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Alexandria Gazette Packet

HomeLifestyle

PAGE 11

25 CENTS

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MAY 14, 2020

Chirilagua in Crisis

More than half of those tested in low-income Hispanic neighborhood are positive for COVID-19.

BY MICHAEL LEE POPE
GAZETTE PACKET

Azucena Esquivel lives in a cramped apartment in the Arlandria neighborhood of Alexandria, where the problem of community spread isn't just theoretical. The pandemic is in her household. Earlier this month, she tested positive for COVID-19, the disease caused by the novel coronavirus. Another adult in her household paid \$300 to get a test, which was also positive. They are living with two people who have not been tested. None of them are currently working, and they have no source of income.

"We are all going to get it," said



Newly released ZIP code data shows Arlandria has one of the highest rates in the state for people testing positive for COVID-19, the disease caused by the novel coronavirus.

Esquivel through a translator. "It shouldn't be like this. What is happening to our household is happening to everyone in Chirilagua" she said, using the local nickname

for Arlandria.

More than half of the people in the ZIP code that includes Arlandria, 22305, who have been tested have the virus, according to new

data released this week by the Virginia Department of Health. That's one of the highest positivity rates in the state, and it's double the rate for the region. The rapidly spreading disease has created a sense of panic in this Arlandria, where the median household income is less than \$55,000 and one out of three people lack health insurance.

"We urge the governor to come visit Arlandria," said Jon Liss, executive director of Virginia New Majority. "Come see with your own

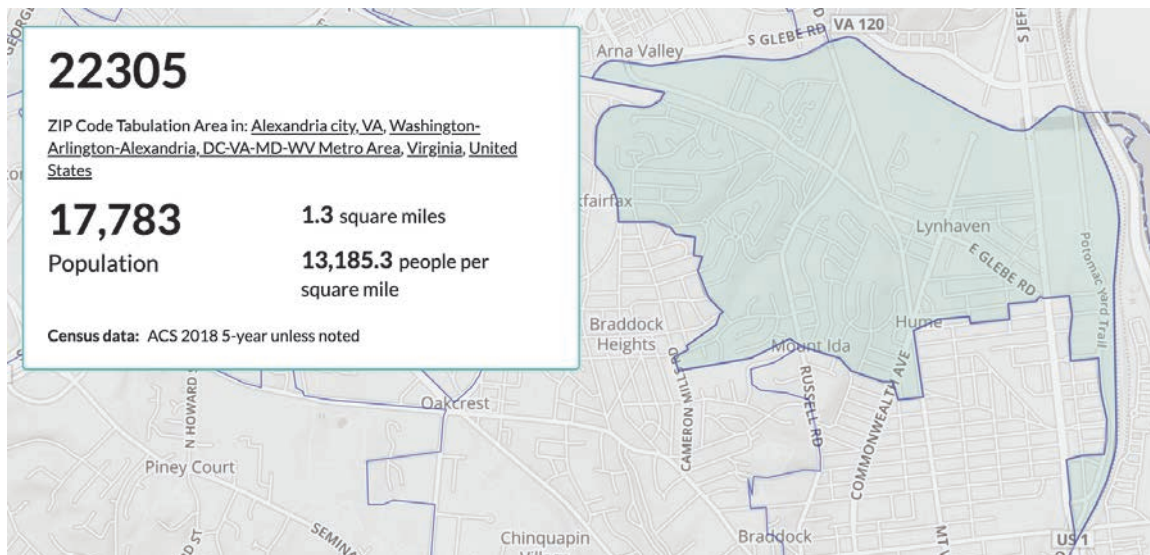
eyes what's happening here."

CITY OFFICIALS say they are doing everything they can to make sure that testing is free and available to anyone who needs it, regardless of their ability to pay or provide documents. Under normal circumstances, the Neighborhood Health clinic on Glebe Road requires paperwork from people seeking care proving they make less than 200 percent of the federal poverty level. About a month ago, they moved to seeing patients over the phone or online. Now, during the pandemic, no paperwork is required — no paystub and no letter from an employer. All that's needed is that a patient disclose their income.

"All we do is ask them, 'What's your income level?' They tell us their income level over the phone," said Basim Khan, executive director of Neighborhood Health. "They just tell us. We don't require any documentation. There's no forms. There's no paperwork."

That's a message that has not broken through, according to people who live and work in Arlandria. Many low-income people believe they will need a paystub or a letter from an employer in order to get a test at the testing center Neighborhood Health set up in an Arlandria parking lot. That's led people to avoid getting a test, or paying \$300 to get a test from a private provider — a huge out-of-pocket expense for people who are already struggling to get by during the greatest economic crisis since

SEE CHIRILAGUA, PAGE 5



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PEOPLE

Play On ASO trio serenades Goodwin House residents.

Residents of Goodwin House Alexandria were treated to a special performance by members of the Alexandria Symphony Orchestra during a May 7 musical program led by ASO Music Director James Ross.

"Today we are celebrating the gift of music brought to us by the Alexandria Symphony Orchestra," said Lindsay Hutter, Chief Strategy and Marketing Officer for Goodwin House. "Our residents are being serenaded by Alexandria's finest, a brass trio led by maestro James Ross."

The ASO presented "ASO on the Courtyard" as residents opened their windows or sat in the courtyard to enjoy the 30-minute concert. Limited rooftop seating was also available.

"Any residents seated outside were separated by a minimum of six feet," Hutter added. "Many are subscribers to the Alexandria Symphony Orchestra and this was a way to keep them in high spirits while maintaining social distancing."

www.goodwinhouse.org



Led by music director James Ross on French Horn, a brass trio from the Alexandria Symphony Orchestra serenades residents at Goodwin House Alexandria during a 30-minute concert on May 7.



PHOTOS BY JANET BARNETT/GAZETTE PACKET

Residents listen to a concert by members of the Alexandria Symphony Orchestra performed May 7 in the courtyard of Goodwin House Alexandria.

40 Under 40

The Alexandria Chamber of Commerce has announced the 2020 class of 40 Under 40 honorees. This is the fifth class of honorees in the program, which was established in 2016 to recognize individuals under the age of 40 who are outstanding in their fields and shaping the future of the city.

The 2020 honorees come from a variety of fields, including business, technology, non-profit management, civic life, public service, education and the arts. A reception sponsored by Beyer Subaru will be held Oct. 29 at the United Way Worldwide building.

Winners were selected by an anonymous selection committee and evaluated on professional accomplishment, scholastic achievement and community impact.

The 2020 Honorees: Andres Acosta II, TC Williams High School's International Academy; Councilman Canek Aguirre, City of Alexandria; Chelsea Anderson, Homegrown Restaurant Group; Chris Arnold, Alexandria Soccer Association; Allen Carrington Brooks, Building Momentum; Virginia Bush, Association of American Medical Colleges; Jessica Du Bois, The Business Benefits Group; Andrew D. Garrahan, Covington & Burling, LLP; Shawna Gary, Arlington County Government; Marcy Giannunzio, DIAG Studios, PLLC; Ariana Gordillo, National Association

of Free & Charitable Clinics; Adrienne Griffith, Alexandria Economic Development Partnership; Gresham W. Harkless Jr., Blue 16 Media; Amanda Hayes Rudolph, Redmon, Peyton & Braswell LLP; Beth Inglis, Preting, LLC; Grant Alan Joiner, Charles Schwab; Lisa Kiefer, Sightline Strategy; Rachel Lazarus, AARP; Helen Lee, City of Alexandria; Garrett McGuire, AT&T; Catherine Miller, Four Directions Wellness; Katelin T. Moomau, Rich Rosenthal Manitta Dzubin & Kroeger PLLC; Jeremy Ryan Moss, Bonaventure; Courtney Overton, Speech of Cake, Inc.; Clinton Page, Alexandria City Public Schools; Sarah Phillips, The Scout Guide; Emma Quinn, Port City Brewing Company; Megan Ritter Just, National Council for Adoption; Sam Silverlieb, McChrystal Group; Josh Simon, Lee & Associates; Christopher Suarez, Alexandria City Public Schools; Natalie Ivana Talis, Alexandria Health Department; John Taylor III, Alexandria's Toyota; Daniel Tekla, INOVA Alexandria Hospital; Nathan Toews, Senior Services of Alexandria; Marisa Tordella, Friends of Guest House; Steven E. Ulrich, Cassaday & Company, Inc.; Adrianna Vallario, McEneaney Associates - Jillian Keck Hogan Team; Dr. Joshua W. Walker, Japan Society; and Kayla Yingst, Alexandria Renew Enterprises.

— JEANNE THEISMANN



PHOTO BY JEANNE THEISMANN/GAZETTE PACKET

Royal Restaurant-AFD

FEED THE FIGHT – Chris Euripides of the Royal Restaurant, left, is joined by Joanna Gomez in delivering meals donated by the restaurant to first responders at Alexandria Fire Department Headquarters on May 11. Accepting the meals on behalf of the department is AFD Battalion Chief Frederick Ruff.

The Rotary Club of Alexandria is sponsoring Flags For Heroes, a tribute that will be on display at Cedar Knoll Restaurant from June 27 to July 11. Flag sponsorship forms are available at www.alexandriarotary.org.



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

Flags for Heroes

The Rotary Club of Alexandria will be sponsoring the third annual Flags for Heroes tribute, a display of more than 200 flags that will be located in front of Cedar Knoll Restaurant from June 27 to July 11.

Flags are sponsored by local individuals in honor of first responders, teachers, veterans, family members

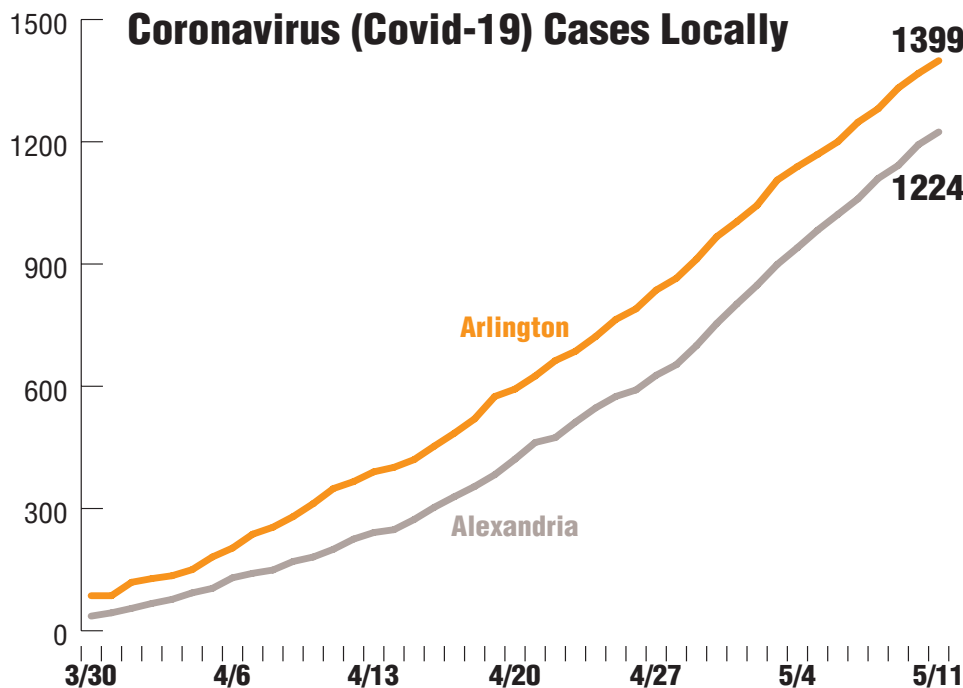
Tribute to be on display June 27-July 11.

or other unsung heroes. Sponsorships are available for \$50 with all proceeds going to support local Alexandria charities.

For more information or to sponsor a flag, email flagsforheroes@alexandriarotary.org or visit www.alexandriarotary.org.

— JEANNE THEISMANN

This Week in Coronavirus



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

Will Phase One begin Friday? Alexandria Mayor and chairs of Fairfax and Arlington Boards respond.

By Ken Moore
 The Gazette

Tuesday, May 12 Northern Virginia Different

Alexandria Mayor Justin Wilson, Fairfax County Supervisor Jeff McKay and Arlington County Board Libby Garvey made the difference: Northern Virginia numbers are different during this pandemic.

Governor Ralph Northam issued Executive Order Sixty-Two Tuesday, May 12, allowing specific localities in Northern Virginia to delay entering Phase One of the “Forward Virginia” plan to ease restrictions.

“While the data show Virginia as a whole is ready to slowly and deliberately ease some restrictions, it is too soon for Northern Virginia. I support the request from localities in this region to delay implementation of Phase One to protect public health,” said Northam.

Virginia as a whole may enter Phase One on Friday, May 15 based on achieving certain health metrics, he said.

Monday, May 11

Alexandria Cases: 1,224
 Virginia Cases: 25,070
 United States Cases: 1,300,696
 Alexandria Deaths: 30
 Virginia Deaths: 850
 United States Deaths: 77,781

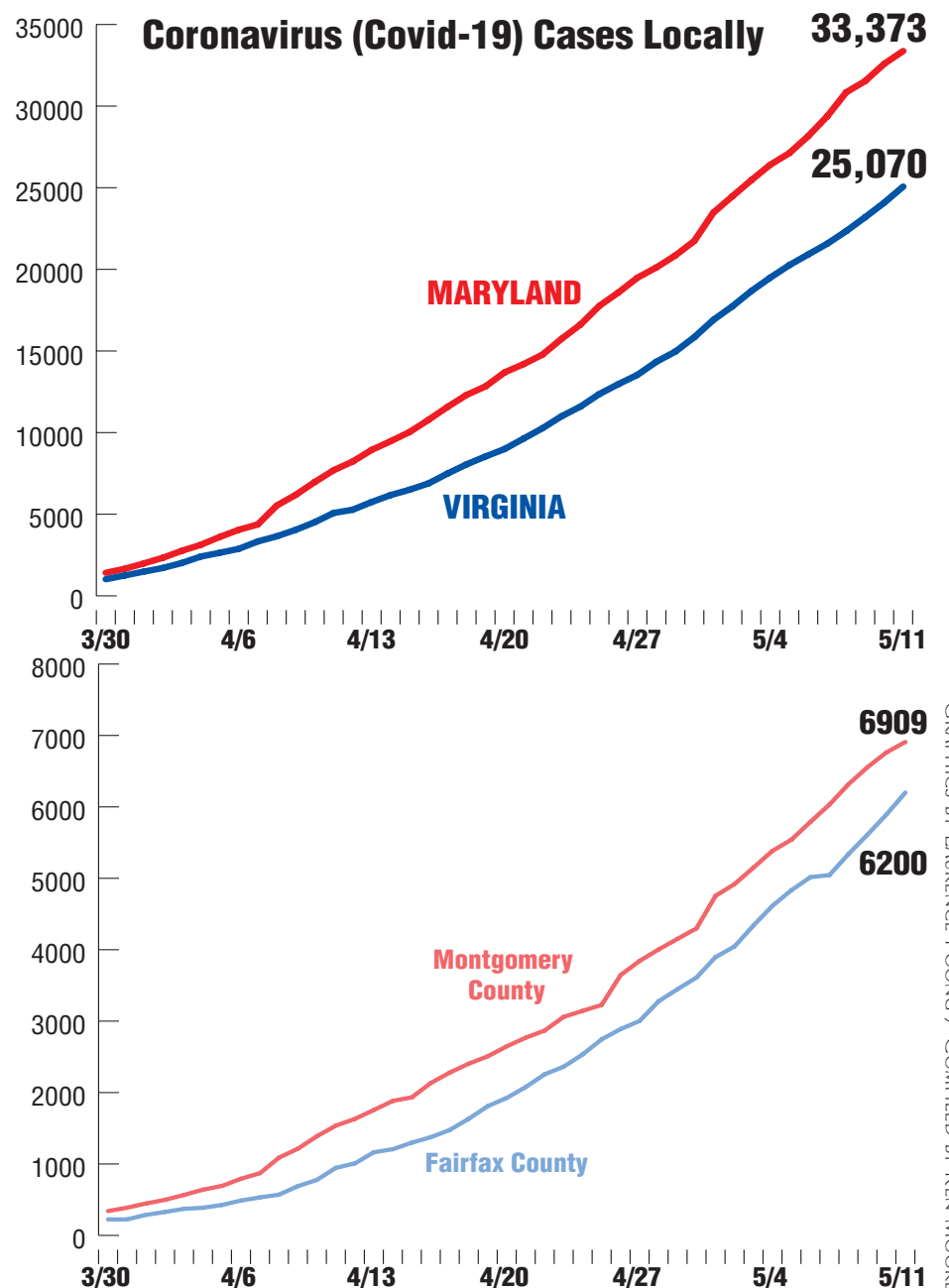
Sunday, May 10

Alexandria Cases: 1,193
 Virginia Cases: 24,081
 Alexandria Deaths: 30
 Virginia Deaths: 839

The top elected officials of the five largest localities in Northern Virginia sent a letter to Gov. Ralph Northam, supporting his “Forward Virginia” reopening plan in general but urging him to implement it for Northern Virginia only once regional threshold metrics have been met. Although the metrics appear likely to be met for Virginia overall by May 15, this does not appear to be the case for Northern Virginia. The 2.5 million residents of the city of Alexandria and the counties of Arlington, Fairfax, Loudoun and Prince William represent nearly a third of the population of Virginia and half of the Commonwealth’s COVID-19 cases, hospitalizations and deaths.

“We eagerly wish to rebuild our economy and help our residents recover,” wrote Mayor Justin Wilson (Alexandria) and Chairs Libby Garvey (Arlington County), Jeff McKay (Fairfax County), Phyllis Randall (Loudoun County) and Ann Wheeler (Prince William County). “It is only through our regional achievement of these milestones that we will be positioned to avoid a more damaging return to business closures later in the summer.”

The Forward Virginia plan requires the following metrics be met before the first phase of reopening can occur statewide: 1) a downward trend of positive test results over a period of 14 days; 2) a downward trend of hospitalizations over a period of 14 days; 3) sufficient hospital beds and intensive care capacity; 4) increasing and sustainable supply of personal protective equipment such as masks, respirators, gloves and gowns; and 5) increased testing and tracing. According



GRAPHICS BY LAURENCE FOONG / COMPILED BY KEN MOORE

to analysis by the region’s public health directors, none of the five metrics for Northern Virginia have been achieved, or cannot be determined based on currently available data.

Saturday, May 9

Alexandria Cases:
 Virginia Cases: 23,196
 Alexandria Deaths: 30
 Virginia Deaths: 827

The cumulative number of COVID-19 cases in Alexandria is now 1,142, including 30 fatalities.

Honoring Asian Americans: Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month, observed annually in May, is an opportunity to honor and celebrate the contributions that people of Asian descent have made to our Commonwealth, and to our nation’s history, culture and heritage. In light of increasing incidents of discrimination against people of Asian descent, the observance this month is a reminder that race, ethnicity, and national origin are not related to an individual’s chances of getting COVID-19 or giving it to

someone else. Learn what you can do to help reduce discrimination and stigma related to COVID-19, and visit Alexandria Library’s Asian Pacific American Heritage Month page for books, activities, and other information.

Increased Telework Protects Employees and Customers: Over the last two months, the City of Alexandria has implemented innovative telework solutions to help protect employees and customers from unnecessary risk during the COVID-19 pandemic.

“Our number one priority is always the health and safety of our workforce and the community we serve,” said City Manager Mark Jinks. “Our use of telework, sometimes in groundbreaking ways, has helped us implement guidance from public health officials while improving the efficiency of the services we provide. In many cases, the telework successes we’ve seen during this crisis will lead to permanent improvements in how we work and deliver services. The City encourages all employers and employees to explore ways to use telework -- now and in the future -- to protect health and reduce traffic congestion and pollution.”

SEE CORONAVIRUS, PAGE 12

WWW.CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM

NEWS

Chirilagua in Crisis

FROM PAGE 1

the Great Depression.

"Yeah, we're heard that too, and it really infuriates me when I hear about people paying \$300 for a test," said Khan, who is also a primary care physician at Neighborhood Health. "I think it's an outrage, and we need to work with the community to let them know that this resource is available."

THE NEIGHBORHOOD has been known as Arlandria since the Arlandria Shopping Center opened its doors in 1947. Three decades later, Salvadorans fleeing violence and civil war in their home country were drawn to the area. As early as 1990, so many Salvadorans arrived that it took on a new nickname: Chirilagua. That was the name of the Salvadoran city that

was home to many of the refugees before arriving here in Alexandria.

"It's like a little barrio," says Ingris Moran, whose parents arrived from El Salvador 30 years ago. "Everyone knows each other, and everyone knows their neighbor."

The Hispanic population in Alexandria is less than 20 percent of the population, but they account for more than 40 percent of the positive cases of COVID-19. Census records show that more than 60 percent of people who live in Arlandria are Hispanic, and a majority of that population has no health care. Many low-income Hispanic residents in

Arlandria work in essential positions like construction or custodial work, and they are more likely to take public transportation to work.

SEE CHIRILAGUA, PAGE 14

"Pandemics disproportionately impact people of low income. In this country, that's people of color."

— Stephen Haering,
director of the Alexandria
Health Department

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A Family's Devastation of Influenza Pandemic: Bessie Evans Baltimore Carter

BY CHAR MCCARGO BAH

World War I ended in November of 1918, but another world devastation began. The 1918 Influenza "flu" known to many as the Spanish Flu was an invisible enemy that killed more people than World War I. An enemy that did not carry guns nor grenades but was deadly.

Alexandria experienced the Flu. From 1918 through 1919, the Alexandria Gazette reported on the Influenza Pandemic by mentioning that by early fall of 1918, stores, churches, schools, theatres and all public gathering places were closed to help slow down the spread of the Flu.

One family that experienced the impact of the Flu was Irvin (Irving) Carter and his wife, Bessie Evans Baltimore. They were the parents of two young daughters, Verma Evelyn Carter and Lucy Beatrice Carter. On Oct. 28, 1918, Bessie was under a doctor's care for Pulmonary Tuberculosis. Before she was quarantined, she contracted the Flu and her three and two-year old daughters were not able to see her again. Bessie was under her doctor's care for two months.

It was a picture perfect snowy day on Dec. 26, 1918 when Bessie Evans Baltimore-Carter died in her family home at 600 South



**Bessie Evans
Baltimore Carter.**

Washington Street leaving her husband and two daughters behind. She died from tuberculosis and the influenza. Two-years later in 1920, Bessie's husband, Irving Carter died at his parents' home at 606 South Washington Street leaving his daughters without a father. His daughters were raised by his Carter family and his deceased wife's Baltimore and Spriggs' families. Throughout the lives of Verma and Lucy, family members rarely talked about the girls' parents. The story of their parents was never told and never passed down to their daughters.

Both daughters grew up in Alexandria and attended school. Verma married Sylvester Roy in 1936. They had four children, Sylvester



**Lucy Beatrice
Carter Cross Roy.**

Jr., Raymond, Donald and Lucy. Verma's sister Lucy Beatrice Carter married twice. She married her first husband Haywood S. Cross in 1934.

They had one daughter, Beatrice Virginia Cross. Lucy's second marriage was to Harold Roy in 1943. The couple had one son, Harold Roy Jr.

Verma and Lucy treasured their family. Although they grew up without their parents, they became devoted mothers to their children. Verma and Lucy bonded with their parents' siblings throughout their lives. Lucy stayed in touch with both sides of her family, remembering their birthdays and celebrating holidays with them. When her elderly family members died, she assisted in paying their burial

expenses.

Unlike their parents, Verma and Lucy lived a long life. Verma Evelyn Carter Roy died at the age of 85 and Lucy Beatrice Carter Cross Roy died at the age of 90. For their parents, Bessie died before her thirtieth birthday and Irving died before his thirty-second birthday. Their lives were cut short by disease.

For Bessie Evans Baltimore Carter, she was added to the mortality statistics of victims who died from the 1918 Influenza Pandemic. The Flu Pandemic killed about 50 million people worldwide, that included the 675,000 deaths in the United States. In 1918, there was no vaccine and no antiviral medicine to treat the Flu. The recommendations from doctors were isolation, quarantining and good hygiene practices.

Those same recommendations are given today for the COVID-19.

During the 1918 Influenza Pandemic, the world had millions of human deaths and today, we are approaching a similar fate. What a devastation these pandemics have had on so many families in the world.

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

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Warehouse Design Charettes No Longer Appropriate

I noted that prior to this unfortunate COVID Crucible, the Old Town North (OTN) City Planning Commission venue for the OTN small area plan (SAP) was scheduled to be held 23 March, at St Paul's Church on S. Pitt St in Old Town South. Why would not the PC select a venue in OTN?

Additionally, the PC SAP for OTN has consistently called for maintaining "warehouse-like" design charette in OTN. Warehousing is archaic, unaesthetic, has no historic value and is no longer apropos here.

Something more akin to a "Captains Row" design would be more attractive.

If we in OTN wanted to live in a warehouse, we would have decided to live above Harris Teeter or above the new ABC store at

Montgomery and Pitt – however, we do not. Additionally, change the venue to an OTN Community location.

Bill Jacobs
Chatham Square HOA
Alexandria

Save Our Pick-up Spaces

Back in March, the Mayor's office offered reserved spaces for pickup and carryout to every restaurant in the City. For those who weren't open for a while and may have forgotten, all you have to do is call the Mayor's office and they'll make it happen.

I ordered from a restaurant on lower King St. last night, but when I arrived to pick it up, the whole lower block was crammed with parked cars. The restaurant told me people are ignoring the reserved space notices and parking anyway, even when asked not to. I had

to double park, blocking traffic, while the hard-working young man ran my bags to my car, several feet farther down, where I could pull over slightly.

I called the police to alert them to this problem and was told they cannot take the complaint from me, even though it is I who is inconvenienced by it. They will only take it from the proprietor. The result here is the City has offered a very nice situation for all of us, businesses and customers, to help our businesses stay in business. But, a few self-centered people ruin it for everyone else, and the police have other things to do.

Please don't park in front of restaurants, posted or not. You all know take out is the only way they can stay in business. If you see someone doing it, give them a kind reminder and hope they will be community spirited. But don't argue with them over it for sure.

Col (ret) Pat Webb
Alexandria

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OPINION

Senior Communities: Need vs. Want

BY PETE CROUCH

As the Coronavirus seems to have many Seniors in its crosshairs, all of our local communities are scrambling to keep residents safe. Many of them report cases of Covid, and are making enormous efforts to both care for those affected, and protect the rest of their residents. Most are on “lockdown” of one sort or another, with virtually all restricting both visitors and meal settings.

The very nature of most Senior Communities is “congregate,” meaning they are designed to promote social interaction as a health and wellness benefit. Most are designed with large activity rooms and dining halls. There are lots of staff and visitors of all sorts coming and going. When you add the fact that many residents have some sort of underlying health condition, you have a perfect storm for this type of virus.

The industry is doing its best to contain outbreaks and protect existing residents, and is working on solutions for going forward. In the meantime, however, what about older folks and their families who had been looking into communities for themselves or their loved ones? The temporary answer, it seems, depends on one’s “need.”

If someone needs help in their activities of daily living, or risks accident or injury by staying in their home, they are often being accepted into most of the communities offering Assisted Living and Memory Care. These are the “need-based” communities. However, many older folks and their families are hearing all the horror stories in the news and balking at that choice. In these circumstances, another option is to bring assistance into the home so that the negatives of “congregate living” are not in play — at least until things are more under control. We have a number of great home-care companies in our area for that alternative.

Other than the “need-based” communities, we have many that are “lifestyle,” or Active Adult/ Continuing Care/Life Plan communities, where the focus is on independent living and socialization. They often have additional layers of Assisted and Memory Care to help if/when health deteriorates, but Seniors move there when they are active and independent.

Caution: Most folks would be wise to think twice about doing so in the current environment, and

SEE SENIOR, PAGE 13

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AlexRenew will launch a new Customer Care Billing System in June! Are You Ready for the Switch?

On June 1, 2020, AlexRenew will introduce an improved customer care and billing system that will make it easier to pay your wastewater bill and manage your account. The myAlexRenew Customer Care Portal will create a more user-friendly experience with additional billing and payment features, including paperless billing, improved online access, Auto-Pay, usage graphs, and additional payment options to make bill-paying more convenient.

The new customer care system will offer you the following features and choices:

- Paperless billing to reduce waste and help our environment.
- Additional Auto-Pay options that offer flexibility and convenience.
- Usage graphs, easy online bill access, and self-service options to give you more control over managing your account.
- Archived bills that you can review and access anytime.
- A new online portal that you can access 24/7 from your home computer, smartphone, or tablet.
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PHOTOS BY JOAN BRADY

Gabe Kimmel-Senior from Fairfax, working on his self-portrait, inspired by artist, Jean-Michel Basquiat.

Out of the Box (OBX) Friday: Zoom class on Basquiat and Self-Portraits.

Now, For Something Completely Different

At the GW Community School, distancing doesn't mean disconnecting.

BY JOAN BRADY
THE CONNECTION

School started the way it always had on March 19, with advisories, groggy students and a few snarky jokes. But instead of staring at a teacher, everyone was staring at a screen. The COVID-19 lockdown had begun.

Students at the GW Community School were thrilled to be there.

"We had only missed a few days of school," said history teacher Tim Connelly. "But with everything going on, it felt desperate and lonely. Everyone was so excited to see [each other]. There was a sense of normalcy. We had history class. We were making jokes."

Founded by teachers Alexa Warden and Richard Goldie, GW Community School is a private college preparatory high school. "GWCS students are bright, motivated, often non-traditional learners who don't necessarily fit into the big public high school mold," said Warden, school director. "They may have felt that there was something missing in their previous school environment, a missing connection that kept them from realizing their full selves."

That connection is what they find at GWCS. They become part of the family.

With an average class size of seven, GWCS's 41 students take classes in everything from English to astrophysics and choose from an assortment of extracurriculars, including a basketball team, a theater group and many clubs.

Warden says it's important for



Senior Elizabeth Cronin of Springfield shows off her self-portrait, inspired by Jean-Michel Basquiat.

kids to have a sense of belonging. So community is core to the school's philosophy. Students are encouraged to help each other, their families and the community at large. Teachers and administrators are expected to model that

behavior.

Anthony Parisi, a senior from McLean, feels the difference: "Public high school can be lonely. But here, it's one big group ... a community, like the name implies."

The approach to academics fo-



Ana Parker, a junior from Arlington, enjoying some outdoor time during our Zoom interview.

cuses on igniting students' interests and passions. Parisi's mother, Suzanne, can't say enough about the impact the school has had on her son's excitement for learning, just since September. "All of a sudden it was like seeing the energy and enthusiasm I had seen in him in grade school," she said. "That [energy] had slowly drained out of him over the years."

For senior Gabe Kimmel of Fairfax, the reason for the school's success is simple, "It's a community," he said. "You support each other and that helps you want to learn."

The GWCS students and their parents didn't waste any time stressing over a shutdown that would ultimately disrupt the education of Virginia's nearly 1.6 million school-age children. Jay Me-
traud, a student from Clifton, had confidence in the school's director,

saying he "knew not to worry, because Ms. Warden is always super prepared."

And, in fact, Warden had recognized early in the COVID crisis that GWCS needed to move quickly to be prepared in case the school was forced to close.

So, weeks before Virginia schools were shuttered, Warden orchestrated Microsoft Team downloads and updates on every student and teacher's computer. And with one local student already quarantining at home and teachers testing distance learning methods by operating from remote classrooms, the team was able to troubleshoot the technology.

Warden recognized that technology would be just one of the pieces that would ensure success. Students would need structure and a continued sense of community to energize them for the rest of the school year.

March 12 was the last day the brick-and-mortar school was open, and Warden and the staff worked to adapt the curriculum as needed. So by March 19, it was business as usual with full-day, live education for all GWCS students.

While many public and private schools struggled with the transition to remote learning, GWCS students quickly learned that there would be no lowering of academic performance expectations, said Goldie, who, in addition to being a co-founder, also serves as the school's assistant director, teacher and coach.

SEE HELPING, PAGE 10

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Now, For Something Completely Different



Alexa Warden, GWCS Director welcomes students to the day's activity. Warden lives in Fairfax.



History teacher Tim Connelly and his son Jackson showing what GWCS Zoom lunches are like from their house.

FROM PAGE 8

BEFORE THE pandemic, Fridays during the school's fourth quarter were a big deal. Juniors and seniors would go to internships, while freshmen and sophomores engaged in carefully crafted outings. Something had to be created to replace those experiences. It was critical that social distancing didn't result in social disconnecting.

The result was the new-for-Covid-19 version of the "Out of the Box" Friday program, which was kicked off by an all-school Zoom call. On Fridays, Warden splits the students into teams and they are given an activity to complete, and sometimes there's competition between teams. For Earth Day, they used the seek app (iNaturalist) to document biodiversity in their yards and neighborhoods and then analyzed and documented the data together.

Last week, English and math teacher Sam Wallace introduced the work of the late artist Jean-Michel Basquiat and, led by artists from Artjamz, the students completed self-portraits inspired by Basquiat's style. In preparation, parents and guardians had picked up art kits from a central location.

Ana Parker, a junior from Arlington, started at GWCS just after they began distance learning. She said she "used to dread the idea of going to school on Mondays." But at GWCS, despite not having met any of the other students face to face, they were quick to draw her in. She was immediately invited to the weekly Zoom movie night that one of the students had organized, which she really appreciated. And, while Parker says she, "doesn't love school, the way some people do, [she] loves this school."

GWCS parent Lisa Kimmel said she is "blown away with how the school has handled the remote learning. And how quick they were to adapt to it. It's been an overwhelming success."

"Creating predictable structure and normalcy is very important for young people," said Jackie L. Stout, a Herndon-based trauma specialist. "Especially at a time when the uncertainty caused by the pandemic can increase stress levels. And GWCS's actions benefit not just the students, but the entire family. Knowing that kids are focused constructively during the day minimizes potential tension between family members."

Suzanne Parisi acknowledged that she "doesn't know anyone who is having an educational experience that is even close to what her son, Anthony, is getting." That can make talking to less-satisfied parents a challenge, "I try to edit myself," she said, "so

they don't get bummed out."

The school is definitely unusual, but it's hard to argue with the results. All fourteen 2020 GWCS graduates have plans to attend college programs. That is, if the world goes back to normal in the fall.

And graduates are successfully launched.

Ben Suskind of McLean, who graduated from GWCS in 2019, says his classes and teachers set him up for success in college. But what he really appreciated was "having the time and freedom to explore [his] interest in aviation because GWCS doesn't waste time with busy work." Suskind recently finished his freshman year in the Aviation Flight Science program at Western Michigan University.

Another member of the class of 2019, Centreville's Gabriella Holtermann, said she has found college challenging, but has taken lessons learned at GWCS to successfully seek support from her college advisors at The American University, where she's pursuing a double major in anthropology and international studies.

Max Ginsberg of Fairfax, class of 2017, remembers well a time when crippling social anxiety kept him from making meaningful connections with peers. Moving to GWCS for his sophomore year, Ginsburg says, "the family environment is the key reason [I] did well there."

In the face of the welcoming acceptance he felt from the other students he said "[his] nervous shell dissolved away." Ginsberg is a rising senior at Davis and Elkins College, W. Va., with a major in psychology and a minor in theater.

In hours of interviews, there was not even a hint of criticism of the school. In fact, the gushing from parents and students was over the top.

About the only possible dent in the armor seemed to be when one student mentioned that Warden sometimes yelled at the school's pet turtles.

So when I sent Warden a list of mundane follow-up questions, I tucked one devious one in: "What do the turtles do to make you angry?"

Her response: "I never get mad at the turtles. I love them."

When I went back to my source with some follow-up questions, I could almost hear freshman Jay Mestraud's infectious laugh in his typed reply, "Ms. Warden doesn't yell at them in anger she just gives them a stern talking to because they are mischievous and get up to all kinds of things. ... Kinda like her students."

That's just how it is when you are a family.

APPETITE

As Phase 1 Reopening Delayed, Restaurants Carry On (and Carry Out)

BY HOPE NELSON

This week, Gov. Ralph Northam confirmed that the Commonwealth of Virginia will begin its covid-19 "phase 1" reopening plan on Friday. By midweek, however, Northam had revised his stance on Northern Virginia, allowing more time for the five cities and counties in the northernmost part of the state -- Alexandria, Arlington, Fairfax County, Loudoun, and Prince William County -- to begin its own Phase 1 plan on or about May 28.

What this means for restaurants on paper is, in short, a slow opening phase. Takeout and delivery services will still be on offer, along with outdoor dining at 50% only, as long as the establishment already had such dining.

What the past two months of virus-related closures has meant for restaurants in practice has been anything but neat and tidy. Jobs have been slashed, open hours cut, to say nothing of the dollars and cents on the bottom line. But cafes, eateries, breweries and restaurants citywide are persevering. Here's an up-

SEE AS PHASE 1 REOPENING, PAGE 12





The sunlit and airy kitchen by Winn Design + Build includes a Claridges Thassos Water Jet tile backsplash and pendant lighting by Shades of Light.

Island Vacation Inspires Kitchen Remodel

A dark and cramped Alexandria kitchen gets sunny makeover.

BY MARILYN CAMPBELL
THE GAZETTE

During a vacation to the Maldives, Lesli and Daniel Creedon found inspiration for the design concept behind their newly remodeled kitchen. The family, which includes two 15-year-old children, wanted to capture the aesthetic of the powder-white sand and glass-blue lagoons that characterize the strand of islands.

The kitchen in their home — located in Alexandria's Warwick Village neighborhood — was dark and cramped, quite unlike the sparsely populated stand of islands where sunlight glints on placid water.

"[It] didn't function or flow properly," said Lesli.

"It was basically donut-shaped. We had a load bearing wall right in the middle of the space."

To create the serenity they craved, the Creedons sought help from the team at Winn Design + Build. "Two of our goals for the kitchen were to have it provide dining options and better engage the outdoor living space," said Michael Winn. "The previous kitchen

... had only a single door with limited views of the backyard. The feeling we were going for was up-scale yet comfortable and functional."

White, glass-front cabinetry surrounded by white quartz countertops and a blue and white backsplash harmonize to create the Maldivian aesthetic the Creedons sought.

The soft blue cabinetry on the island streamlined the sand-and-sea color palette.

"The mother-of-pearl, wavy backsplash was my splurge, my favorite component," said Lesli. "I also wanted a little glam, hence the crystal pendants."

An Avallon wine cooler, Sub-Zero refrigerator, and Thermador range give a nod to high-end practicality.

"Both kids have started to take an interest in cooking," said Lesli. "We love to have family and friends over and now we have a great space to entertain and cook together."

The breakfast room, which seats the entire family, is encased in large windows and a set of French doors.

"This design provided easy access to a new deck and dramatically lightened the entire space by allowing a large amount of natural light to filter into the kitchen," said Winn. "We are spending so much time in the kitchen during this crazy pandemic," said Lesli. "I can't imagine having to spend eight weeks in self-quarantine in my old, cramped, dark kitchen."

"The mother-of-pearl, wavy backsplash was my splurge, my favorite component. I also wanted a little glam, hence the crystal pendants."

— Lesli Creedon

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.

CHAMBER ALX NETWORKING BREAKFAST

The Chamber ALX is presenting a May Professional Networking Breakfast on Tuesday, May 19 from 7:30-9 a.m. via Zoom. Develop new prospects and share a 60-second commercial with all the attendees. Each attendee

will get to address the entire group and share their business. Presented by United Bank. Cost is \$10 for Members and \$20 for Non-Members. Register at Website: <https://alexandriavacoc.wliinc33.com/events/WEBINAR-The-Chamber-ALXs-May-Networking-Breakfast-presented-by-United-Bank-2680/details>

NEW DATE AND ABSENTEE VOTING

The City of Alexandria reminds voters of the new date and absentee voting options for the Republican Party primary election on Tuesday, June 23. Executive Order 56 moved the

SEE BULLETIN, PAGE 13

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This Week in Coronavirus

FROM PAGE 4

With more than half of employees now teleworking, City government has remained open and operational for the residents and businesses who depend on City services. Telework is only performed to the extent it can be done safely while protecting the confidentiality of any records or other information involved. Employees whose job responsibilities require them to work on-site are provided with personal protective equipment (PPE) appropriate to their duties, such as cloth face coverings, surgical masks, N95 respirators, gloves, gowns and plastic shields. Since April 6, city employees (below management level) who are required to work on-site are paid a premium pay supplement of \$4 an hour.

Friday, May 8

Alexandria Cases: 1,110
Virginia Cases: 22,342
Alexandria Deaths: 29
Virginia Deaths: 812

The City is developing temporary child-care options to support employees who are required to work during the COVID-19 crisis. This includes workers in healthcare, the food industry, transportation, pharmacies and other essential services. See the City's COVID-19 Emergency Child Care webpage www.alexandriava.gov/dchs/childrenfamily/default.aspx?id=115165

Thursday, May 7

Alexandria Cases: 1,060
Virginia Cases: 21,570
Alexandria Deaths: 29
Virginia Deaths: 769

THE CUMULATIVE number of COVID-19 cases in Alexandria is now 1,060, including 29 fatalities. Due to a delay in reporting by the Virginia Department of Health, the new data represents 39 cases and one fatality reported for May 5, and 38 cases and two fatalities reported for May 6.

DATA BY ZIP CODE: The Virginia Department of Health (VDH) published new data on COVID-19 cases by ZIP code, which show rates in Alexandria that vary from 2.3 to 19.7 cases per 1,000 residents for ZIP

codes that can be reliably calculated. Now that there are more than 21,000 confirmed cases of COVID-19 throughout Virginia, the risk to patient privacy is lower and VDH is publishing ZIP code data to help communities identify differences in the distribution of COVID-19 cases.

The COVID-19 virus disproportionately impacts vulnerable populations just as other diseases and health conditions do. The ZIP codes with the highest rates of known COVID-19 cases in Alexandria are also the ZIP codes with higher concentrations of poverty, lower education levels and crowded housing conditions. The populations living in some ZIP codes have historically experienced discriminatory policies and systems, resulting in inequitable access to healthcare, economic opportunities and affordable housing.

Inequitable conditions have created disproportionate rates of chronic health issues resulting in large differences in life expectancy across Alexandria. Now, these chronic health issues also make people more susceptible to severe disease from COVID-19 infection. Additionally, these community members are more likely to work in jobs where they are underpaid, do not receive paid sick leave, and are not afforded telework opportunities, creating additional risk of exposure to the COVID-19 virus.

Since originally becoming aware of COVID-19 in late 2019, Alexandria Health Department has been working with community partners that serve populations at high risk for severe illness if they contract COVID-19. This has included targeted messaging to inform all Alexandrians of all levels of health literacy what COVID-19 is, how to reduce the risk, where to seek testing and medical care, and how to take care of oneself and loved ones at home who may become ill.

SMART 911 is a free service that allows individuals and businesses to create online safety profiles with home, workplace and mobile phone numbers, along with additional information that would be valuable to dispatchers and first responders during an emergency. This information often includes home or work addresses, details about medical conditions, hazardous materials on the

property, pets and emergency contacts. See the City's Smart 911 webpage to set up a safety profile, or call 311 or 703-746-4311.

SCALE UP PRODUCTION: U.S. Sen. Mark R. Warner (D-VA) joined Sen. Chris Van Hollen (D-MD) and seven other senators to tell President Trump it is imperative that the federal government fully use its authority to support and expand production of personal protective equipment and testing supplies.

"An analysis by Harvard University researchers found that the United States must, at minimum and under the best-case scenario, double the number of tests being conducted each week," wrote the Senators.

"From the outset of the pandemic, the United States has been dogged by testing shortages and supply chain issues—and Virginia is among the states where that testing shortage has been most severe," according to Warner. Sen. Warner has been outspoken about the need for a cohesive, national coronavirus testing strategy and has fought to secure additional funding for coronavirus testing—including \$8 million for Virginia.

U.S. Sen. Mark R. Warner (D-Va.), Sen. Tom Udall (D-N.M.) and 30 other senators urged Secretary of the Treasury Steven Mnuchin to reject politically motivated conditions on financial relief for the U.S. Postal Service. The senators also expressed their strong opposition to the use of coronavirus as a pretext to pursue privatization of the United States Postal Service, which is unpopular with the American people. The senators called the postal service a critical lifeline for many Americans, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic.

CASH THROUGHOUT: Virginia Rep. Don Beyer and Rep. Madeleine Dean (PA-04) sent a letter to House Speaker Pelosi and Minority Leader Kevin McCarthy with recommendations on how to provide Americans with direct cash support throughout the duration of the Covid-19 pandemic and economic crisis.

"So many Americans need help right now, and Congress must not fail them. This is not a time to hold back – leaving people at the mercy of this crisis would be immoral and would hurt, not help, the broader economy,"

said Rep. Beyer. "We should make [payments] rapidly and get assistance to those who need it, especially the millions worried about making their rent payments or buying food." They emphasize the importance of ensuring all adults and all dependents receive payments, including getting payments out to those who were left out of the last disbursement. "These payments are a necessary vehicle to help American families weather this economic crisis."

PAYCHECK PROTECTION PROGRAM: U.S. Reps. Jimmy Panetta (CA-20) and Don Beyer (VA-08) unveiled a proposal to improve the newly created Paycheck Protection Program (PPP). The PPP, created by the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act, provides forgivable loans to cover up to eight weeks of payroll and related expenses. However, structural and regulatory issues have hobbled the program, making it difficult for many small businesses, especially in the hospitality industry, to use the loans effectively. The Paycheck Protection Program Improvement Proposal provides dedicated funding for the smallest businesses and prevents publicly traded companies from receiving PPP funding; provides more clarity and flexibility for loan forgiveness and payroll requirements; allows small businesses to spread out payroll payments over a longer period; provides \$660 billion for the PPP program overall, with amounts reserved for businesses with fewer employees, including; provides banks increased processing fee incentives for the smallest loans and lowers fees banks receive for processing the largest loans.

During a Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions (HELP) Committee hearing, U.S. Senator Tim Kaine pressed Dr. Francis Collins, Director of the National Institutes of Health (NIH), on the Trump Administration's response to the coronavirus and the differences in the death toll in the United States and in South Korea. He asked Dr. Collins why South Korea's death toll increased from 28 on March 3 to 256 today while the United States' death toll increased from 9 to 74,665 in that same time period.

"The numbers are large, but we can't forget that each one is a tragedy," said Kaine.

As Phase 1 Reopening Delayed, Restaurants Carry On (and Carry Out)

FROM PAGE 10

date from two store owners on how they're faring and what their latest plan is.

Chad Breckinridge, Bagel Uprising:

"We are deeply grateful for the support the bagel-eating community has shown us! We love being part of Alexandria -- as an employer, as a neighborhood business, and as residents -- and we're inspired by the way

this city has kept moving forward despite the crazy times.

"We've been very fortunate that a bagel shop can transition to pure takeout more easily than many other places. We've been able to keep our staff employed (thank goodness for all of them!), and we have our fingers and toes crossed that we've landed on an approach that will last however long the pandemic does.

"Diners in Alexandria have gone above and beyond to do their part

to help restaurants as we fight to survive the economic and emotional strife of this pandemic. Every act of commerce feels like a gift of support. We are especially touched and proud of our staff who continue to work, with positive attitudes and grace, among new stiff sanitization guidelines, daily food delivery shortages, technological snafus and angst about daily contact with the public. The challenges change day to day and they continue on without complaint."

Bill Butcher, Port City Brewing:

"We will continue to operate our Drive-Through Beer Service and Home Delivery until further notice. Even as the Stay at Home order will expire [soon], we do not feel that it is time to re-open our Tasting Room.

"We continue to closely monitor the COVID-19 situation in Alexandria and the DC Metro area. Our top priority is keeping our coworkers and customers safe, and we

look forward to getting back to normal business at the right time. We are here to support our restaurant customers and will be able to supply them with fresh draft and packaged beer as needed."

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.

Senior Communities: Need vs. Want

FROM PAGE 7

many/most of those communities are not accepting new “lifestyle” residents at this time.

For those making the decision to shelve “lifestyle” changes, at least for the time being, the alternative to communities has always been to downsize into condominiums that are near social and dining/shop-ping areas.

These give people the benefit of a downsize, move them closer to resources and social opportunities, but do not have the current risk of congregate settings. Our region is blessed with an abundance of such “private” condominiums where folks can be social – or choose not to be.

In this environment, determine your “need” versus the “want” of the lifestyle option, and then do your homework. Not an easy task, but there are plenty of honest professionals locally to assist.

Pete Crouch is a Seniors Real Estate Specialist with McEneaney Associates, Realtors. Pete is also a Board Member of At Home in Alexandria, one of our local Senior Villages.

BULLETIN BOARD

FROM PAGE 11

Republican primary election for U.S. Senate from June 9 to June 23, due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Virginia Department of Elections encourages all voters to cast their ballots by mail to avoid in-person contact during the COVID-19 pandemic. All voters may choose reason 2A (“My disability or illness”) on the absentee voting application due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Voters in Virginia do not register by party, so any person registered to vote in Alexandria may vote in the June 23 primary. Absentee voting begins on Friday, May 8. Voters may submit absentee ballot applications online at vote.elections.virginia.gov. They may also print paper applications on the City’s Elections page, or by calling the Alexandria Voter Registration Office at 703-746-4050. Voters may also use this application to apply for a ballot for the November 2020 general election; those ballots will be mailed mid-September.

The deadline to apply for an absentee ballot by mail for the June 23 primary election is Tuesday, June 16. Applications must be received in the Voter Registration Office by 5 p.m. on June 16. The absentee ballot must be received by the Voter Registration Office no later than 7 p.m. on Election Day, Tuesday, June 23. Ballots may be returned by mail or delivered personally by the voter to the Voter Registration Office (132 N. Royal St., Alexandria).

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LEGAL NOTICE

Notice is hereby given to members of the American Society of Clinical Oncology, Inc. and the Association for Clinical Oncology that their Annual Business Meetings will be held online on Monday, June 1, 2020, at 12:00 p.m., U.S. Eastern Time. Members will be emailed a link to use to access the online Annual Business Meetings in advance of the event.

Members with questions can email nicole.medrano@asco.org or call 571-483-1317. This notice is issued at the direction of the Boards of Directors of the American Society of Clinical Oncology and the Association for Clinical Oncology.

Legals

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Legals

PUBLIC NOTICE

AT&T proposes to replace an existing 25’ wood utility pole with a new 40’ wood utility pole and install a top-mounted antenna at 43.4’ near 4550 Kenmore Ave, Alexandria, VA (20200679). Interested parties may contact Scott Horn (856-809-1202) (1012 Industrial Dr., West Berlin, NJ 08091) with comments regarding potential effects on historic properties.

Legals

PUBLIC NOTICE

AT&T proposes to modify an existing facility (new tip heights 101.3’) on the building at 3737 Seminary Road, Alexandria, VA (20200589). Interested parties may contact Scott Horn (856-809-1202) (1012 Industrial Dr., West Berlin, NJ 08091) with comments regarding potential effects on historic properties.

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Obituary

Obituary

Daniel Douglas DeHart, 70, passed quietly into the Lord’s healing arms on May 6, 2020, from complications of rapid onset leukemia. He was a longstanding resident of Old Town Alexandria, Virginia, but his true home on earth—and the place he loved most—was the Chesapeake Bay. It was there he shared the joys of boating, fishing, and hunting early on with boyhood friends, and later cruising, boating and fishing with his wife, June Langston DeHart, and daughter, Ashley DeHart Russo, also of Alexandria. He was a loving husband, father, son, uncle, grandfather, and friend to many.

Boating was a central theme for him beginning with his first boat, a Grady White, the *Ashley C*, and then an Egg Harbor *Just Because*, berthed at the Corinthian Yacht Club near Ridge, Maryland, where he and his mother, the late Freda DeHart and stepfather Bo Boehley, had been longstanding members. Many a rockfish and blue fish were caught in those southern Maryland waters, and with his friend, John Mingo, developed an outstanding technique for catching rockfish on the flyrod. See *Flyfisherman Magazine* (September 1998). One cold Veterans holiday, he and John caught and released over 100 rockfish. A thrilling day!

Since 2008, Dan and June docked their MJM *Spirit* on the Tred Avon River in Oxford, Maryland, where they cruised the Intercoastal Waterway, a seminal experience, and to ports around the Bay. Dan soon became a local light and close neighbor to many at the Bachelor Point community, where they bought a house in 2012. Always undertaking every job, volunteer or career, with focus and diligence, he upgraded docks as Dockmaster and President of the BPHOA. They welcomed guests from near and far, from friends and extended family members on holidays, to fellow members of the Poplar Islands Yacht Club, of which Dan served as Commodore in 2018, and Tred Avon Yacht Club where Dan was fascinated learning about the world of sailboat racing. Hosting daughter Ashley, son-in-law Tony, and their precious grandchildren Margot and Everitt was a favorite weekend past-time with many a lunch on board and swim off the transom of *Spirit*. They are his pride and joy. He loved fishing from his Parker, the *Just Because II*, and his double catch of two keeper rockfish on the same lure made the marina bulletin boards.

For many of you, his culinary talents are legendary. Recall how masterly he carved a Thanksgiving turkey and then re-covered it with its skin as if never touched, to present it at table as if right from the oven. He treated guests to their favorite libation and often a special recipe he pulled off the internet. One of his favorites, Ina Garten’s Beef Bourguignon, is a must try for any cook. He excelled in the kitchen at both the simple and the complex: he could delight in preparing a newspaper-covered table of Old Bay-scented crabs, or a duck a l’orange for Christmas dinner. His brioche French Toast delighted his grandchildren and niece and nephew, Anna Maria and Alex, who enjoyed week-long summer visits, crabbing, fishing, and trips to the beach. He fiercely guarded his kitchen domain for his labors of love, and June was relegated to table setting and flowers. He enjoyed a weekend bourbon and cigar on the patio.

Dan was a man who thought before he spoke, and was a careful observer—of the nature around him, and of human nature, as well. He treasured and was protective of the joys of family life from early on: After his father passed away when he was 12, and his mother set about building a career, he attended Randolph-Macon Military Academy, and graduated from Randolph-Macon College, an experience that formed his character and outlook. He was a great storyteller, enjoyed a good laugh, was strict on table manners, and could evoke a time and place with a phrase. Who hasn’t heard his mom for June’s early morning quiet time -Coffee Chapel! His niece and nephew experienced the benefits of his famous “bad rules and strict discipline”, and they loved him all the more for it. His knowledge and skills were vast from selecting the perfect wine to tracking the markets. He loved to cheer on the University of Miami Hurricanes football team with Ashley, a graduate. “Go Canes!” He had a passion for his hobbies and was a great teacher. He ran two marathons. He could repair anything! And so handsome to boot!

Dan enjoyed a successful career in Alexandria and northern Virginia, prior to retirement, as a well-known and respected commercial and residential real estate appraiser. Yet while adhering to the rigorous schedule, turn-around, and demands of appraising, he focused on keeping close the ones he loved. He cherished his drives with Ashley to school each day, never missed a volleyball game, hosted sleep-overs, weekend visits, Halloween crawls, and made parent’s days and graduations throughout her school days and college. So loving and caring, he made sure to take his football-loving mother-in-law to the last Redskins game at RFK Stadium and then the first game at the new Fed-Ex Field. He cared for his own mother when as she was dying of cancer, and helped June with her mother in her last years.

Dan lived by a code of honor and manners that he had gleaned from his family, his education, and his quiet faith. He wasn’t one for any kind of showy individualism. He moved with quiet confidence in a time—and in a city—when far too many people talk too much about too little, but lived, and held dear, the “every day” man he was. He was the solid rock, true north, for June, Ashley and Tony and their children, and family and friends. He was June’s soulmate and best friend, sharing the deepest love and 25 years of the happiest marriage.

We will all miss him so, so much, but commit him to the Lord, and his safekeeping. Thank you for flying the flag at half-mast at Bachelor Point. He loved it so.

In lieu of flowers, charitable donations may be made in his name to the Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum.

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What's Today?



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

After six weeks or so of isolating at home and working hardly at all, I believe it's time to invoke Violet Crawley (a.k.a. Maggie Smith), "the Dowager Countess of Grantham" and wonder aloud: "What's a weekend?" Every day feels like some other day or no day at all because the days in and of themselves are meaningless/indistinguishable. I mean, you can't go anywhere, you can't do anything; thankfully you can use your phone and access your computer, but at the end of the same-old-day, you're basically nowhere man, with apologies to "The Beatles."

If it weren't for the trash pick-up on Thursdays and the recyclable pick-up on Fridays, and of course, no mail delivery on Sundays, there really is very little to separate one day from the next (the four-week schedule relating to my thyroid cancer treatment notwithstanding). Actually, if it weren't for the thyroid treatment beginning May 11th and the very specific requirements/activities for the following 23 days, ending June 2nd when I return to the hospital for a post-script scan, I would be totally betwixt and between; so much so that I might not know the difference between "Downton Abbey" and "Belgravia." But I still do, thank God, even though they were both written by Julian Fellowes. I haven't completely fallen through the cracks. Although sometimes I do fear that if I indeed have a crack in my psychological armor, it likely would occur in the middle/late beginning of a pandemic when a possible lack of sanity might be exposed.

And since I'm not really allowed out of the house and retail stores and service providers are mostly unavailable, this would be a heck of a time to need any kind of help from outside one's house. You're not supposed to go anywhere and neither is anybody else so you're sort of left to fend for yourself. Now, generally speaking, I don't mind fending for myself or others for that matter, but at present, in the midst of pandemic pressures, we're all supposed to mind our own business (and/or others if we stay six feet apart) and watch our "ps" and "qs" as we're doing it.

And as well consider what other letters to 'watch.' The problem with living through a pandemic, aside from listening to all the opinions on "a" to "z" is believing any kind of reliable timeline. No one, despite their credentials and learned experience, can say with any accuracy or certainty when this pandemic will end, when the virus will stop spreading and/or whether and when a second viral wave will hit in the fall, when a safe and effective vaccine will be ready and when we can return to whatever the new normal will be. And though there's no shortage of hopes and prayers on the subject, unfortunately neither are there any simple solutions or definitive end to this mess. Somehow, we have to persevere in the present to get to the future by presuming nothing except more of the same. I guess it's an updated version of a definite-maybe or a "confirmed I doubt it" as BJ Honeycutt frustratingly said on a M*A*S*H episode 25-plus years ago.

However, life went on for BJ and the rest of M*A*S*H characters as they all got to leave South Korea and return to The United States (except for Klinger who ironically enough chose to stay and marry a South Korean woman). And just as it seemed that the suffering they all experienced during the police action in South/North Korea would never end, it did. And so too will this pandemic end. Probably not by magic as President Trump has suggested, but likely through the collective efforts of the medical and scientific communities as well as our own mitigation and social distancing behaviors. As my Auntie Irene used to say decades ago, and as so many others say all the time now: "This too shall pass."

But not knowing exactly when 'it shall pass' is sort of the problem. As my late mother would say: "It's enough already." I imagine we'll have a better idea of whether it's 'enough already' when we see the effects of the 45-plus states which are "opening." If the virus reasserts itself, and thousands more are diseased and ultimately die, then we'll know exactly what day it is: a day of reckoning.

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

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News

Chirilagua In Crisis

FROM PAGE 5

"Pandemics disproportionately impact people of low income. In this country, that's people of color," said Stephen Haering, director of the Alexandria Health Department. "One of the things we're focused on is why there is this disproportionality, and how it can be remedied."

SINCE THE PANDEMIC shuttered schools and closed businesses, city officials have been engaged in a number of outreach efforts to make sure that people in Arlandria understand the dangers of the pandemic and the services available to them. They've created direct mail in several languages, and they've used a system to send text messages to people who live in the community. They've partnered with churches and non-profit organizations, a communications effort that some say did not materialize fast enough.

"Unfortunately I feel that we were a little bit slow as a city to come out with this," said Councilman Canek Aguirre, the first Hispanic member of the Alexandria City Council. "This crisis has really highlighted the deficiencies we have when it comes to access to health care, to communications in different languages and how we serve our vulnerable communities."

City officials have also entered into a contract with the Hampton Inn near the King Street Metro to isolate COVID-19 patients if needed. Although the city government facilitates the logistics, the Alexandria Health Department conducts the health investigation to determine if a hotel room is required. The new contract replaces an earlier agreement city officials had with an Arlington hotel that offered shelter to homeless residents and first responders.

"So far, only one COVID-19 patient has needed a room," said Craig Fifer, communications director for Alexandria. "Keep in mind that the overwhelming majority of people with COVID-19 isolate and recover at home on their own."

Last week, New Virginia Majority called on Gov. Ralph Northam to provide 10,000 tests in Arlandria. The move came shortly after the state released ZIP code data for the first time, showing that Arlandria has one of the highest positivity rates in Virginia. As of Wednesday, the ZIP code including Arlandria had 765 tests and 386 positive results. That's significantly more tests than any other ZIP code with a higher positivity rate, which tend to be smaller communities in Accomack County or Shenandoah County where only a few dozen tests have been administered. So far, the governor has not yet agreed to New Virginia Majority's request.

"Governor Northam appreciates this input and shares these concerns," said spokeswoman Alena Yarmosky in an email request for a response to the New Virginia Majority request. "Our administration will continue to expand testing in this area, as well as in other disproportionately impacted communities across Virginia."

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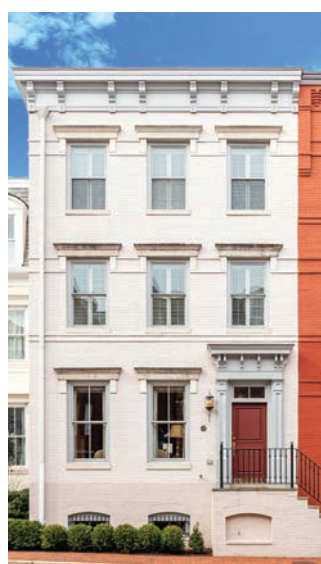
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