

Alexandria Gazette Packet

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JULY 2, 2020



Staff of the Juvenile and Domestic Relations Court celebrate the retirement of Circuit Court Judge Nolan Dawkins June 26 in Old Town.



Surrounded by family members, Circuit Court Judge Nolan Dawkins, center, waves to well wishers at a surprise celebration of his retirement June 26 at the Franklin P. Backus courthouse in Old Town.



Myra Mendoza, Deputy Clerk of the Court Ben Ortiz, Elaine Dodge and Kim Fiske hold signs congratulating Circuit Court Judge Nolan Dawkins on his retirement.



Surrounded by grandchildren Lucien, Skylar and Micah Smith, Circuit Court Judge Nolan Dawkins waves to well-wishers during a surprise drive-by retirement celebration June 26.

‘It’s Been an Honor’ Trailblazing Judge Dawkins retires after 26 years.

BY JEANNE THEISMANN
GAZETTE PACKET

Nolan Dawkins grew up at a time when Alexandria segregated everything from water fountains to public schools. But he was determined to make a difference, becoming one of seven individuals to integrate George Washington High School in the 1960s, then distinguishing himself as an officer in Vietnam.

Last week, on June 26, the respected jurist was honored with a surprise drive-by retirement celebration 26 years after becoming Alexandria’s first African American judge.

“Dad can be very stoic at times, but he is also a softie so it was nice

to see him genuinely surprised,” said daughter Ashley Dawkins Sorensen, who traveled from New York to attend the celebration. “Alexandria is a small city and secrets are hard to keep so I was glad to see that this worked out.”

Hundreds of well-wishers greeted Dawkins as fellow Circuit Court Judges Lisa Kemler and James Clark led him out to the courtyard of the Franklin P. Backus Courthouse under the guise of taking one last photo with their colleague on the courthouse steps.

A visibly moved Dawkins wiped tears from his eyes when he saw the crowd of family, friends, courthouse employees and city officials that had gathered in the streets surrounding the courthouse. More than 70 cars participated in a drive-

by parade along South Pitt Street, many decorated with balloons and signs of appreciation and thanks for the service of the trailblazing lifelong Alexandrian.

Dawkins grew up on Columbus Street in the Parker-Gray district. He attended Parker-Gray High School until 1963, then was one of seven Black students to attend George Washington High School, where he graduated in 1965. During that time, he was a standout basketball player alongside future NBA player Skeeter Swift.

He earned a ROTC scholarship in college, followed by law school at Seton Hall University. Prior to his 26-years on the bench, Dawkins practiced law in Alexandria and served as an Assistant City At-



Attorney Drew Carroll in the June 26 drive-by retirement parade for Circuit Court Judge Nolan Dawkins.



Former Clerk of the Court Ed Semonian drives his car decorated with signs celebrating the retirement of Circuit Court Judge Nolan Dawkins during the June 26 drive-by parade.



Dozens of cars participated in the surprise drive-by parade June 26 to celebrate the retirement of Circuit Court Judge Nolan Dawkins.



Karen, Chris, Maeve and Aiden Hill participate in the June 26 drive-by retirement celebration for Circuit Court Judge Nolan Dawkins.

PHOTOS BY JANET BARNETT/GAZETTE PACKET

SEE ‘IT’S BEEN AN HONOR’, PAGE 11



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Alexandria Reckoning

Police launch formal inquiry into why Black people make up majority of arrests.

BY MICHAEL LEE POPE
GAZETTE PACKET

Black people are 23 percent of the population in Alexandria, and yet most arrests in the city are of African Americans. Most cases when police use force are against Black people. Most drug arrests are of Black people. And almost half of the inmates at the Alexandria jail are Black people.

For many years, the criminal justice system in this city has tilted toward exerting power and influence over African Americans, particularly Black men. Now the killing of an unarmed Black man by a white police officer in Minnesota has launched a national conversation about police brutality and systemic racism.

“Police brutality exists, and sometimes it’s warranted. Sometimes it’s not,” said Alexandria Police Chief Michael Brown. “I want to fix this as much as anybody else because it’s not fair to the next generations to come.”

Earlier this week, Brown took part in a Black Lives Matter panel discussion to examine what kind of racial disparities exist in law enforcement and what the city is doing about them. When asked what has changed for him in the last month, the chief announced he is



Alexandria activist Tiffany Flowers, center image in top row, hosts a discussion of racial inequalities in law enforcement with the Alexandria Police Department, the Alexandria Sheriff’s Office and Mayor Justin Wilson.

currently conducting an analysis to get a handle on what’s happening in his department and whether any systemic changes were needed.

“We’re looking at our data to find if there’s any element of bias on our part. If so, we want to root that out,” said Brown. “And if there’s issues that are systemic that show up in our data, we want to make sure we address it.”

DURING THE FORUM, Mayor Justin Wilson said the same inequities that existed before the murder of George Floyd are still around. But, he said, he senses a new courage in Alexandria to grapple with the thorny issue of racial inequality.

The first phase was a rhetorical declaration that Black Lives Matter, a proclamation that might have seemed a bit edgy or controversial a month ago. The next phase, he said, should be dismantling inequities that have existed for hundreds of years.

“The criminal justice system, and the inequities that exist and the differing experiences that particularly Black and brown residents have in our criminal justice system are really a tip of the iceberg of systemic racism,” said Wilson. “It’s a hard-wired white supremacy that was woven into our founding as a country and for 350 years was legal and for the last several decades

has been largely illegal but is still very much present in a lot of our institutions in this society and certainly in our city.”

In the last 20 years, the city’s budget for the Alexandria Police Department has more than doubled, although relative spending has remained at about 9 percent of the city’s budget. Similarly, the budget for the Alexandria Sheriff’s Office has also more than doubled, although relative spending there has also stayed constant at about 4 percent of the city’s budget. The chief makes \$180,000 a year, and the department has eight captains who have annual salaries ranging from \$138,000 to \$149,000. The

Sheriff makes \$197,000 a year, and his office has three chief deputy sheriffs who make \$153,000 each.

“We expect our public safety officials to perform a variety of tasks that they are not the best equipped folks to deal with,” said Wilson. “This conversation is one we need to have about what we use police for and what we should not use police for.”

SINCE 1970, the population of inmates in Virginia’s jails has increased 800 percent according to researchers at the Vera Institute of Justice. They also calculate that the Black incarceration rate has increased 22 percent in Virginia since 1990. Currently, Black people are about 3.2 times more likely to be in jail than white people in Virginia. Here in Alexandria, 47 percent of the average daily population last year were Black inmates, according to the Alexandria Sheriff’s Office.

“I go to the barbershop, and I get questions on how you can be a law-enforcement officer as an African American,” said Sheriff’s Chief Deputy Shelbert Williams. “It’s tough to convince people that we’re doing what we need to do as law enforcement officers to be fair and respectful.”

SEE ALEXANDRIA, PAGE 10

Reconsidering Police in Schools

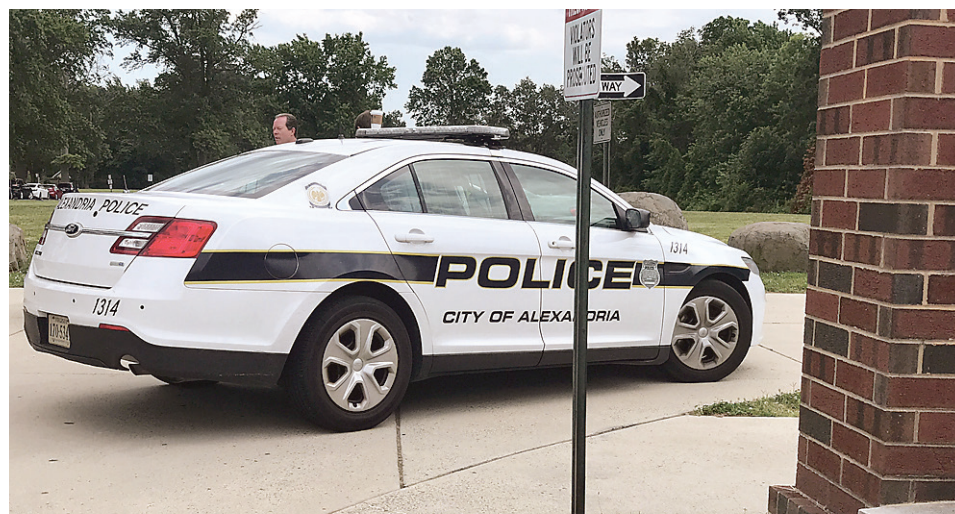
School resource officers face new scrutiny during Black Lives Matter movement.

BY BRIDGETTE ADU-WADIER
GAZETTE PACKET

Earlier this year, rising senior Fina Osei-Owusu encountered a yelling crowd while walking the second floor B wing of T.C. Williams High School. A conflict was escalating between several Black female students and school resource officers, sometimes known as SROs. Osei-Owusu also saw her friend involved in the argument and watched her yell back at an SRO who had screamed at her.

“I already knew that something was going on,” said Osei-Owusu, president of the Black Student Union. “I saw a school resource officer holding back another school resource officer from an altercation with a student. I was worried that my friend would get in trouble. If they are going to protect us then why are they fighting with us? It made a lot of students resent them.”

She’s not alone. Many people are



An Alexandria police car parked behind T.C. Williams High School.

now questioning the need for having police in schools. Divisions across Virginia are re-evaluating their relationships with law enforcement in light of new calls to examine the problem of police brutality. Fairfax County Public Schools recently revised its

contract with the Fairfax police, clarifying that SROs don’t have the authority to discipline students.

“There is some value in having the officers there, as long as they stay outside of the administrative things,” said Alexandria Police

Chief Michael Brown. “I don’t want them telling someone to take their hat off; that’s not their job. It really is a call that the School Board will have to make. We don’t want to be where we’re not wanted.”

A 2018 contract between the school division and the Alexandria Police Department explains the authorities SROs have while assisting with law enforcement. They have access to student records, can search belongings of students, and can stop and question students on criminal activity without parent or administrator authorization.

“Why (do they) need transcripts?” asked Mikaela Pozo, a recent graduate of T.C. Williams. “What exactly do SROs do in schools? How much power do SROs have?”

Alexandria NAACP president Christopher Harris opposes police in schools and, like Pozo, questions the role SROs have in the school environment.

SEE RECONSIDERING, PAGE 10

ACPS Serves 30,000 Meals Weekly to Children during Coronavirus

By Shirley Ruhe
Gazette Packet

Part 2 of a series on food insecurity in Alexandria during the coronavirus

Five yellow school buses and two vans line up outside door 34 at T.C. Williams every Monday, Wednesday and Friday at 9:30 a.m. for meal deliveries to Alexandria children. School bus 117, which under normal circumstances drives children to school, is today delivering breakfast and lunch meals to Ruby Tucker Community Center and Old Town West.

Volunteer Robbie Schaefer joins a group organized in a human chain efficiently passing the food boxes down the hallway and into the school bus. In real life he says he is a performing musician and songwriter. In five minutes the school bus is loaded and replaced by the next.

William Roos, a school bus driver in normal times, stands outside his school bus waiting for it to be loaded for the 4-Mile Run delivery. Today's delivery includes a cinnamon bun, citrus juice and milk for breakfast, and turkey and cheese plus a pear or orange and vegetable for lunch. "I usually carry over 400 breakfasts and an equal number of lunches."

Cynthia Hormel, Director of School Nutrition Services for the City of Alexandria, remembers well the moment when everything changed. "It was 2 p.m. March 13 when I notified the Central Office staff that there would be no school for the next three weeks due to the coronavirus. We had no idea at the time to the degree. I had the feeling earlier that we may go on leave so I had worked on a plan for how to feed the kids — what would that look like? But I had no idea it would happen so quickly."

Hormel said they had to work immediately on establishment of a feeding program while keeping the staff safe at the same time. The first step was to have parents sign up online to pick up lunch and breakfast at T.C.Wil-



A car pulls up at the T.C. Williams High School Grab 'N Go site exactly at 9:30 a.m. June 19, and an Alexandrian picks up a bag with breakfasts and lunches for her children. The site is open Monday, Wednesday and Friday from 9:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. "And here is some ice cream." You can see the smile underneath the facemask.

liams High School or to request a home delivery. They immediately had 200 sign ups with about half requesting home delivery and half pick up. More requests followed quickly. The bus drivers got repurposed to deliver the food. "We tried to manage the preorders but after the first week while people liked the idea, the logistics were an issue. People signed up for meals but didn't come to pick them up or they weren't available at home for their deliveries."

Now School Nutrition Services has been able to expand the sites to add deliveries of Grab 'N Go lunch and breakfast at William Ramsay Elementary, Jefferson-Huston Elementary, Hammond Elementary and Cora Kelly Elementary. After several weeks SNS was able to use a separate funding program to add snacks. However, unless they receive a waiver from the State, the authority to include snacks expires June 30.

In order to reach pockets and regions of



William Roos, Marquetta Lynch, and Zufan Endrais, repurposed school bus drivers, wait outside T.C. Williams for their buses to be loaded with Grab N'Go breakfasts and lunches for Alexandria school children.

need identified by their database, SNS has now expanded the meal deliveries to different parts of the City by adding mobile pop-up locations. These include sites such as Mason Apartments, as well as Ruby Tucker Family Center, and 4-Mile Run. Hormel says, "We just call when we arrive and they come out and pick up their meals."

Hormel says any child 2-18 years old regardless of income or enrollment in public schools is eligible to receive these meals. Sara Bennett, Deputy Director for School Nutrition Services, says they are currently serving 30-33,000 meals a week. She adds to date, they have served over 350,000 meals.

According to the ACPS meal report for the third week in June, the combined numbers for the Grab N' Go breakfasts and lunches for Monday and Wednesday ranged from a total of 5,288 at Ramsay to a total of 896 at Jefferson-Houston and 1,524 at Cora Kelly with the total of 12,480 for all school sites. Grab N' Go lunches and breakfasts for Monday and Wednesday for the pop-up sites ranged from 176 at Old Towne Apt. 1 to 1,208 at 4-Mile Drive and 1,344 at Com-

munity Lodgings 4 with a total for the two days of 5,556.

A lunch will include an entry such as pizza, a turkey croissant or chicken Caesar wrap plus two fruits/vegetables, milk and a whole grain component. Hormel says, "We are working on requests for kids who have allergies so we can, for instance, replace peanut butter with sun butter or a yogurt meal. In an extension of Backpack Buddies, which offers weekend meals for needy children during the school year, they have been able to add Saturday meals, and on June 19 a Sunday meal delivery was added to the food services offered to kids."

Hormel says they have been able to run this new system without missing a beat with the enthusiastic participation of their staff that wanted to come in and make this work. "About 50 or so of our staff come in and work in the kitchens of the schools making the meals, and about 30 Volunteer Alexandria staff help pass out meals Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays. They have been a wonderful partner."

SEE ACPS SERVES, PAGE 14

Senior Services of Alexandria Welcomes New Board Members

Senior Services of Alexandria (SSA) welcomed 5 new board members at its virtual Annual Meeting on June 23, 2020. The new members have a broad range of experience from the medical, federal government, legal and financial sectors.

"We are pleased to welcome such an impressive, diverse group of women and men to the Board of Senior Services of Alexandria, said incoming Board Chair Maribeth Bersani. Their talents and commitment to older adults will help SSA move forward providing more innovative programs and services to Alexandria's older adult population."

The new board members are:

Rina Bansai, MD – President of Inova Alexandria Hospital and Senior Vice President of Inova Health System. She joined Inova

Alexandria Hospital in 2016 as the Chief Medical Officer and was named President in May 2019. She obtained a Doctorate in Medicine and a Master's in Business Administration in 2001. Subsequently, she completed her internal Medicine Residency Program at the University of California, San Francisco. Rina's passion is to serve the community and optimize every patient's health and wellness.

Claudia Kostel, Esq. – Practicing attorney in the role of Chief Counsel to an office within the Legislative Branch of the United States Government and provides legal advice and representation in all labor and employment law matters. Previously, she was a litigation attorney for a corporate law firm in Wilmington, Delaware. She earned her undergraduate degree at Lehigh University and her law

degree from the College of William and Mary, Marshall-Wythe School of Law. She previously service on SSA's Board from 2004-2007 as Chair of the Gala Committee.

Vivek Sinha, MD – Chief Medical Officer and Co-Founder of Bellevue Medical Partners, PC and Medical Director of Silverado Alexandria Memory Care Community as well as Medical Director for Fairfax County and Alexandria City Public Schools. He has a Doctor of Medicine from Saba University School of Medicine, Netherland Antilles and a Bachelor of Arts, English from the State University of New York. He served as Chief Resident of Family Medicine at St. Joseph Hospital in Chicago. His honors include Washingtonian Magazine Top Doctor in 2017 and Virginia Living Magazine Best of Virginia – Best Concierge Practice in 2018. Dr. Sinha is active

with the Alexandria Fire Department as a Physician Lecturer.

Kathleen Trepper – is an Alexandria resident since 1993 after spending most of her corporate career in and around New York City. Her professional pursuits in the DC area have included management and communication roles with several trade associations. She recently retired from the Federal Government serving with US Customs and Border Protection (CBP) working on the "Customs duty" scam prevention program aimed at protecting the senior population. She has a Bachelor of Arts in American Studies from the University of Delaware. She has served on several boards, as a volunteer for at Home in Alexandria (AHA) and is passionate about the rights and welfare of the senior population.

Bill Watts – Worked at the In-

ter-American Development Bank for close to 30 years as a Senior Investment Officer, managing US Dollars, British Pounds, Swiss Francs, Euros and the Yen. He served on the Westminster Presbyterian Church Session, was a Trustee, and Chairman of their Foundation Board for 3 years. He is active in the Alexandria community tutoring at George Mason Elementary School, youth adviser for Westminster Presbyterian Church and on the ALIVE investment and budget committees. He's a DC-United season ticket holder and a life-long Boston Red Sox fan.

SSA welcomes this distinguished group of individuals to its Board of Directors for the 2020-2021 term. For more information about SSA's work in the community go to www.seniorservicesalex.org or its facebook page.



PHOTO BY JEANNE THEISMANN/GAZETTE PACKET

Chris Harris, Merrick Malone, William Chesley and Harry White of the Departmental Progressive Club gather June 25 at the DPC to discuss efforts to change the name of T.C. Williams High School. Williams, a former ACPS superintendent, was an avowed segregationist.

What's in a Name?

Efforts intensify to change name of TC Williams High School.

BY JEANNE THEISMANN
GAZETTE PACKET

When the Disney movie “Remember the Titans” was released in 2000, it brought national attention to T.C. Williams High school. Starring Academy Award winner Denzel Washington, the movie shone a spotlight on the integration of Alexandria’s public high school and the 1971 undefeated season of its football team.

But while viewers remember the state championship in the oft-times inaccurate telling of the school’s history, few, if any, know that the school itself is named after Thomas Chambliss Williams, one of Alexandria’s most avowed segregationists.

William served as superintendent of the city school system from the 1930s to his retirement in 1963. During that time, he staunchly advocated against integration. Over the years, discussions to change the name of the school have surfaced, but that effort intensified in recent weeks in the wake of national protests and social unrest.

“Even after Brown vs. Board of Education, this man still refused to integrate Alexandria schools saying that blacks learn differently,” said Merrick Malone, an Old Town resident who serves as the president of the Departmental Progressive Club. “Why have we as a community remained silent? Dr. Martin Luther King would call this a deafening silence.”

Malone and several Progressive Club members met recently to discuss the current efforts to remove Williams’ name from the school. Petitions advocating for the change have been presented to the School Board, who has authority over the decision.

“We can’t have it both ways,” said current

Alexandria NAACP president and 1992 TC graduate Chris Harris. “We can’t remove statues that are derogatory but have students walk under the banner of a school named for TC Williams. This individual did not want us there. It’s time to make a change.”

DPC member William Chesley noted the history behind the names of other ACPS schools and that of the city’s lone public high school.

“Schools like Lyles-Crouch teach the history behind the name of the school,” said Chesley. “And at Ferdinand Day Elementary School there is an impressive educational display when you enter the school. Who wouldn’t be proud attending a school named after those individuals and what they stood for? TC does not have that kind of history. Folks are not proud of that story.”

“Why have we as a community remained silent? Dr. Martin Luther King would call this a deafening silence.”

— DPC President Merrick Malone

In addition to the petitions, a FaceBook page has been created dedicated to renaming the school. Supporters are encouraged to contact members of the School Board, who said they will take up the issue in the fall. The board’s July meeting will focus on a plan for reopening schools in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic.

But Progressive Club officer and ’83 TC graduate Harry White said that the School Board should recognize the urgency of the situation.

“People remember the Titans, but they don’t know anything about TC Williams,” White said. “He was an intentional segregationist and did a lot of harm.”

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Standing on Historical Land: James E. Henson, Esq.

BY CHAR McCARGO BAH

After the end of the Civil War, George L. Seaton was commissioned by the Freedmen Bureau to build two schools for the education of Colored children. The school opened its doors in 1867 serving as a Free School for white and colored children and with all white teachers. In 1870, the school was incorporated into the Alexandria Public School System and it was identified as a school for colored boys. The school was named Snowden School for Colored Boys. However, many of the citizens of the day called the school, "Seaton School House," after its builder George L. Seaton. The second school was called Hallowell School for Colored Girls. Both schools served the Colored children until the City of Alexandria started a coed Colored school in 1920 named Parker-Gray School. The Snowden School was located in the 600 block of South Pitt Street. Today, the land that the School was built on includes 607 South Pitt Street.

On Sunday, March 27, 1916, the Snowden School caught fire and burnt down. The students were located into temporary buildings. The school was never rebuilt on South Pitt Street.

After World War II, Alexandria experienced a housing boom. Several houses were built on South Pitt Street. Thomas C. Massie and his wife, Eleanor McGuire purchased their new home in 1948 at 607 South Pitt Street. Thomas was a Federal employee who worked for the Navy at the Torpedo Factory in Alexandria and at the Navy Yard in Washington, DC. Thomas's wife, Eleanor was a native Alexandrian, her fa-



James E. Henson

Thomas C. Massie and his wife, Eleanor McGuire purchased lived at 607 South Pitt Street, the site of the former Snowden School. The house is currently on the market.

ther and brothers had attended the Snowden School. Her aunt, Alice McGuire Seaton was married to George L. Seaton's brother, John who was the first colored to be appointed as Alderman in the fourth ward in Alexandria City Council in 1871. Eleanor was aware of the historical significance South Pitt Street had on her family's history.

On Oct. 17, 1970 at the age of 60, Thomas C. Massie died. Eleanor continued her life as a widow. She became closer to her surviving siblings and nephew, James E. Henson. Eleanor lived 31 years as a widow, dying on June 13,



2001. She left her 607 South Pitt Street house to her nephew, James E. Henson, and his wife, Elsie Ardene Henson. The couple hired contractors to renovate the entire house into three bedrooms, 3.5 bathrooms with a garage. This house is a beautiful showpiece and it sits on historical land that once educated many children who were born in slavery or were the children of former slaves. Eleanor knew that she

SEE STANDING ON HISTORICAL, PAGE 12

Alexandria Police Department Has Systemic Racism Problem

The Alexandria Police Department is one of the most professional and respected law enforcement agencies in the country. And yes, the Alexandria Police Department does have a systemic racism problem within it. The two can be synonymous.

I recently retired after serving 30 years of law enforcement service with the City of Alexandria and I thank the City for giving me an opportunity to live out my childhood dream. I was able to develop life-long friends amongst all races. I was fortunate to have a career to include experience with the Alexandria Office of Sheriff, as a Patrol Officer, Community Oriented Police Officer, Detective, Sergeant and Lieutenant. My command experience oversaw the COPS units, the Patrol Support Division, HR overseeing recruitment and Records. I was also one of the department's Implicit Biases Instructors. I use this as a backdrop to say that I believed that I had a successful career. As a Black officer, this career was also filled with plenty of racist footnotes within it.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

I remember walking into roll call in 1992 and out of approximately 60 officers on the entire midnight shift, I was one of two Black officers. What was more troubling, when you fast forward to 2012-2016, the number of Black officers in the department had dropped to alarming low levels. And to give credit to the City and the Department, they took immediate action to address it but in the modern era of minority hiring this should not have happened.

When white officers state that the Alexandria Police Department does not have a problem with systemic racism because it is a professional law enforcement agency, this often is looked upon suspiciously from Black officers. It is quite easy for my white brothers and sisters in blue to make this statement because they are not the subject of it and therefore, may not see it.

But if they come and talk to me, I will tell them about the time when a retired officer and current city employee said, "Yeah, when Blacks he arrests make him mad, he calls them N-word."

I will tell them about the time when I submitted my statement on a Use of Force Investigation where my statement aligned with that of the Black arrestee and not the white officer and the investigating retired Sergeant informed me that if I didn't change my statement, "there would be a time when I go into a dark alley and would not get a backup."

I would tell them about the time when a retired Deputy Chief referred to the Alexandria Black Firefighters Association's money as "confederate money." I would tell them about the time when a current Commander, after this country elected its first African American President, said "See what happens when you are raised by a white family." This commander went on to question the department's minority hiring.

Look, I can go on and continue to cite more incidents and more stories that are not unique. I am also sure that if you would ask every Black officer in the department, they would have their own stories.

This problem is not even unique to the police department. If you

went over to the Sheriff's Office, I am sure the large number of line level staff would share how they feel isolated because of a department that continues to hire whites from outside the agency for leadership

positions that they could have competed for if they were allowed. The Black firefighters, I am sure, could cite a book of systemic racism within their agency.

This is not meant to pound on the Police Department or other Public Safety Agencies within Alexandria. It is meant to educate us all that we can work for a very professional agency and still have a problem with racism within it. We must acknowledge that the problem is real and current to effectively address it. I have had the pleasure of working for four outstanding Police Chiefs, Chief Samarra, Chief Baker, Chief Cook and Chief Brown, and all have mentored me into who I am today. This is not one man's problem. All of us share a burden to address it.

Lieutenant Vince Jones (Retired)
Alexandria Police Department
SEE MORE LETTERS, PAGE 12

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2018

**Virginia
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**Award Winning
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The Alexandria Rotary Foundation Celebrates our 2020 Nonprofit Grantees

ACT NOW COVID-19 Fund
Alexandria Police Foundation
Alexandria Police Youth Camp
Alexandria Seaport Foundation
Alexandria Symphony
Alexandria Tutoring Consortium
Arts on the Horizon
Best Buddies
Boys and Girls Club of Greater Washington
Center for Alexandria's Children
Community Lodgings
Computer Core
Concerned Citizens of Alexandria
First Night Alexandria

Friends of Alexandria Mental Health
Friends of Guest House
InspireLit
Joey Pizzano Memorial Fund
Liberty's Promise
Literary Council of Northern VA
National Breast Center Foundation
Neighborhood Health
Next Step Pilates
Northern Virginia Family Services
Nueva Vida
Rebuilding Together DC Alex
RunnningBrooke
SCAN

Scholarship Fund of Alexandria
Senior Services of Alexandria
Space of Her Own
Spitfire Club
Tenants & Workers United
The Alexandria Singers
The Arc of Northern VA
The Bryce Project
The Campagna Center
The Dream Project
Together We Bake
Urban Alliance
Volunteer Alexandria
Wesley Housing Development Corporation



This Spring, The Alexandria Rotary Foundation and Alexandria Day Nursery & Children's Home awarded over \$100,000 in grants to support local nonprofits serving Alexandrians in need.

COVID-19 cancelled our annual Contributions Day Celebration Luncheon, but not our gratitude!

The Alexandria Rotarians celebrates and honors our community partners who have untiringly pivoted and innovated to serve our community at a time of enormous need.

And, we want to thank our restaurant partners who helped us raise those grant funds.

The Alexandria Day Nursery & Children's Home Celebrates Its 2020 Grantees

ALIVE!
Beverly Hills Church
Preschool
Butterfly House at Virginia Theological
Seminary
Child & Family Network

Emmanuel Church Preschool
Fairlington Preschool
Grace Episcopal School
St. Clement Episcopal Day School
St. Paul's Episcopal Preschool
The Campagna Center
Upcycle Creative Reuse Center

Valley Drive Preschool
Washington Street United Methodist
Preschool
Westminster Weekday Preschool
Kathy Wilson Foundation

The Rotary Club of Alexandria Thanks Its Restaurant Partners

A La Lucia
Blue Print Chocolatier
Cedar Knoll
Chadwick's
Dishes of India
Firehook
Hard Times Café

LaPorta
Nando's Peri Peri
Old Town Dolcia Gelatia
Port City Brewing
Red Rocks Restaurant
Riverbend Bistro
Sweet Fire Donna's

The Warehouse
Tequila & Taco
Trademark Drink & Eat
Tempo
Union Street Public House
Whiskey & Oyster

Another **Alexandria Gazette Packet** Community Partner

Not Ready for Indoor Dining? Eat Al Fresco Here

BY HOPE NELSON

Here on the precipice of Virginia's Phase 3 of reopening, most of Alexandria's restaurants are back to business as usual – within the scope of a major pandemic, that is. Dining rooms are filling up with the requisite six feet of space between tables, and as summer heats up, outdoor seating is once again prime space. For many, that al fresco dining setup is still the most comfortable way to get back into the world without venturing too far afield. On the cusp of July 4 weekend, here are some al-fresco spots that mustn't be missed.

Landini Brothers, 115 King St.

The scene on lower King Street has been hopping of late, and Landini Brothers has

been right in the middle of the mix. With tables lining the sidewalk, diners can people-watch from where they sit – sometimes, perhaps, a little too close to the action for socially distanced comfort. Landini Brothers, as usual, is bringing the best of its menu to the out-of-doors, with entrees such as penne alla Romana and risotto a la primavera, or a plate of bruschetta to share. Order a bottle of wine, fill your glasses and idly watch as the world goes by.

Café 44, 44 Canal Center Plaza, Suite 401

Tucked away as it is in the Canal Center complex, Café 44 is a bit of a hidden gem. And though its dining room is open to accommodate the latest phases of reopening, it's the outdoor space that takes the ambience to a new level. With balcony views

overlooking the Potomac River, the café is an excellent off-the-beaten-path option for weekend brunch or weekday lunch or dinner.

Try the "Café Trio" of soup, sandwich and side for lunch; a charcuterie board to share (along with a bottle of bubbly, perhaps) for a light dinner; or a Bloody Mary grilled cheese for weekend brunch.

Whiskey and Oyster, 301 John Carlyle St.

Over in the Carlyle neighborhood, Whiskey and Oyster awaits with widely spaced tables and a wide-open menu to boot. Start the meal with kung pao cauliflower or hush puppies to share (or keep all to yourself), and then belly up to a lobster roll or "Hot Mess Burger" piled high with mac and cheese, sriracha aioli and more. Round out the proceedings with a beignet and the meal will be

sweet indeed.

Tempo, 4231 Duke St.

The patio was naturally the first part of Tempo to open, and it remains so even as indoor seating has become a way of life. Like so many other Alexandrian restaurants, Tempo's outdoor space is small but mighty, hosting tables while maintaining appropriate distances. Settle into a helping of capelli d'Angelo Napoletana or steak diablo, order up a signature cocktail and enjoy a few minutes of normalcy – with a good meal served alongside.

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.



Bagpiper Adam Tianello performs Amazing Grace at the Flags for Heroes display June 28 at Cedar Knoll Restaurant.



Attendees listen at the opening ceremony of the Flags for Heroes display June 28 at Cedar Knoll Restaurant. More than 300 flags will be on display overlooking the Potomac River through July 11.

PHOTOS BY JANET BARNETT/GAZETTE PACKET

'Flags for Heroes' Hundreds of flags on display through July 11.



Rotary Club of Alexandria president Sharon Meisel, second from left, is joined by Rotary Club officers Paul Anderson, John Moorman and Marita Alabaster at the Flags for Heroes display June 28 at Cedar Knoll Restaurant.

BY JEANNE THEISMANN
THE GAZETTE

A lone bagpiper stood among hundreds of American flags as the strains of Amazing Grace wafted through the air during the opening ceremony of the 3rd annual Flags for Heroes display June 28 at Cedar Knoll Restaurant along the George Washington Parkway. Local Scouting Troops joined volunteers the previous day in erecting more than 300 flags in the field overlooking the Potomac River. A project of the Rotary Club of Alexandria, the display will remain in place through July 11.

Local officials, first responders and hospital workers were among the heroes recognized at the ceremony for their service.

"What an awesome day," said Rotary Club president Sharon Meisel. "All of the presentations were heartfelt and authentic and my sincere thanks go out to Mount Vernon district Supervisor Dan Storck for coming down and recognizing the folks

that keep us safe."

The project was made possible by the Androus Foundation in honor of Arthur "Tommy" Androus. A card attached to each flag bears the name of a hero along with the individual who sponsored the flag in honor of a friend, family member, veteran or other hero in their life.

"We had a beautiful musical tribute with our National Anthem sung by Bill Colosimo of the Alexandria Singers," said Jim Carmalt, coordinator of the dedication ceremony. "And the fantastic closing music on the bagpipes by Adam Tianello provided for a tearful exit as he disappeared into the flags playing Amazing Grace."

Members of the Rotary Club of Alexandria were joined by Rotarians from Mount Vernon and Alexandria West in assisting with the set-up of the display.

"This was a great, patriotic program, Meisel said. "And the flags are magnificent with the Potomac as a backdrop.

We are humbled to honor all the individual heroes who are remembered here today."

Alexandria: This Week in Covid

BY KEN MOORE
GAZETTE

Monday, June 29

CONTACT TRACERS: The Virginia Department of Health (VDH) encourages all Virginians to respond and engage with legitimate contact tracing calls and emails while remaining vigilant against scams. Caller ID will read “VDH COVID Team.”

The Commonwealth employs contact tracers to notify individuals who have been exposed to known cases of COVID-19. Contact tracers will offer information, encourage individuals to monitor themselves for symptoms, and refer those who develop symptoms for medical evaluation and testing to help contain the spread in Virginia. Contact tracing saves lives by preventing the spread of COVID-19, if every Virginian will answer calls, text messages, or emails from the Commonwealth’s contact tracers.

SCAMS: Recognizing the signs of a scam is important. Contact tracers will not ask for money or information such as a Social Security Number, bank account details, or credit card numbers. The Commonwealth does not charge individuals for contact tracing services.

EVICTIION OR FORECLOSURE RELIEF: The Virginia Rent and Mortgage Relief Program will provide \$50 million in federal funding for households facing eviction or foreclosure due to COVID-19.

Rent and Mortgage Relief Program will provide short-term financial assistance on behalf of households in the form of rent and mortgage payments.

The Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) will administer the \$50 million program through a variety of partners, including nonprofit organizations and local governments. To conduct a self-assessment for eligibility, visit dhcd.virginia.gov/eligibility or call 211 VIRGINIA by dialing 2-1-1 from your phone. Tenants and homeowners are encouraged to know their rights and responsibilities and pay their rent and mortgages on time if they are able. Visit StayHomeVirginia.com for additional information and resources.

Sunday, June 28

NINE MORE: The cumulative number of COVID-19 cases in Alexandria is now 2,312, including 57 fatalities.

METRO STATIONS REOPEN: Eisenhower Avenue and Van Dorn Street Metrorail Stations opens June 28, along with 17 other stations throughout the Metro system. Buses from underutilized lines will be added to 14 of the busiest bus lines beginning June 29. Many stations and stops were closed in March, in an effort to conserve cleaning supplies during the early stages of the pandemic. Riders are reminded that face coverings are required inside all stations, trains and buses. Physical distancing should be maintained whenever possible.

	Monday, June 29	Tuesday, June 22
Alexandria Cases:	2,317	2,236
Virginia Cases:	62,189	58,465
United States Cases:	2,504,175	2,275,645
Alexandria Deaths:	57	49
Virginia Deaths:	1,740	1,620
United States Deaths:	125,484	119,923

Saturday, June 27

SIXTEEN MORE: The cumulative number of COVID-19 cases in Alexandria is now 2,303, including 57 fatalities, after the health department reported one more fatality.

WATER TAXI RUNNING: Potomac Water Taxi resumed limited service between Alexandria, National Harbor and Washington, D.C., with dining cruises resuming on June 27. A number of procedures have been put in place, including requiring face coverings for all guests, ages 3 and up; physical distancing and touchless entry boarding and ticketing; and reduced capacity onboard. Employees are required to undergo a health screening prior to boarding and all surfaces are disinfected regularly.

FOOD DISTRIBUTED: ALIVE! will distribute food to those needing assistance during the pandemic on the last Saturday of each month. Drive-through and walk-up options will be available from 8:30 to 10:30 a.m., or until supplies run out, in the parking lots of Cora Kelly and John Adams Elementary Schools. In order to observe no-contact distribution and physical distance requirements, drivers must remain in their cars and walk-ups must stand at least 6 feet apart and wear face coverings.

The Alexandria Health Department concentrated and fortified its decision-making processes into Public Health Justice Principles.

Prioritizing science-based recommendations --understanding that such recommendations will change with science’s understanding of a novel disease like COVID-19 -- to reduce the risk of harm to individuals or populations and to maximize effectiveness of limited resources.

Focusing resources on saving lives of those in high-risk populations (such as older adults, persons living in long-term care facilities, and those with serious underlying medical conditions).

Engaging and empowering Alexandrians most in need, recognizing certain members of the community (usually as the elderly, communities of color, and low-income residents) are not only most susceptible to chronic and infectious disease, but also are often marginalized in civic conversations and decision making. AHD will continue to engage community leaders and residents to inform communications strategies that empower them to take appropriate COVID-19 mitigation actions, and through meaningful community engagement, develop strategies

for access to care and other resources.

The health department also published the fourth of a series, Strategic Action Framework: Vulnerable Residential Buildings. Vulnerable residential buildings include apartment buildings, duplexes or townhomes that serve populations at high risk of infection and severe illness from COVID-19, such as seniors; those living in crowded conditions, low-income residents, or are located in neighborhoods with high rates of confirmed COVID-19 infections. This framework summarizes objectives and tactics being used to support Alexandria’s senior housing and vulnerable residential buildings in infection control, outbreak prevention, and mitigation during the COVID-19 pandemic. Priority tactics include: sharing resources and information about best practices to stop the spread; determining use of infection control measures. working with building staff to utilize best practices; and supporting the alteration of building conditions to encourage healthy behaviors.

Out of School Time half-day programs and group game activities are being offered by the City of Alexandria. All programs are available to Alexandria residents ages 6-12 who have attended Kindergarten through 6th grade.

Friday, June 26

SIX FATALITIES: The Alexandria Health Department reported 16 additional COVID-19 Cases and 6 more fatalities. The cumulative number of COVID-19 cases in Alexandria is now 2,287, including 56 fatalities. “This represents the Virginia Department of Health’s ongoing review of death certificate data, and does not represent a recent, sudden spike in COVID-19 related fatalities. Fatalities are added to Alexandria’s count on the date they are reported, not on the date of the death. The six most recent fatalities to be added to Alexandria’s count actually occurred in April and early May,” according to the health department.

MORE AT RISK: The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) updated and expanded the list of who is at increased risk for getting severely ill from COVID-19. Consistent evidence has shown that specific conditions increase a person’s risk of severe COVID-19 illness at any age, including chronic kidney disease, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), obesity, weakened immune system from a solid organ transplant, serious heart conditions, sickle

cell disease, and type II diabetes. The CDC also amended the list of other conditions that might increase a person’s risk of severe illness, including additions such as asthma; high blood pressure; neurologic conditions such as dementia; cerebrovascular disease such as stroke; and pregnancy. Among adults, the risk for severe illness from COVID-19 increases with age, with older adults at highest risk.

COVID ANIMATION: The City has released a series of animated videos in numerous languages to help communicate the role everyone plays in preventing the spread of COVID-19. The first video, Six Steps to Stop the Spread explains the vital steps to reducing the spread of COVID-19. Another video in the series addresses all the preventive measures to take when you are sick, and how to prevent spreading the virus to friends, coworkers and loved ones. The last video offers a variety of resources for those in need of help during the pandemic. Whether it’s food, health care, substance abuse, child care or other needs, there is support available.

OUTDOOR REC and BUSINESS: The City is expanding opportunities for restaurants, retail businesses and fitness centers to operate outdoors. Retail businesses may request the use of sidewalks, on-street parking spaces and privately-owned parking lots and spaces to display their products and conduct sales. Similarly, fitness and health businesses may request the use of privately owned parking lots and spaces to offer classes and provide access to fitness equipment. Interested businesses should contact the Department of Planning & Zoning to request the correct form for their business zone. Requests must be reviewed by the City prior to setting up the alternative areas for outdoor dining, retail display, and sales and fitness business use. There is no fee for these requests. The programs are in effect until August 27 and may be extended or shortened upon future notice.

Thursday, June 25

THIRTEEN MORE: The cumulative number of COVID-19 cases in Alexandria is now 2,271, including 50 fatalities

PROMISE FOR SAFETY: The ALX Promise program, offered by AHD in partnership with Visit Alexandria, trains business owners and operators how to properly and effectively create a safe, sanitized environment for customers and patrons. Businesses that complete the training receive an ALX Promise shield to display. All Alexandria businesses are encouraged to participate. Visit Alexandria offers a list of businesses that have completed the program.

Wednesday, June 24

Alexandria reported 10 new cases and one more fatality. The cumulative number of COVID-19 cases in Alexandria is now 2,258, including 50 fatalities.

Alexandria Reckoning

FROM PAGE 3

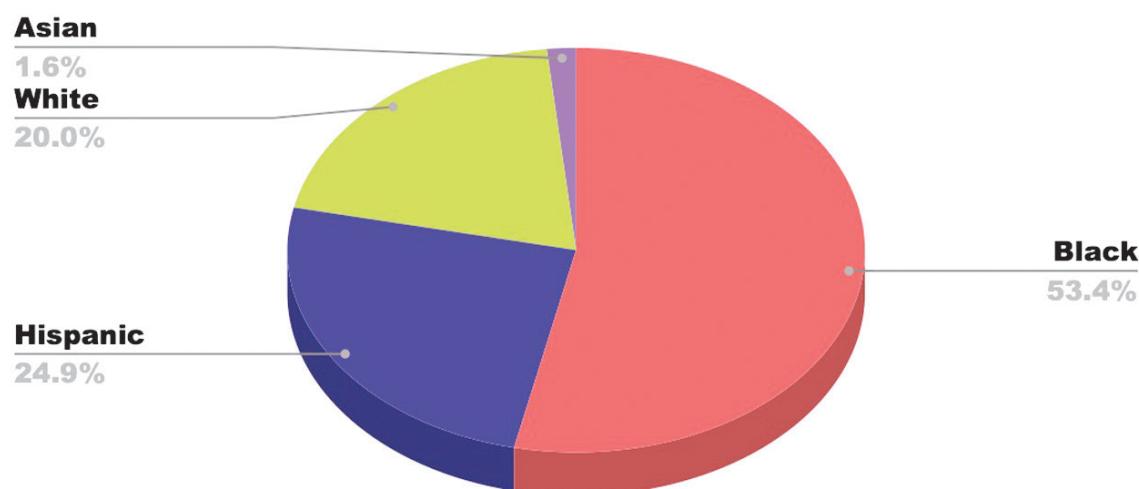
The Black Lives Matter forum featured city leaders calling for change and vowing to make changes to dismantle inequities, although few specifics were part of the discussion. City Council members are considering a proposal to create a citizen oversight board, but details have yet to be worked out about whether that panel would have access to documents that police routinely

“Police brutality exists, and sometimes it’s warranted. Sometimes it’s not.”

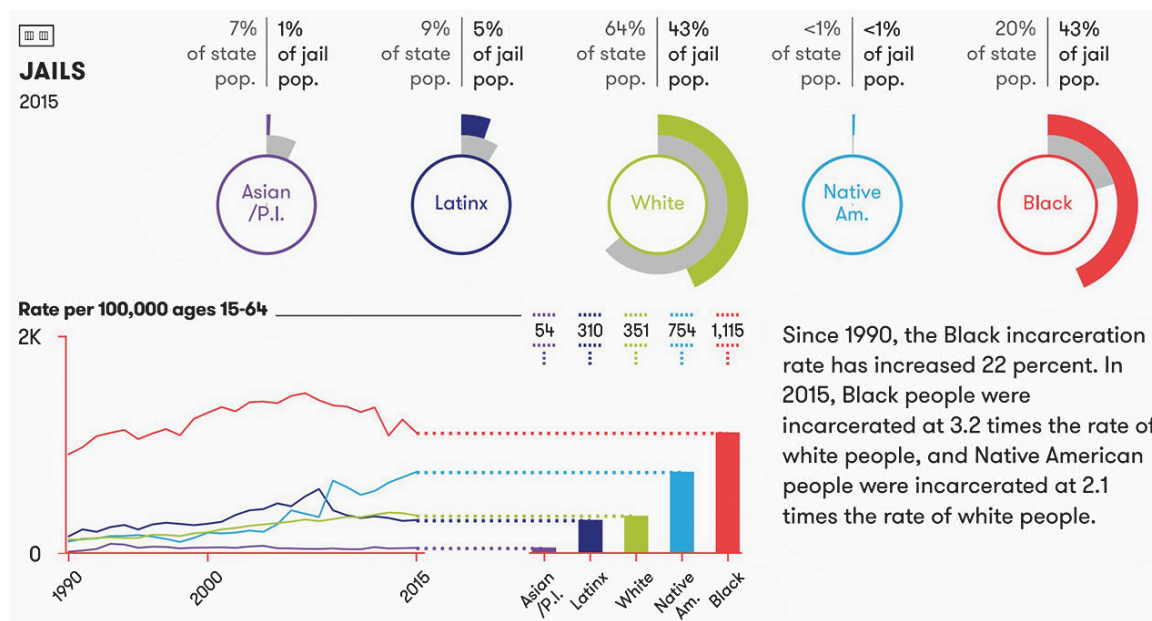
— Alexandria Police Chief Michael Brown.

shield from the public. The police chief did promise an analysis of the racial imbalance in Alexandria arrests, though, and participants expressed passionate opposition to the kind of police brutality that sparked the national conversation a month ago. “Is there anger? Yes, there’s anger, and there should be anger,” said Williams. “People have to understand that there should be anger, and if there’s not anger we’re missing something.”

2019 Arrests in Alexandria



SOURCE: ALEXANDRIA POLICE DEPARTMENT



Incarceration trends in Virginia

Since 1990, the Black incarceration rate has increased 22 percent. In 2015, Black people were incarcerated at 3.2 times the rate of white people, and Native American people were incarcerated at 2.1 times the rate of white people.

BULLETIN BOARD

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

FIREARMS PROHIBITED ON CITY PROPERTY

Following a public hearing June 20, the Alexandria City Council unanimously adopted an ordinance prohibiting firearms and ammunition in City facilities, parks and areas requiring special event permits. Effective July 1, it will be a Class 1 misdemeanor to possess, carry or transport firearms or ammunition in any building, park or recreational or community facility owned or operated by the City for governmental purposes; or at any special event requiring a permit and being held on a City public street, road, alley, sidewalk or public right of way. The ordinance also applies to City employees, agents or volunteers in workplaces that are owned, operated or managed by the City.

ONLINE WORSHIP SERVICE

Fairlington United Methodist Church. Sundays. 11 a.m. to 12 p.m. Via Zoom. Address: 3900 King Street, Alexandria. Are you looking for hope, healing, and community during this time? You are invited to online worship at 11am every Sunday morning. Pray, sing, read scripture, share a meditation, and respond. Follow this link: <https://fairlingtonumc.org/worship/watch-or-listen-to-a-service>

Reconsidering Police in Schools

FROM PAGE 3

“It’s not clear as to what they do,” said Harris. “It’s a foothold into the criminal justice system. I don’t see them having a beneficial purpose without stringent regulations, which they currently don’t have.”

ALEXANDRIA CITY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

most recent suspension data shows that 18 percent of the total 787 out-of-school suspensions in the 2017-2018 school year resulted in law enforcement referrals. Both Black and Hispanic students were suspended at disproportionate rates compared to white students. Black students were nearly four times more likely to be referred to law enforcement than white students; Hispanic students were twice as likely.

“I’m concerned SROs may contribute to the school-to-prison pipeline and create an intimidating school climate for students,” said

“We don’t want to be where we’re not wanted.”

— Alexandria Police Chief Michael Brown

School Board member Michelle Rief.

STUDENTS HAVE a variety of views on the SROs, and the issue is layered with the individual experience students bring to their interaction with police. Osei-Owusu never did find out what that altercation was about on the B wing, and she doesn’t let that cloud her perception of police in schools. She

says she recognizes the positive relationships several Black SROs have with minority students at T.C.

“It’s important that we have Black security,” said Osei-Owusu. “It is more crucial that since the student population is predominantly Black and brown, we have security officers that reflect that. I’ve noticed that the Black security guards at T.C. are the ones who check minority students, promoting an education. I always hear, ‘Hey, get to class; be on time.’” The access SROs have to student records doesn’t bother Kate Casper, a rising senior at T.C.

“I think it’s important to have the background of a child and maybe see how their behavior could have stemmed from other related issues,” said Casper. “If a kid is struggling in school and has

a background of being violent, it’s important to know, especially for a police officer at a school.”

She’s had positive experiences with SROs and thinks they contribute to students’ safety.

“I always feel safe at T.C. A great school resource officer actually helped me get my phone back from a kid who stole it on the bus,” said Casper. “They are really nice guys and they do a great job.”

The ACLU of Virginia opposes police in schools. According to Executive Director Claire Gastanaga, SROs perpetuate the school-to-prison pipeline.

“The things that, when I was in school, would get you sent to the principal’s office now get you sent to juvenile detention centers,” said Gastanaga. “The police people are there to arrest people; they’re not there to be friendly. They’ve turned

routine school disciplinary matters into criminal prosecution of kids.”

At some point in the near future, the chief of police and the superintendent of schools will meet to discuss the future of the school resource officer program in the school system. Ultimately, though, the Alexandria School Board will make the determination on whether to continue the contract with the police and if any changes should be made.

“I don’t believe this is necessarily a binary decision,” said School Board Chair Cindy Anderson.

The School Board will review its school police contract in July, as agreements between school divisions and police departments are reviewed every two years in Virginia. Proposed changes and opportunities for public comment will come in the fall.

'It's Been an Honor'

FROM PAGE 1

torney. He worked as an Assistant City Attorney from 1977—1981 and was in private practice from 1981—1994.

In 1989, Dawkins was appointed to serve as a substitute judge; then, from 1994 until his elevation to the Circuit Court in 2008, he presided over the Juvenile and Domestic Relations Court. He was the Chief Judge of the JDR Court from 2004—2008 and presided over the Alexandria Family Drug Treatment Court from 2001—2008.

Among those attending the celebration were Dawkins' three daughters; Kelli Smith, Kimberly Dawkins and Ashley Dawkins Sorensen; and grandchildren Lucien, Skylar and Micah Smith, and Lukas Sorensen.

Due to health complications, his wife of 47 years, Lorraine, was unable to attend.

"The Alexandria Bar Association really helped pull this all together," said Dawkins Sorensen. "We would have loved to throw a traditional party for him but even under these extraordinary circumstances it was a wonderful celebration and nice to see him so happy."



FILE PHOTO

Nolan Dawkins, center, was one of the first African Americans to attend George Washington High School where he was a standout basketball player along with teammate and eventual NBA player Skeeter Swift (kneeling at left).



Beth Colton holds a sign of appreciation for Circuit Court Judge Nolan Dawkins during the drive-by retirement parade June 26 in Old Town.

PHOTOS BY JANET BARNETT/GAZETTE PACKET



Circuit Court Judge Nolan Dawkins poses for a photo with family members on the steps of the Franklin P. Backus Courthouse during a surprise retirement celebration June 26 in Old Town.

Obituary

Obituary

Bruce Murdock McLellan

Bruce Murdock McLellan passed away on June 23rd, 2020, at age 74. He was born November 9th, 1945 in Brooklyn, NY to Dr. George and Nancy McLellan. He is survived by his loving wife of 49 years Stephanie, their daughter Dana Quigley, her husband Mike Quigley, three grandchildren Jack (Toot), Katelyn (Katydid), and Emily (Little Bear), as well as his sister Susan Breen, Brother-in-law Doug Breen, his Uncle and Aunt, Donald and Ann Murdock, as well as other family and friends.

He grew up in Sparta, NJ and attended Colgate University where he was a Theta Chi. Upon graduation in 1967 he went through Officer Candidate School and was an Army Intelligence Officer stationed in Washington DC. After leaving the Army Bruce worked on Capitol Hill for Congressman Roe. He then worked at The National Office Products Association as Director of Government Relations. He resigned from NOPA after 26 years in 1997, but continued to work at Association Headquarters in DC, National Tax Lien Association, and the Alexandria Gazette in Old Town until 2004.

In 1971 Bruce married his high school sweetheart Stephanie Wall at the Jersey Shore and they moved to Old Town Alexandria. Their daughter Dana was born in 1974 and the family moved to Mt. Vernon, VA where they stayed until 2004. It was that year Bruce retired, and he and Stephanie moved to Hilton Head Island to enjoy the beach and be with Dana and her family. Here they spent wonderful years surrounded by family and new friends.

In remembrance of this wonderful man, in lieu of flowers, donations can be made to the American Cancer Society at www.cancer.org.

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Preventing the Callous in Young Black America

BY GEVAR BONHAM

Growing up in Birmingham, AL, I recall playing in the basement of 16th Street Baptist Church. The same church that was bombed in 1963 by the KKK, killing four young Black girls and injuring dozens. The weight of that experience playing where people lost their lives is one of many that released a strain of trauma already ingrained in my DNA as a Black man.

I consider myself a first-generation child of the post-civil rights era. My parents, who directly experienced Jim Crow, redlining and segregation, moved the family to the predominantly white suburbs in search of opportunities and high performing schools

for their children.

But our experiences were not the same as our white peers. At ten years old, I remember walking past our car in the driveway to find eggshells and yolk blasted on the windshield and the word “n****r” written in paint. The feeling of being unwelcome in Hoover City was the beginning of a callous we develop as young Black children, and the threat in my own neighborhood made it thicken.

I learned early on that not everyone views you as equal, or even human. The callous you develop turns into self-policing. Don’t say too much. Monitor your physical presence and actions to appear nonthreatening. The timestamp on a store receipt can prove your innocence if accused of a crime. This takes a heavy toll mentally, physically and

emotionally but this is how we have learned to navigate an oppressive system.

Two years ago, my then 11-year-old son began his journey into callousness. Innocence began its departure, catalyzed by his first police encounter -- resulting from a schoolmate’s false allegation. It was devastating to now be an observer as history began to repeat itself. Attempts to reconcile with the accuser were ignored as if this behavior is acceptable. These compounded situations bind such trauma to our DNA — white America moves on with blissful ignorance of the broken pieces we’re left to quietly mend in isolation.

It’s unfair and unjust, but I am hopeful for my sons. Black communities are no longer fighting for justice and equity alone. Our al-

lies are a diverse group of individuals and corporations, who have resonated globally. For the first time I am hopeful that we’re poised for a reckoning with our nation’s sordid history. We must keep our foot on the gas. Systemic change is tangible, if we can sustain engagement. Just as we didn’t arrive here overnight, healing through restoration and reparation will require sacrifice and stamina.

Gevan Bonham is IT Systems Administrator, United Way of the National Capital Area and resident of Alexandria. This piece is part of a collection of stories told by African American male co-leagues at United Way NCA. To hear more, please visit: <https://unitedwaynca.podbean.com/e/we-are-not-okay-1593038482/>

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Failing to Stem Impact of Covid-19 on Vulnerable

Dear Editor,

Even as many of our leaders emphasize reopening the economy, covid-19 cases in Virginia have fallen only by 50 percent, and Alexandria has more Covid-19 cases than most other jurisdictions in Virginia. We are alarmed that the city of Alexandria has failed to stem the impact of Covid-19 on vulnerable communities. Specifically, we were told by the Alexandria Health Department that hotel rooms have been secured that enable Covid-19 patients to quarantine. Where houses or apartments are too small to provide separate quarantine space for a sick family member, these hotel rooms are an essential tool to protect families. However, because of insufficient planning, these rooms are not being used. Specifically, we were told that the hotel rooms remain (mostly) empty because, by the time Covid-19 is detected in a family member, the entire family is infected. This is a failure of either planning or execution.

We need widespread testing and rapid results that enable isolation of a patient before an entire family is infected. Failing that, we need to offer a hotel room as soon as symptoms appear, so that a sick family member can be isolated and a family saved. These hotel rooms are, we are told, part of the city Covid-19 plan. A plan that makes a pretence of offering quarantine without doing so is not a real plan at all. We appreciate the good news that testing is now widely available, by appointment, from Alexandria doctors and clinics. We worry that insufficient adver-

tising of these resources suggests a prioritization of tax dollars over lives. Whatever the cause, zip code data on Covid-19 cases reveals that Alexandrians are sickening at a higher rate than residents of surrounding jurisdictions. We need an effective plan.

Jonathan Krall
Grassroots Alexandria

Not Above the Law

To the editor:

I applaud the effort of the 12 local state politicians to put the United States Park Police (USPP) on notice that they are not above the law. These Senators and Delegates are asking officials of Fairfax, Alexandria and Arlington to look into terminating any Memorandums of Agreement (MOAs) that currently exist with the USPP until specific conditions are met. Good for them.

I do have one ask and it is significant and not addressed as far as I can tell. It is that USPP protocols on active pursuit and use of deadly force be included. Perhaps Bijan Ghaisar would be alive today if such a reasonable use of force protocol had been in effect and followed when he was murdered over two and a half years ago. No charges have ever been brought and no meaningful information has been provided. How is that possible?

John K. Bergen
Alexandria

Statues for Benedict Arnold

I’m a history buff and have read many books about the Civil War in order to understand events surrounding that tragedy. To all those

Standing on Historical Land: James E. Henson, Esq.

FROM PAGE 6

had to pass her property down to a person in her family that would appreciate the significance of the land that had the first Colored Public School. Her nephew is college educated and a lawyer, the person she felt knew the historical background of the land the house is built on.

James and Ardene have lived in their home since 2006. Now, they are downsizing. They have put the house on the market. This house and the land it sits on represent Alexandria’s history that is unknown to many. The house is walking distance to a grocery store

and to Alexandria’s wharf. From this house, elementary students can walk to Lyles-Crouch Elementary School.

James E. Henson, Esq., has made history himself by becoming the 2019 Living Legend of Alexandria. His aunt Eleanor would be proud that he is keeping the history of 607 South Pitt Street alive.

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>.

opposed to removing statues that honor those who fought to preserve slavery, I have one serious question: “Why don’t we have more statues and memorials honoring Benedict Arnold?”

Dennis D McDonald
Alexandria

Missing the Obvious?

Michael Lee Pope’s article on income gaps misses some obvious explanations. Many minorities are recent immigrants. Do we really expect them to step into jobs with incomes commensurate with Alexandria’s 80% college-educated whites? Even when immigration was almost entirely white a century ago, immigrants ended up predominantly in low-paying jobs. Moreover, many of Alexandria’s immigrants are not legally present, which relegates them into lower-paying, often contract positions. Income disparity is not a sign of “systemic racism,” but normal economics. That is not to say that “systemic racism” doesn’t exist, just not in the way the article describes.

The Millennials, minority and white alike, participating in these

demonstrations do not understand that what they’re seeking has been tried before. In the 1960s and 70s the naive GI Generation in political power devoted huge amounts of taxpayer funds to social services and backed off strict policing, just what today’s Millennials are demanding. The result was a huge crime spike, doubling and tripling in a few years. After a couple decades of this, the public demanded the policies against which the Millennials, discounting this history from before they were born, are now protesting. But those who forget history are fated to repeat it.

With 41 of 56 Declaration of Independence signers owning slaves, obviously they did not mean “all men are created equal” literally, but as a subterfuge disguising the Declaration of Independence’s ulterior intent of erasing the Royal Proclamation Line which reserved everything between the Appalachians and Mississippi for the Amerindians and assuring that Lord Chief Justice Mansfield, who held in *Somerset v. Stewart* (1771) that slavery “is so odious, that nothing can be suffered to support it,” could not threaten most of the colonies’ economies. The founding documents rest on an implicit assumption of what is today commonly called “white supremacy.”

Is what the protesters are calling “white supremacy” so woven into the legal, economic, and cultural fabric of a nation birthed in the “founding sins” of slavery and theft of the indigenous peoples’ land that, while it can be ameliorated by ending slave importation and ultimately freeing the slaves, it cannot be fully eliminated, as the failure of Radical Reconstruction suggests? Black millennial film-maker R. Kaye Thomas premiered *Two Steps Back* at the inaugural D.C. Black Film Festival focusing on Dr. Derrick Bell, the first Black tenured law professor at Harvard University, who evolved from civil rights activist to later believing that *Brown v. Board* had failed.

After nearly seven decades of *Brown v. Board* and six decades of civil rights laws, Millennials are protesting because these attempts at equality have met the same fate as Radical Reconstruction.

Dino Drudi
Alexandria

Dear Editor:

Although we are gradually returning to normal, I regret to say that some “normal” things are still not acceptable, since the Alexan-

SEE LETTERS, PAGE 13

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LETTERS

FROM PAGE 12

dria City Council and the Police Department continue to ignore enforcing traffic and bicycle laws. However, Alexandria residents are totally fed up with this situation. While we understand that Alexandria is a popular city for tourists, literally hundreds of bicyclists roll through stop signs without slowing down. To make matters worse, some riders are very insolent, and offer rude digital gestures when they are challenged.

Union Street is a particular problem; it has nine T intersections that are being treated like uncontrolled intersections by bicyclists rather than sign controlled intersections. At any time of the day, it is likely that no bikes will stop or slow down as they pass through any of these stop signs. I asked the Chief of Police for his assistance in the matter, and was advised that the sector commanders would be taking care of the problem. Although I am a great believer in the "chain of command," this approach has not met with success to date. I have notified the police department in the past about this issue and nothing has changed. Furthermore, the police department had a bicycle detail dedicated to this area, but it has been disbanded for some unknown reason quite some time ago. Hopefully, this can be turned around by the responsible authorities, since bicycle accidents can be as deadly as automobile accidents. Unless action is taken immediately, it is only a matter of time before someone is killed speeding through one of our stop signs, or colliding with pedestrians. Since I do not want to be in the unenviable position of saying "I told you so," the City needs to enforce the traffic laws on record.

Townsend A. "Van" Van Fleet
Alexandria

GOP Women Host Douglass Leadership Institute Chairman and State GOP Party Candidates

The Commonwealth Republican Women's Club (CRWC) of Alexandria met via Zoom to discuss state party candidacies and the recent US Senate primary, and to hear a special guest speaker on African American conservatism.

Susie Miller, 1st VP for Pro-

SEE LETTERS, PAGE 14

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Obituary

Henry M. Switkay, 94, on May 16. An Army veteran (navigator), graduate of Penn (1948) and Harvard Law School (1951), retired Administrative Law Judge (Civil Aeronautics Board), loving husband of his late wife Mary, and beloved by his children Nancy and Coleman (Mary) and grandsons. Services pending.

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

Obituary

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Obituary



Evert Raymond Durrett Jr., 68, passed away on June 5, 2020, in Alexandria Hospital. Affectionately known as "Red," he was a life-long Alexandrian, the son of E. R. Durrett and Katherine Ruth Lutes Durrett. He is survived by his wife of 29 years, Darbie Gilmore Durrett, daughters Jessie Katherine Durrett and Ashley Rae Durrett, sister Sharon Hovda and husband Russell, brother-in-law Bart Gilmore and wife Crystal, 2 nieces and 3 nephews and their families. He was a graduate of George Washington High School in Alexandria. Ray retired from the Cameron Station Fort Myer Commissary after 36 years. He then worked for 10 years at Safeway and currently was employed by Target. Red loved to be of use to others, always quick to lend a hand. His kind and generous heart will be greatly missed by his family and friends. His memorial will be held on July 11 from 2-4pm at Everly Wheatly Funeral Home, Dress code is come as you are, blue jeans and cowboy boots, ball gowns and tiaras. (Feather Boa optional)

Obituary



Howard Lee Clark Jr passed away peacefully on June 19th, 2020. He was a long-time resident of the Goodwin House in Alexandria, Virginia. Originally from Dillon, South Carolina Howard came to the Virginia area after graduating from Clemson University and entered the US Federal Service with the Department of the Army as an Electrical Engineer where he worked for over 35 years. He was a member of the Old Presbyterian Meeting House in Alexandria. He was an amateur radio operator and supporter of the National Railway Historical Society.

He was preceded in death by beloved wife Susan Ball Clark, his parents Howard L. Clark and Kate Rogers Clark, sisters Sarah and Lillian, and nephew Charles Dennis.

Left to cherish his memory are Brother-in-law William Ball and wife Jackie (Kentucky), Patricia Ball (Tennessee), nephews Mark Rogers (Tennessee), Roy Albert Ball (Oregon), Andrew Ball (Kentucky), William Ball Jr (Virginia), niece Judy Akers (Kentucky), several cousins in South Carolina and Virginia, and special friend Betty Cranwell (Virginia).

Mr. Clark will be missed by his many friends, colleagues and family. He was a kind and gentle man who brought a smile to almost everyone he encountered. His unabashed devotion to the Clemson Tigers and his dry sense of humor were just a couple of the many things that endeared him to others. Plans for a memorial service will be announced at a later date.

The family would like to extend its deepest gratitude to the many members of the Goodwin House staff and Medical Personnel for their overwhelming kindness and concern for his care and well-being. In lieu of flowers please consider making a donation to the Goodwin House Foundation which provides assistance to its employees.

Legals



Public Hearing will be held by the City Council of the City of Alexandria, Virginia, by video conference, City of Alexandria, Virginia, on Tuesday, July 7, 2020, at 5:30 p.m., or as soon as may be heard on the hereinafter described items.

Public Hearing in regard to the Consideration of a Three (3) Year Lease Agreement Renewal with Child and Family Network Centers at Leonard "Chick" Armstrong Recreation Center Located At 25 West Reed Avenue.

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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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

Mourning, Afternoon and Evening

By KENNETH B. LOURIE



We had to euthanize Biscuit, our oldest cat on Saturday, June 20th. He would have been 14 on September 20th. Biscuit is survived by his half-brother, Andrew and his two half sisters, Sloane and Twinkle. Biscuit's litter mate and brother, "Chino" preceded him in death in November, 2019, after succumbing to diabetes. Biscuit had likewise been diagnosed with diabetes around the same time as "Chino." However, as occasionally happens, according to Biscuit's veterinarian, some cats "spontaneously" overcome the disease, as Biscuit miraculously did, and go on to live relatively normal lives. Biscuit lived approximately one year after his diabetes went into remission, which ended up being about seven months longer than "Chino." Not exactly "relatively normal"; nonetheless, we were grateful for the extra seven months.

Biscuit was "the senior man," as we called him and we typically left him in charge of the other four cats when both Dina and I would be away from home. Of all five cats, Biscuit was the most present in our lives. He was also the most social, the most fearless and the most affable/tolerant of all our cats. An indoor cat like our entire herd, Biscuit was most likely to be around and to socialize. He would greet visitors within a few minutes of their arrival and invariably introduce himself by jumping up on the coffee table in front of the couch and staring at the newcomer. He was also the first in line for breakfast and dinner, first in line for treats, and whenever my wife, Dina, made a tuna fish sandwich for lunch, Biscuit was, you guessed it, first in line. Topping out at 15 pounds, somehow he managed to keep his weight down. He was a sweet, adoring and talkative cat and we loved him, and of course, we miss him terribly, especially Dina.

Over the last few years, particularly, Dina and Biscuit had formed a bond. He was her cat, just as "Chino" had been mine. Not that Biscuit ignored me, hardly. But when he made his requests, verbal or otherwise, Dina was almost always the intended requestee. Moreover, as Dina's schedule changed, she became Biscuit's primary caregiver, feeder, litter-box scooper and groomer and more interesting for Biscuit, became the one to let him outside to take in the sights, sounds and smells which enthrall cats. She was, on these special occasions, daily of late, his constant companion, which is how they spent his last Saturday morning, together, outside.

What has made Biscuit's passing so difficult is how quickly he declined, always a bad sign, our veterinarian said. Biscuit stopped eating on Friday after barely nibbling on Thursday. He even turned away from treats that I offered him and tuna fish that Dina placed in his bowl. Though still engaged with us, we could see his haunches, and feel his boney spine. He had lost two and half pounds in the last three months. That Friday night, Biscuit had trouble settling down and whimpered off and on through the night. I called the veterinarian first thing Saturday morning and we were fortunate to secure an appointment at 10 am that very morning. Biscuit was clearly struggling and probably even suffering as his zero interest in breakfast confirmed and his sounds not of silence continued.

We didn't want to be selfish this time as we had been with "Chino." We kept him at home far too long before taking him to the veterinarian and have regretted it ever since. We just couldn't let go. We weren't going to make the same mistake with Biscuit. That Saturday, we drove to the animal hospital and dropped Biscuit off to be examined while we waited in the car (per phase 2 rules). Ten minutes or so later, the veterinarian called with her grim assessment: Biscuit was failing and was not going to recover. Through our tears, we then made the decision to end Biscuit's suffering. We took his body home that day and buried him on Monday next to his brother "Chino."

It was a private service attended only by family members.

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

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LETTERS

FROM PAGE 13

grams, introduced Rev. Dean Nelson, the Founder and Chairman of the national education and public policy non-profit Douglass Leadership Institute (DLI), named after the Civil War era statesman and abolitionist Frederick Douglass. Rev. Nelson discussed the work of the DLI and the values promoted by the organization, namely: righteousness, justice, liberty, and virtue. DLI works to preserve and promote these conservative values in the African American community. Locally, some of its members have helped campaign for African American conservative candidates such as Monique Miles (for Alexandria City Council) and DJ Jordan (for Virginia House of Delegates).

All three candidates for Chairman of the Republican Party of Virginia (RPV) spoke to club members on their vision for the party and answered questions. The candidates are Jack Wilson, Mike Schoelwer, and Rich Anderson. The election for chairman will take place at the RPV's convention.

CRWC President Linda App discussed the successful efforts of the local GOP during Tuesday's Republican primary for U.S. Senate. CRWC members and other Republicans staffed each precinct outside on election day and connected with hundreds of Republican voters, many of whom wanted to volunteer to work on campaigns for the fall elections. She said it is now time for volunteers to get busy promoting the full Republican slate that will be on Alexandria's ballot in November: Donald Trump for President; Daniel Gade for US Senate; and Jeff Jordan for the 8th Congressional District. Jordan was selected by a party convention of the 8th District.

CRWC is the Alexandria chapter of both the Virginia and the National Federation of Republican Women (VFRW and NFRW). CRWC encourages local Republican women of all ages to become more politically involved by helping support and elect GOP candidates to public office at the local, state, and national levels. The club also has a conservative book club and organizes activities to support charitable organizations. More information is available at www.alexandriacrwc.org. The Douglass Leadership Institute can be found at www.DLIInstitute.org.

ACPS Serves 30,000 Meals

FROM PAGE 4

Hormel says the biggest challenge has been the unknown. "We played around with a big puzzle piece. When you are in the service industry you think on the spot, but this came at us quickly, and we were scrambling." She continues, "We had to get acclimated. Just when you think you have it figured out, a new challenge would come."

She adds that they had to create a new culture and get into the rhythm of feeding the kids while putting in place a safe work environment. "There were a lot of moving parts." She says the challenge has been identifying and working through logistics; remotely adds an extra layer of difficulty.

Bennett adds, "As with any business we were faced with something different every day. We needed to problem solve and be flexible."

The plans moving forward are to maintain the status quo until Aug. 21.

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