting into the spirits with their, well, spirits. Here are a few can’t miss options for happy hour – at home.



PHOTO BY MICHAEL LEE POPE

Taqueria Poblano’s margaritas have long been a hit, and their carryout version doesn’t disappoint.

Taqueria Poblano, 2400-B Mount Vernon Ave.

Arguably, Taqueria Poblano was one of the restaurants that led to the Commonwealth’s change of heart. The popular Mexican eatery in Del Ray is known for its margaritas, and even served bottled

margaritas at the start of the stay-at-home order until the VABC clarified its original mixed-drink policy, thereby sinking the plan. After that, it sold bottled margarita mix instead until Northam changed the state’s mind on the matter. Now it’s back to selling margaritas in sealed

bottles – perfect for Taco Tuesday at home.

Captain Gregory’s, 804 N. Henry St.

The classy, secluded spot nestled within Elizabeth’s Counter is offering up its Speakeasy at Home series, featuring a choice of beverages that offer a little something special to dress up your evening. Pick up dinner at Elizabeth’s Counter and add on a batch of cocktails to accompany the feast, ranging from a bourbon-based “Remember the Maine” to a gin-infused “Green, I Want Your Green,” and more. Order two entrees online and select your four-cocktail batch of libations, then head home and toast the day.

Hummingbird, 220 S. Union St.

Hummingbird has been offering Dinner and Date Night bags since the shutdown, but those bags just got a little more potent with the addition of four different cocktail options. From blackberry sangria

to vodka bloody Marys to rye or bourbon Manhattans, the elegant spot overlooking the river has the perfect accompaniment to the likes of pot roast, roast chicken and more. And served in Mason jars, they’re just cute to look at, too.

Hops n Shine, 3410 Mount Vernon Ave.

The newly loosened ABC regulations have allowed Hops n Shine to get back to the “Shine” portion of its name, offering up both single cocktails as well as batches of drinks for the taking. Apple pie moonshine, a Shine-Arita with Belle Isle Honey-Habanero Moonshine, and a Shine Mule are all in keeping with tradition; or, go further afield with Manhattans, negronis and more. Order a sandwich – like the burger melt, or the “Eeezy Capreeze” – or some wings or tater tots to round out the meal.

Hope Nelson is the author of “Classic Restaurants of Alexandria” and owns the Kitchen Recessionista blog, located at www.kitchenrecessionista.com. Email her any time at hope@kitchenrecessionista.com.

NEWS BRIEFS

New Recycling Rules

Trash Goes in Plastic Bags; Recycling Does Not: Beginning Monday, April 13, residents receiving City trash and recycling service must place all materials in their City-issued bins or carts. Trash should be tied or sealed in plastic bags within the bins or carts. Recycling should be placed loose, with no plastic bag, inside the blue bins or carts.

Residents who have not been issued a City trash container should place tied or sealed plastic trash bags on the curb.

Those without a City recycling bin or cart should place recyclables in paper bags on the curb. For the safety of collection crews and to encourage waste to be reduced, loose trash or recycling on the curb will not be collected.

City Budget Revisions, Participation

On April 18, the City Council will hold a public hearing on the budget and effective real estate tax rate. City Council will then hold work sessions on April 21 and April 27, and is scheduled to adopt the FY 2021 budget and FY 2020 tax rates on April 29. All of these meetings will be held online in order to observe physical distancing guidelines. For details about how to view these meetings or participate in the public hearing, check the listing at alexandriava.gov/Calendar a few days before each event.

Prior revenue projections have been reduced by \$35.8 million for FY 2020 (ending June 30) and \$56.4 million for FY 2021 (July 1, 2020, through June 30, 2021). Some of the recommended budget revisions to close these gaps include:

Cancelling the previous proposal to raise the 2020 real estate tax rate to fund City and Schools capital projects. This would mean rescheduling the beginning

phases of the Waterfront Park and Flood Mitigation plan to FY 2023, and the high school facility project at the Minnie Howard Campus to FY 2023. The new MacArthur Elementary School project would proceed on schedule.

Cancelling previously proposed pay increases for City employees in FY 2021, and freezing new hiring, with few exceptions, for the remainder of FY 2020 and much of FY 2021.

The recommended operating transfer to the Alexandria City Public Schools (ACPS) has been reduced by an amount equivalent to previously proposed pay increases for ACPS staff. The final decision on ACPS employee compensation rests with the Alexandria School Board.

Cancelling many previously proposed program enhancements, totaling \$2.1 million of \$3.9 million proposed.

Reducing the scope of several projects in the 10-year Capital Improvement Program or deferring them from FY 2021 to a future fiscal year.

Using fund balances specifically set aside for economic downturn and emergencies.

The revised budget proposal allocates \$1.0 million to the Alexandria Health Department from potential federal funding under the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act, to be used along with potential state funding for increased epidemiological staffing. Although the Alexandria Health Department is a division of the Virginia Department of Health, more than 50% of its budget is funded by the City.

Jinks will further present his budget recommendations to City Council and the community at the April 14 City Council meeting.

The City Manager’s full message to the City Council and the community, as well as details about the revised budget proposal, public budget presentation, public meetings and online comments, are available at alexandriava.gov/Budget.



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

The Alexandria Film Festival in partnership with the Alexandria Symphony Orchestra will commission five new films for the 2020 festival.

Lights! Camera! Action! Film Festival seeks entries in ASO partnership.

The Alexandria Film Festival in partnership with the Alexandria Symphony Orchestra will commission five new films to be screened “live to picture” with American orchestral pieces performed by the symphony at its Nov. 7 and 8 concerts. Following the ASO concerts, the films will be screened during the 14th annual film festival Nov. 12-15.

A submission form indicating interest and proposed film concept for one of the five musical pieces is due Friday, April 17. Filmmakers selected to move forward to completion will receive a \$1,000 commission for their 3 to 5-minute film. Filmmakers will be selected by Alexandria Film Festival leadership, in collaboration with Alexandria Symphony leadership, and may include students and emerging talent, as well as established filmmakers. Details on how to enter can be found at AlexFilmFest.com/Homegrown.

– JEANNE THEISMANN

Working from Home with Children

Juggling the role of parent and employee.

BY MARILYN CAMPBELL
GAZETTE PACKET

It's been nearly one month since the coronavirus pandemic led to school closures and teleworking. With most schools closed for the remainder of the academic year, parents are left with the dual responsibility of teacher and employee.

"Times have greatly changed and now everyone is trying to adjust to a new reality," said Bethesda therapist Carol Barnaby, MSW, LCSW. "I have heard from many patients who feel that they are currently a bad parent, worker, and spouse."

"Couples are fighting daily about whose career is more important in regards to who will watch the children during conflicting conference calls," continued Barnaby. "Others feel bad that their children are on their own all day while they are locked in a room working."

For those who are struggling with this balancing act, reality testing your self-expectations can offer relief, suggests Barnaby.

"Is it realistic to expect that you are going to be able to conduct business as usual while you have toddlers needing constant entertainment, school children who need school help or are fighting over devices or teens who want to sleep all day and stay up all night?" Barnaby asks. "The answer is no, it is not realistic. In normal times we would not expect someone to watch their toddler while trying to conduct business meetings. We would think that it was an absurd expectation."

Distance learning with children while simultaneously working from home is a new experience for most. Parents cannot work, teach and parent all at once. "Parents and children should develop a flexible schedule and specify locations for each to do their work," said Jerome Short, Ph.D. Associate Professor of Psychology, George Mason University. "Parents should discuss with their work colleagues the specific times each day they can do work-related communications."

Since the usual boundaries that separate settings and activities throughout the day are absent, it's important to create them, advises psychologist Stacie B. Isenberg, Psy.D. "Set hours for school or work and hours for leisure and family time," she said. "This allows for quality time and experiences in each camp. Of course the ability to do this will depend upon the age of your children and the type of work you do."

"Communicate about times when quiet and lack of



PHOTO BY MARILYN CAMPBELL

Working from home in the age of coronavirus is stressful for parents.

interruption is essential, and clearly distinguish from times when you are available for questions and helping your child," continued Isenberg. "Identify specific activities that your kids can do on their own [such as] drawing, reading and throwing a tennis ball against outdoor steps."

Once a routine or schedule is established, writing and posting can create organization, says Barnaby. "This will allow children to interrupt parents less and to know when it is a good time to seek help," she said. "It will also give them a plan for their days."

If possible, designate a workspace for each family member, suggests Isenberg. "In order to stay organized and feel in control of your work, it is important to have your own work area in which to keep your belongings," she said. Scheduling time for physical activity can help minimize the impact of not having access to playgrounds, movie theaters and museums.

"Have exercise time every day," said Isenberg. "Not only is it good for your overall health, but it helps with mood and we all need a little extra moving and stretching from all of the sitting in front of computer screens. "Even if you don't have much space, getting outside every day is therapeutic. The sunshine, fresh air, and change of scenery will help everyone decompress and improve their moods."

and stretching from all of the sitting in front of computer screens. "Even if you don't have much space, getting outside every day is therapeutic. The sunshine, fresh air, and change of scenery will help everyone decompress and improve their moods."

"Is it realistic to expect that you are going to be able to conduct business as usual while you have toddlers needing constant entertainment, school children who need school help or are fighting over devices or teens who want to sleep all day and stay up all night?"

— Bethesda therapist Carol Barnaby

"Getting outside every day is therapeutic. The sunshine, fresh air, and change of scenery will help everyone decompress and improve their moods."

— Stacie B. Isenberg, Psy.D.

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Historic Huntley Farm.



Map by Robert Knox Sneden, a Union map maker during the war.

Time Warp Along Telegraph Goes From Revolutionary Sites to Civil War

Part three of the Telegraph Road series goes to the edge of Alexandria.

BY MIKE SALMON
THE GAZETTE

As Telegraph Road creeps along towards the City of Alexandria, the community of Lake d'Evereux is highlighted by the Belvale House. Belvale is a historic structure that dates back to 1764, and is rumored to have a ghost lurking on the grounds.

The mansion was built between 1763 and 1766 for George Johnston, a friend of Patrick Henry and George Washington. Johnston was a member of the Virginia Assembly 1758-1766, and a legal advisor to George Washington, who was a frequent visitor to the home.

Johnson died in 1766, possibly in the gun room of the house. The Johnston family sold the house in 1925 to A.B. Weldeford, and then came stories of a ghost appearing in the cedar grove that used to be on the property. On the second night of each month, the ghost was said to appear in the grove, where there was a duel. The young man who lost the duel was never really identified, but it was written that George Washington might have helped bury the man and plant the cedar tree near the grave.

In 1964, the D.J. Richard family owned the house and went up in the attic, saw the ghost out the window, and when they went to turn on the lights, all the lights in the house blew. All this was recorded in a 1964 issue of the Hollin Hills Bulletin, a local newsletter for the community off Richmond Highway. According to a 1970 Historic American Buildings Survey (HABS), there is a report of a slave burial ground on the property but the exact location could not be determined. The Belvale house remains a residence that faces Telegraph Road and there is a historic plaque near the front door.

Historic Huntley

Bordering the rear of this neighborhood is Huntley Meadows park, which can be ac-



There are a few strands of Old Telegraph Road that weave in and out of the current Telegraph Road.

PHOTOS BY
MIKE SALMON
THE CONNECTION



The Belvale House off Telegraph Road.

cessed from Telegraph Road at the fork with South Kings Highway. Historic Huntley is a house that is located on the park, and it is described on county documents as a Federal period villa built for Thomson Francis Mason in 1825 as a summer retreat. Mason was the mayor of Alexandria from 1827-30 and a grandson of George Mason IV, author of the Virginia Declaration of Rights.

Historic Huntley is on the National Register of Historic Places, the Virginia Landmarks Register and the Fairfax County Inventory of Historic Sites. Over the years, Historic Huntley was used as a summer retreat, a grain farm, encampment for Civil War troops of the 3rd Michigan Infantry, and eventually was converted to a dairy farm, county records indicate.

Ownership changed several times, and in later years, after being abandoned, the house was vandalized. The Park Authority obtained the house and its surrounding

2.5 acres in 1989, and a renovation of the manor house was completed in 2012. The surrounding park is famous for a boardwalk that goes out over the wetlands that bird watchers use on a regular basis.

Civil War Rages On

As Telegraph Road leads toward the City of Alexandria, it passes Rose Hill, where Mosby's Raiders went to the Rose Hill mansion on Sept. 28, 1863, and captured Col. Dulaney, a Union officer as he was sleeping. This occurred in the Rose Hill mansion which was on the hill overlooking Greendale Golf Course and Telegraph Road. One of the raiders was French Dulaney, the son of Col. Dulaney who fought for opposite sides. This story is on a Civil War Trails marker on Rose Hill Drive.

Close to the northern end of Telegraph Road, near present day Jefferson Manor Park, was Fort Lyon, one of the Union forts that was put in place to defend Washington, D.C. This fort was built in 1861 after the Union defeat at Bull Run, near the present-day location of Mount Eagle school in an area known as Ballenger's Hill. Since it was on the highest point around, the fort overlooked Telegraph Road, the Columbia Turnpike, the Orange and Alexandria Railroad, and the Little River Turnpike.

On June 9, 1863, there was a huge explosion in the battery of the fort which killed 25 soldiers and could be heard from miles around. In the wake of the explosion, Fort Lyon, and Alexandria were visited by many military and civilian dignitaries, including Secretary of War Edwin Stanton and President Abraham Lincoln, according to a "Voices from the Past." By Lewis Bissel, dated June 17, 1863.

LETTERS

FROM PAGE 5

poor, the homeless and the incarcerated. Therefore, it is vital that the city maintain its commitment to the Environmental Action Plan, even in a time of severe budgetary constraints.

Implementing policies which

reduce our production of greenhouse gases by among other things electrifying the city's bus and vehicle fleets, providing alternatives to driving, facilitating installation of rooftop solar, and pushing for new construction to be NetZero will help protect public health and eventually revitalize our economy.

We ask all Alexandrians to join us in supporting the Environmental Action Plan. People interested in learning more about our group can contact Carolyn Lyle at torenew16@yahoo.com

Paul Kaplowitz
Alexandria

NEWS BRIEFS

Opportunity for First-Time Homebuyers

The City of Alexandria's Office of Housing announces the availability of a Set-aside Homeownership unit at the Cameron Station Condominium, located at 400 Cameron Station Blvd., in Alexandria, 22304. This 1-bedroom condominium with 1- bathroom, has a cherry kitchen with stainless appliances, granite countertops and backsplash. A bathroom with upgraded vanity and towel closet. The unit is priced at \$282,243.00 after the purchase discount of 11.79 percent.

To qualify for this home, purchasers must live or work within the City's corporate limits and have a gross annual income below 100 percent of the area median income (\$88,200 for a one-person household, \$100,800 for a two-person household, \$113,400 for a three-person household, and

\$126,000 for a four-person household). Eligible purchasers may receive a City shared-equity loan of up to \$50,000 through the City's Flexible Homeownership Assistance Program.

This home is also eligible for reduced mortgage interest rate financing through the Virginia Housing Development Authority's Sponsoring Partnerships & Revitalizing Communities (SPARC) program. To qualify for SPARC and/or City financing, participants must complete a VHDA-sponsored homebuyer training class, followed by a two-hour individual counseling session.

For questions regarding this opportunity and qualifying criteria, please contact Ms. Irina Babb at 571-217-2571 or Vicente Espinoza at the Office of Housing at 703.746.3087



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Legals

Legals



Public Hearing will be held by the City Council of the City of Alexandria, Virginia, in the Council Chamber, City Hall and by video conference, City of Alexandria, Virginia, on Saturday, April 18, 2020, at 9:30 a.m., or as soon as may be heard on the hereinafter described items.

PUBLIC HEARING and Consideration of Enhanced Southwest Access to the Potomac Yard Metrorail Station and Modifications to the WMATA Funding Agreement for the Potomac Yard Metrorail Station.

PUBLIC HEARING of the FY 2021 City Council Preliminary Add/Delete Proposals and the City Manager's proposed amendments to the FY 2021 proposed budget. Budget Adoption is scheduled for Wednesday, April 29, 2020 at 7:00 p.m.

PUBLIC HEARING and Consideration of Draft City Fiscal Year (CFY) 2021 Action Plan for Housing and Community Development.

PUBLIC HEARING and Second Reading of an Ordinance on the Proposed Real and Personal Property Tax Rates and Proposed Effective Tax Rate Increase for Calendar Year 2020 (Fiscal Year 2021).

PUBLIC HEARING and Second Reading of an Ordinance to amend and reordain Subdivision J (MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS), Article B (SEWAGE DISPOSAL AND DRAINS), Chapter 6 (WATER & SEWER), of Title 5 (TRANSPORTATION AND ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES) of the Code of the City of Alexandria, Virginia, 1981, as amended. The proposed ordinance amends the ordinance regulating storm and subsoil water disposal by updating the fee for submission from \$500 to \$1000 for a grading plan. Grading plans are mostly used for new homes or large additions to single family homes. This adjustments brings our fees closer to those of our neighboring jurisdictions.

AN ORDINANCE to amend and reordain Section 3-2-248 (PENALTY AND INTEREST FOR FAILURE TO REMIT TAXES WHEN DUE) of Article N (TAX ON MEALS SOLD BY RESTAURANTS) and SECTION 3-2-146 (PENALTY AND INTEREST FOR NONPAYMENT) of Article K (TRANSIENT LODGING TAX) both of Chapter 2 (TAXATION), of Title 3 (FINANCE, TAXATION AND PROCUREMENT); Section 9-1-10.1 (INSTALLMENT PAYMENTS WHEN TAX IS BASED ON GROSS RECEIPTS) and Section 9-1-12 (PENALTY FOR FAILURE TO PAY WHEN DUE) both of Article A (GENERAL PROVISIONS), Chapter 1 (BUSINESS LICENSES), of Title 9 (LICENSING AND REGULATION) of the Code of the City of Alexandria, Virginia, 1981, as amended.

This ordinance will impose a moratorium on penalties and fess for the Restaurant Meals Tax, Transient Occupancy Taxes and BPOL taxes during the COVID-19 emergency that has been declared by both the State of Virginia and the City of Alexandria.

AN ORDINANCE to ensure the Continuity of the City Government, implementing emergency procedures, modifying public meeting requirements and public practices and procedures in order to address continuity of operations associated with the COVID-19 pandemic disaster.

The ordinance establishes procedures for the continuity of the City government during the COVID-19 Pandemic disaster.

THE PUBLIC IS ADVISED THAT AMENDMENTS OR ADDITIONS MAY BE MADE TO PROPOSED ORDINANCES WITHOUT FURTHER PUBLICATION. IT IS RECOMMENDED THAT PERSONS INTERESTED IN ANY OF THESE ORDINANCES OBTAIN FREE FULL-TEXT COPIES FROM THE CITY CLERK AT CITY HALL. If the Mayor determines that weather or other conditions are such that it is hazardous for members to attend the Saturday Public Hearing, the hearing will be continued to the next Saturday that is not a legal holiday. GLORIA SITTON, CMC, CITY CLERK

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Legals

PUBLIC NOTICE

AT&T proposes to replace an existing 30' wood utility pole with a new 40' wood utility pole and install a top-mounted antenna at 44.3' at 6218 Summit Point Ct, Alexandria, VA (20200269). Interested parties may contact Scott Horn (856-809-1202) (1012 Industrial Dr., West Berlin, NJ 08091) with comments regarding potential effects on historic properties.

Obituary

Harriet Goode Reubush 8/2/1924-4/7/2020, formerly of Alexandria, died in Raleigh, NC. Wife (Robert d.2007), mother (Lynne[Dave]Anderson of CO & Nancy[Terry]Brenneman of NC), grandmother, sister, aunt, kindergarten teacher. Donations to Bush Hill Presbyterian Day School, 4916 Franconia Rd, Alexandria 22310

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

Legals

Legals

PUBLIC NOTICE

VOLUNTARY REMEDIATION PROGRAM (VRP) ACTIVITY

VRP Project Number VRP00746
1200 N Henry Street
City of Alexandria, Virginia 22314

Participant
APTA Centennial Properties LLC
c/o American Physical Therapy Association
1111 N. Fairfax Street
Alexandria, VA 22314

The subject property is participating in the Virginia Voluntary Remediation Program (VRP) administered by the Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ). The property is a portion of the Central Operations Area of the Potomac Yard rail yard, which operated from 1906 to 1990 and was used for locomotive repair, maintenance and fueling. Environmental investigations have identified petroleum and metals contamination of soil and groundwater. The petroleum constituents are associated with diesel fuel and heavy oils, and the metals are associated with cinder ballast ash fill material. Remedial actions to mitigate potential risks to human health and the environment from the contaminants have been proposed by APTA Centennial Properties LLC and accepted by DEQ. The remedial actions consist of: the removal of certain contaminated soil; a groundwater use restriction; installation of an impervious surface cap or a minimum 2-foot thick clean soil cap, an Impacted Material Management Plan; an Environmental Health and Safety Plan; institutional controls such as an Operations and Maintenance Plan for engineering controls, and vapor mitigation controls or clearance by a vapor intrusion investigation/risk analysis. A Certification of Satisfactory Completion of Remediation will be requested of the VDEQ VRP for the site. Questions or comments regarding this notice will be accepted for 30 days from the date of publication and should be addressed to the contact below:

Thomas Hardy
Environmental Consultants and Contractors, Inc.
43045 John Mosby Highway
Chantilly, VA 20152
tom.hardy@eccfirst.com
(703) 327-2900

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Money For What, Exactly?



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

I don't know, really. Money comes in. Money goes out. But since I stay in and don't go out, cash is no longer king. Credit reigns supreme and since the accounting/budget system for the Lourie family business is rarely written down/planned for, I don't know from one expenditure to the next, where the money goes, unlike John Prine knew when he sang about "Sam Stone" when he came home.

As the spouse responsible for the business side of the marriage, it has been my job to financially plan what the family can and cannot afford. And since both earners were commission/tip recipients, the task of managing that cash flow, unpredictable as it occasionally was, took some emotional wherewithal. Nevertheless, we survived the ordeal, mostly, and now, as it has happened that all of us are consumed by pandemic-related pressures/procedures, our compensation history/experience has prepared us to ebb and flow with the times. But instead of spending money when we may have it, now we're spending money when the goods and services we need are available, which is similarly unpredictable as our dual incomes used to be.

The result of this inconsistent and 'unpredictable' availability is that when any of the goods and services are available one must buy immediately regardless of cash on hand/in-wallet or credit balance in tow or risk being shut out completely: "No soup for you," from a long-ago Seinfeld episode, so to speak (although my wife, Dina does like soup and therefore it is a regular item on our shopping list.) Accordingly, during these pandemic days, one must strike (buy) when the iron is hot, cash on hand be damned, and worrying about your credit card balance also be damned. We all need what we need in our homes/for our families and lack of paper money is not going to stop any of us from purchasing what staples and peace of mind a piece of plastic can offer. And thank God for those pieces of plastic with the magnetic strip. They're certainly getting a work out these days providing aid and comfort - of a sort, to all of us non-essential people staying at home.

And while we're staying/consuming at home, we're no longer letting our fingers do the walking through our local Yellow Pages. Instead, we're Googling our way instead, pointing and clicking, and then entering our credit card information while trying to keep our respective family business afloat. The evolving problem for me however is accounting for all these purchases and wondering if we're ever going to receive them, how much was actually charged and was the purchase even worth it, given the wait. Still, since we're all housebound, there are so many more purchases that have to be made over the phone/online that what control I used to have when in-person, spending the cash in my wallet, I no longer have. Now, I have to charge almost everything and then wait for the monthly credit card statement for an accounting of what financial damage I may have done. And by that time, 30 days or so later, I likely can't undo any of the damage because the customer-service operators are not available like they were during the pre-pandemic days or in some cases, not even taking calls. Resolution, clarification, compensation? Heck no. All you're likely to get is frustration, and that's after "extended waiting times."

And that previous paragraph's presumption is that I even know what I'm talking about (what I bought, where, when, how much, etc.). But the real point of this column, which concerns me more, is accounting for the purchases that I don't know about/haven't received. It reminds of a joke I once heard, David Brenner, a comedian from Philadelphia and a regular on The Johnny Carson Show tell: "It's not the mosquitoes I hear that I worry about, it's the ones I don't hear."

Three months plus into this pandemic and our new normal has become fairly familiar. The problem is that familiarity has bred some contempt.

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

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Fundraiser

FROM PAGE 5

decided to go ahead because, "We know this brings joy to people who attend and we wanted to be able to do that in these unprecedented times." In addition, she explained the program participants are really struggling and needing the OAR services, and this is the biggest fundraiser by far each year. "We get calls every day for help with food, rent and other necessities." And they were already \$30,000 over budget. Dwyer said they tried to follow the same format as in previous in-person fundraisers where they shared the creative and inspiring stories of OAR participants who had experienced incarceration. Jones Valderrama, did a live welcome to the breakfast from her home, then incorporated a couple of prerecorded small videos of OAR stories. Dwyer did the ask for support at the end. They incorporated a couple of polls where people could participate by answering questions, first with fun things like "is your pet watching with you," and then on to more serious questions about racial justice. The answers were immediately tabulated. This all got combined into the program.

Dwyer says last year's breakfast at the Crystal Gateway Marriott in Arlington had 600 attendees and raised \$110,000 while this year's online breakfast had 200 attendees in a Zoom chat format and raised \$30,000. "Overall given the timeframe and everything else, it was remarkable." She says a number of new people learned the OAR story.

But Dwyer explains the breakfast was disrupted "right off the bat by a speaker in space" mouthing racial epithets in the Zoom meeting. Dwyer explains as each speaker joins a Zoom group, they are identified by name and picture. A number of strange account names started appearing. These people started speaking racial slurs, and the administrator of the call immediately started kicking them out. But there were so many of these interruptions "that we couldn't keep up and had to shut out the entire group from chatting."

"The disturbing thing was that our Executive Director, who is a person of color, was talking about racial disparities just at the time these calls were coming in."

Jones Valderrama says "imagine white supremacists up at 7 in the morning saying super aggressive things."

But she said she wasn't surprised. She expected something like this might happen because of common interactions in the Arlington and Alexandria communities. "These things happen to us every day." She says people want to touch her hair to see if it feels different or her body, like a person of color isn't a real person, or they argue back at her in an aggressive way. Having a conversation about race is uncomfortable.

OAR was founded in 1974 to work with men and women returning to the community from incarceration and offering alternative sentencing options through community service with race equity as a core goal.

In 2019 OAR worked with 708 men and women who had experienced incarceration as well as 1,334 adults and youth performing community service. They sponsor reentry programs beginning with assistance while still in prison and following with services as the person transitions successfully into the community. Since last fall OAR has hosted four intensive Undoing Racism workshops for 180 people, most of whom live in Arlington and Alexandria. For further information visit their website at www.OARonline.org

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