

Alexandria Gazette Packet

25 CENTS

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AUGUST 6, 2020



Sandbagging for Isaias

Sandbags line the Starbucks building on the unit block of King Street Aug. 4 as a precaution against flooding in the wake of Tropical Storm Isaias. Minor coastal flooding occurred along the Potomac River in Old Town due to the rise in water from the storm but the city was largely spared from significant damage.

PHOTOS BY
JANET BARNETT/GAZETTE PACKET

Sandbags are stacked outside The Lucky Knot at the corner of King and Union streets in preparation for the arrival of Tropical Storm Isaias. Approximately four inches of rain fell when the storm moved through the region Aug. 4.



Dangling Liberty

Lawmakers to consider putting pretextual stops in the rearview mirror.

BY MICHAEL LEE POPE
GAZETTE PACKET

It was shortly after 2 p.m. on a clear chilly spring day several years ago in Southside Virginia when an officer with the Waverly Police Department noticed something dangling from the rearview mirror of a green sedan on Route 460. The white officer decided the dangling object, 3" by 5" parking pass for nearby Fort Lee, was a pretext to pull over the vehicle carrying two African American men. The officer ended up searching the vehicle, finding drugs and arresting both the men — all because a parking pass for Fort Lee was dangling from the rearview mirror.

"There was no evidence ever presented that it was obstructing his view," said Paul Roskin, a Hopewell-based attorney who represented one of the two Black men in the car that day. "And when he had the chance to see if it was obstructing his view, he didn't even check to see if it was obstructing his view."

Roskin tried to suppress the evidence obtained in the traffic stop, arguing that it was an unconstitutional infringement of his cli-



Do you have a parking pass dangling from your rearview mirror? What about rosary beads or a graduation tassel? Police officers can use that as a pretext to pull you over and ask to search your car.

ent's Fourth Amendment rights. If the police officer was legitimately concerned about the parking pass obstructing the view of the driver, Roskin argued, he would have checked to see if it was blocking the line of sight. But the officer's own testimony proved that he did not do that. The case made it all the way to the Supreme Court of Virginia, where justices issued a

six-to-five decision in favor of the police.

"Why did they stop this vehicle as opposed to the others?" asks Roskin. "They don't have to say honestly that they thought there was something special about this particular hanging object that made them want to stop it as opposed to the hundred others that you might see everyday on the

road."

PRETEXTUAL STOPS have raised concerns about racial profiling for years, and advocates have called on lawmakers to crack down on police officers pulling over vehicles for tinted windows or loud exhaust. Now that members of the General Assembly are returning to Richmond, they'll be considering several measures aimed at cracking down on pretextual stops like the one in Waverly.

Del. Mark Levine (D-45) is considering a bill that would prohibit officers from stopping vehicles for anything other than a moving violation.

"There's a long history of police stopping someone for driving while Black or driving while Black in the wrong neighborhood or driving a car that doesn't look like it belongs there," said Levine, who is chairman of the Public Safety Subcommittee. "They use these pretexts to ask for a search, and sometimes these things can lead to very deadly outcomes."

House members are still taking testimony in advance of the session, although senators are taking a different approach. They're already knee-deep in drafting legis-

lation. Sen. Scott Surovell (D-36) says two bills are in the works on pretextual stops. One would prohibit officers from searching someone based on the odor of marijuana, the pretextual stop that has attracted the most attention in recent years.

The bill would also prevent officers from pulling over vehicles based on things like tinted windows, loud exhaust or objects dangling from the rearview mirror. A separate bill would allow the attorney general to force consent decrees for localities that engage in racially biased policing.

"If you have a department that's engaging in lots of pretextual stops, it'll play out in the data. That's racially biased policing," said Surovell, who is spearheading the Senate's effort on criminal justice reform for the special session. "If they seem to be stopping black people a lot for not using their turn signal but not any white people for it, that's what you need a consent decree for."

REPUBLICANS ACCUSE Democrats of hypocrisy, pointing to several new pretextual stops they've added in recent years. For exam-

SEE DANGLING, PAGE 14

PHOTO BY MICHAEL LEE POPE/GAZETTE PACKET



MY VISION IS 2020



Janet Caterson Price celebrates 25 years of service in the residential real estate industry, and each year she ranks among the top Northern Virginia agents. Honesty and integrity are her hallmarks. As a Penn State graduate, Janet is a proud Nittany Lion and brings the practical experience of small business ownership, attention to detail, and high-performance standards into every aspect of her practice. She is optimistic about the advancement of our housing market, particularly in Alexandria where values are rebounding at all price points. "Let me help you fulfill your dreams during these unsettling, yet opportunistic times."



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OBITUARY

James Breeding

Al's Steakhouse owner dies at 52.

BY JEANNE THEISMANN
GAZETTE PACKET

Like many Alexandrians, James Breeding was a frequent visitor to Al's Steakhouse in Del Ray. Opened in 1955, the iconic Mount Vernon Avenue restaurant became a family favorite for Breeding, who dreamed of one day owning Al's despite having no experience in the food industry. But Breeding made that dream a reality in 2016, keeping alive the tradition of serving the best Philly cheesesteaks in the region. On July 26, the life-long Alexandrian died in Washington, D.C. from complications of diabetes. He was 52.

"All of Del Ray is saddened by Jim's passing," said "Mango" Mike Anderson, owner of several city restaurants, including three in Del Ray. "When [previous owner] John Severson passed away, everyone was excited that a local family and T.C. graduate would be taking over and keeping the business in the Alexandria family. They have done a great job of keeping the tradition of Al's alive. This is a great loss for the city."

James Vincent Breeding was born Jan. 23, 1968, in Alexandria, one of five siblings born to James D. and Myrtle E. Breeding. At six-foot, six-inches tall, he had a commanding presence and a standout career as defensive tackle for T.C. Williams High School, where he graduated in 1986. It was during his sophomore geometry class at T.C. when Breeding met his future wife, Dorothy Bradley.

With an interest in architecture, Breeding began studies at the Annandale campus of Northern Virginia Community College. He transitioned to a successful roofing and construction business that continued until he was broadsided in a 1992 car crash that left him out of work for two years.

In the mid-1990s, Breeding began building houses for D.R. Horton but eventually returned to roofing when he was offered a contract to construct the dome skin roof on the Presidential Hangar at Andrews Air Force Base. Over the next 21 years, Breeding Construction did significant work throughout the region, including roofs for the U.S. Naval Research Laboratory, Howard University, and large commercial projects in Pennsylvania.

But Breeding never forgot about Al's, always letting Severson know that he was interested in buying the restaurant when Severson was ready to sell. When Severson died in 2015, the Breeding family stepped in to keep the local favorite alive.

Breeding used his expertise in construction to give Al's a facelift and install new equipment. With much anticipation, the newly renovated restaurant opened July 6, 2016, only to suffer a catastrophic fire that closed the venue four hours later. It would be another year before the restaurant would reopen.

"That fire was devastating, not just to the Breeding family but to the entire community," said Anderson, who along with partner Bill Blackburn transformed the Holy Cow Burger restaurant into a "pop up" Al's

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James Breeding, owner of Al's Steakhouse in Del Ray, died July 26 at the age of 52.



James Breeding played defensive tackle at T.C. Williams High School, where he graduated in 1986.

"All of Del Ray is saddened by Jim's passing."

— "Mango" Mike Anderson

Steakhouse to host a fundraiser to help the Breeding family rebuild. "Everyone was anxiously awaiting the reopening of Al's. But the Del Ray community really came together to do what it does best — support one another



James and Dorothy Breeding on their wedding day.

PHOTOS CONTRIBUTED



PHOTO BY JEANNE THEISMANN/GAZETTE PACKET

Al's Steakhouse owners James Breeding, seated, with daughter Emily Breeding, standing center, and staff watch as a three-alarm fire sweeps through the Del Ray restaurant on the day of the reopening in July of 2016.

when times are tough."

Breeding is survived by his wife, Dorothy; four children, Amanda Owens and her husband Raheem, Emily Breeding, Tyler Breeding and Shannon Bartolac; and five grandchildren, A'Dyn, Brooklyn, Peyton, Skylar and Kloie. He is also survived by a sister, Terri L. Clark of Fort Washington, Md.; brothers Geary A. Breeding of Indian Rocks Beach, Fla., and Glen A. Breeding of Accokeek, Md.; as well as many nieces,

nephews, cousins and friends. He was preceded in death by his parents James D. and Myrtle E. Breeding, stepmother Phyllis J. Breeding and brother Darrel L. Breeding.

A funeral service was held Aug. 1 at Del Ray Baptist Church followed by interment at Fort Lincoln Cemetery in Brentwood, Md. In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to the National Kidney Foundation, American Heart Foundation or the American Diabetes Association.

Alexandria Schools Stay Virtual

Division to open fall semester online, then reevaluate in November.

BY BRIDGETTE ADU-WADIER
GAZETTE PACKET

Students will not return to school this fall. Instead, another several months of Zoom class discussions and online learning lie ahead.

The division's "Virtual PLUS+" program includes support for kindergarten through second-grade students, a structured bell schedule, afterschool programs, college admissions support, live instruction from teachers and tutoring.

"After much careful consideration of the facts as they stand today, we feel confident that Virtual PLUS+ will provide a quality educational experience worthy of our children while keeping the health and safety of our students, staff and families in mind," said Superintendent Gregory Hutchings. "This model places equitable access for all at the heart and ensures that we can build a framework that addresses the needs of specific groups of students to ensure they stay on course this fall."

The district doesn't plan to try to reopen schools. Instead, students will stay home and have several hours of live instruction and assignments for the first nine weeks. In November, school officials will reevaluate



A teacher in FCPS measures space between desks for safe social distance.



After considering both hybrid and virtual options, the school division will begin its first quarter online and re-evaluate after the first nine weeks.

the pandemic situation and decide if it's safe to move to in-person schooling.

THE DECISION was met with mixed feelings from students and teachers. Though some agree that the plan prioritizes students' safety, many are concerned about beginning a new school year through screens.

"I'm absolutely terrified of trying to virtually teach 150 students I've never met while frantically trying to rewrite my science curriculum for a virtual environment," said T.C. Williams physics teacher Laura Simons.

T.C. Williams senior Fina Osei-Owusu learned a lot from online learning during the last few months of her junior year. However, she's not happy about starting her senior year virtually.

"I'm actually very disappointed," said Osei-Owusu. "I feel like it takes away the joy of going to school and seeing your friends and actually having a social life outside your home. I feel like being at home and learning ... is actually pretty draining doing it every day."

Despite her initial frustration with online learning back in March, T.C. Williams senior Kate Casper thinks a fall virtual reopening was the best option the administration could

SEE HELPING, PAGE 5

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Alexandria Schools Stay Virtual

FROM PAGE 4

have come up with.

"I'm just glad ACPS came to this decision because if they had tried to do even half in-person, it would have been a huge equity issue and unfair to kids in neighborhoods that might be disproportionately affected by the virus," said Casper.

Scheduling has yet to be finalized. At the high school level, school officials have suggested five hours in class with block scheduling. Classwork will be graded normally. How middle and high school students will be able to manage a full-online course load with multiple classes remains unknown. Even though the district was successful in quickly transitioning to online learning last school year, many students struggled to stay on track with classwork.

"I'm worried about my students being able to balance seven virtual classes at once," said Simons. "I remember how stressed and overwhelmed they were last spring, and that was with teachers they knew and courses with which they were already familiar."

AS FOR PARENTS with younger children, childcare options will be tough to navigate in the fall. The district says there will be childcare support, but it will look a lot different than before. Many childcare centers have closed. Now, parents depend on Zoom daycare sessions and other family members

to keep their children occupied while they work.

Happy Home Child Learning Center, a prominent childcare service in Southern Towers, was among the few that has stayed open during the pandemic. Happy Home now predominantly serves essential workers and new clients have to go through a lengthy process to register new children.

Deborah Tillman, Happy Home's CEO, prioritizes safety above all else. While the childcare center is open, children practice social distancing and everything is disinfected after every use. The total number of children was reduced from 53 to 40, with ten children in each room. For parents who can't bring their children to the center, Happy Home provides video lessons for children, along with Zoom activities.

"If the parents are working virtually, obviously they can't watch a seven-year-old all day. And a seven-year-old can't sit in front of a computer all day because they still have to get outside," said Tillman. "Let's start thinking about how we can support families if they are at home and let's start thinking about how we can support families if they have to go to work."

The division will come out with more specific childcare details in the coming weeks. The plan will be submitted to the Virginia Department of Education on Aug. 14, after it's presented to the School Board on Aug. 7.

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OPINION

Say Their Names: In Remembrance: Benjamin Thomas, August 8, 1899

BY AUDREY P. DAVIS,
DIRECTOR ALEXANDRIA BLACK HISTORY MUSEUM

During the early morning of August 8th in 1899, at the corner of King and Fairfax streets, just across from Market Square, a 16-year-old boy named Benjamin Thomas was lynched by a mob of thousands. In life, he was denied the right to a fair trial and protection. Benjamin Thomas deserved better from his community.

On August 8, 2020, the City of Alexandria will honor Benjamin Thomas' memory with a virtual remembrance ceremony.

The event is part of the City's renewed commitment to social justice, which is exemplified by the Alexandria Community Remembrance Project. This project is inspired by the Equal Justice Initiative's (EJI) National Memorial for Peace and Justice in Montgomery, Alabama. The memorial includes over 800 steel monuments, or pillars, one for each county in the United States where a lynching took place, with the names of the lynching victims engraved on the pillars. The goal of the Community Remembrance Project is to bring Alexandria's pillar to the City, displaying it in a

prominent location. The pillar has two names on it: Joseph McCoy, who was killed on April 23, 1897; and Benjamin Thomas.

Recently, our country has faced terrible crises – the global COVID-19 pandemic and the deaths of Breonna Taylor, Ahmaud Arbery, and George Floyd. While the unjust deaths of African Americans was not new, recent pandemic "stay at home" orders forced Americans to see in real-time the abuse that African Americans have been reporting for years. We've seen rac-

"I am no longer accepting the things I cannot change. I am changing the things I cannot accept."

—Angela Y. Davis, Educator and Activist

ist rants captured on cell phones, but also corporations and Hollywood apologizing for their lack of inclusivity. Most importantly, we saw Black Lives Matter protests grow into an international movement.

The Serenity Prayer, a very familiar prayer for Americans, asks for the serenity to accept the things I cannot change, courage to change the things I can, and the wisdom to

know the difference. Today, more of us are unwilling to accept the status quo. Accountability is the only acceptable course, and many are willing to change the things they can no longer accept.

In 1897 and 1899, there was no accountability for the murders of Joseph McCoy and Benjamin Thomas. There has been little to no accountability for the deaths of millions of African Americans beginning with slavery until the present day. In our country, all people are created equal, and all are innocent until proven guilty.

Now more than ever, we must stand up for what is right, true and fair. In the words of the late John Lewis, we must ... Get in good trouble, necessary trouble ... Today we all must walk the walk of social justice in our daily lives.

Due to the pandemic, the remembrance for Benjamin Thomas will be virtual. On Aug. 8, the Alexandria Community Remembrance Project asks Alexandrians to do two things. First, say the name of Benjamin Thomas, and remember him and his family. We also ask everyone to say the names of the African American men who tried to save Benjamin Thomas' life. Please take a moment to recite the following:

I / We say their names to remember ... to never forget ... to know there are people who will stand on the right side of history, even at great personal cost. Today we say their names...

James Alexander
Robert Buckner
Allen Carter
Thomas Elzie
Edward Gibson
Albert Green
John Haskins
Alfred Mason
Harry McDonald
John Nelson
Edward Payne
James Turley
Richard Washington
William Washington
John Wilson

They live on in our hearts as we strive to make Alexandria a welcoming and inclusive city. Today, we also remember Benjamin Thomas and all African Americans who died at the hands of racist terror hate mobs. We keep their memories alive as we vow to fight against racism and injustice.

For more information about future programming, ways to participate, or how to donate, please visit the Alexandria Community Remembrance Project website: <https://www.alexandriava.gov/historic/blackhistory/default.aspx?id=106501>.

The Path to Marijuana Legalization

BY SEN. ADAM EBBIN

The prohibition of marijuana in America has clearly failed. After six hard years of building support, educating colleagues, and workshopping legislation, I was able to pass SB2, my bill to eliminate the criminal penalty for personal possession of up to an ounce of marijuana and downgrade the offense to a \$25 pre-payable fine processed much like a traffic ticket. House Majority Leader Charniele Herring (D-Alexandria) passed companion legislation. Our bills were a critical step to reform our criminal justice system and lay the groundwork for the equitable legalization of cannabis.

According to a July 2019 Gallup poll, 12% of adult Americans regularly consume marijuana. Eleven states have fully legalized responsible use by adults. However, until SB2 went into effect on July 1, 26,000 Virginians were being arrested for possessing marijuana

every year. They were punished with devastating, life-long consequences for a victimless and arbitrary crime. Arrests for marijuana possession can hurt job prospects and negatively impact student financial aid, access to housing, and even child custody decisions. This issue was exacerbated by the harsh reality that Black and Brown Virginians are 340% more likely to be arrested for marijuana possession than white Virginians, even though white and Black Virginians use marijuana at the same rate -- according to a study by the ACLU.

Black Arlingtonians were eight times more likely than white Arlingtonians to be arrested for marijuana possession. When arrested, penalties were more harshly enforced against Black and Brown Virginians. Marijuana decriminalization was a moral and economic imperative during the 2020 legislative session, both because of the



Adam Ebbin

cost to minority communities and the ballooning cost of enforcement on our state's budget (we had been spending over \$100 million a year on enforcement). With this important step taken care of, it is now

time to move towards equitable legalization.

Decriminalization builds a short-term safety net to remove the overly-punitive enforcement of possession of marijuana, but long-term equitable reform requires bringing the benefits of legalization to the communities disparately impacted by the war on drugs. Based on the study of the eleven states and the District of Columbia which have already legalized adult-use, the sale of marijuana through a regulated marketplace can both net millions in state revenue and create strong small, minority-owned businesses throughout the state. Washington, a state similar in size to Virginia, netted nearly \$400 million in tax

revenues from legal marijuana in 2019. In Illinois, which recently legalized, a large portion of the tax revenue is allotted to grants to reduce gun violence and poverty and provide social services. A state-regulated retail market ensures product testing and labeling, minimizes the illicit marketplace which contributes to violence in our communities, and reduces youth access to cannabis.

COVID-19 has undercut funds for key state services and hit minority communities disproportionately hard. Creating equitable marijuana reform can be an important tool in our policymaking toolbox to address these issues.

According to a Gallup Poll, 66% of Americans support the legalization of marijuana. In Virginia, those supporters consist of a broad and diverse coalition that I was glad to work with to pass decriminalization in this year's legislative session and look forward to working with to pass legalization

SEE THE PATH, PAGE 7



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OPINION

The Path To Marijuana Legalization

FROM PAGE 6

in 2021. This list includes Attorney General Mark Herring, Sen. Jennifer McClellan (D-Richmond), Del. Charniele Herring (D-Alexandria), Del. Steve Heretick (D-Portsmouth), and Virginia NORML (National Organization for the Reform of Marijuana Laws).

The Joint Legislative and Audit Review Commission (JLARC) is expediting a study on the potential implementation of legalization due to be received in November. This dovetails with an executive workgroup that will be composed of members of the Governor's cabinet to provide guidance on the best regulatory model for cannabis in Virginia so that when we introduce legislation in January, it is ready for primetime. While we are anxious to introduce this legislation, real leadership requires making the right choices for the long-term benefit of every Virginian. Equitable reform demands appropriate safety regulations, support for disparately-impacted communities, and a structure for taxation. Legal cannabis should support Virginia's small businesses, not simply pad the pockets of massive corporations. Small, Women-owned, and Minority-owned (SWaM) businesses can play a critical role in the entire supply chain including farming, processing, and brick and mortar sales.

The prohibition of marijuana has failed and the consequence of this failure has been felt overwhelmingly by Virginians of color, but it has not ended. It will only end when it is replaced by a regulated adult-use market that emphasizes equity-making whole those who have been burdened most by making sure they have a seat at the table and share in the profits. I am looking forward to doing the hard work needed to get this right.

Adam Ebbin represents the 30th Senatorial District comprised of parts of Arlington, Alexandria, and Mount Vernon and Lee Districts of Fairfax County.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Thankful

I want to let you know how thankful I am for Mrs. Char McCargo Bah and the many articles she has written for the Alexandria Gazette. Her articles have always helped me gain insight into the lives of my loved ones who were born and educated in Alexandria,

SEE LETTERS, PAGE 8

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LETTERS

FROM PAGE 7

VA. I was so excited to read her latest article about Henry T. White who was the Principal of several of my beloved ancestors who attended Hallowell and Park Gray.

Mrs. Char is a very dedicated writer, especially to the Alexandria, VA community and I look forward to reading each and every article she writes. Thanks!

Respectfully,

Gale A. Brooks Ogden

Tapestry of Experiences that Make Alexandria Special

To the editor:

It is always a pleasure to shout praises to you for covering and to Char Bah for writing stories so illustrative of the Black experience in Alexandria! Char continues to spotlight with authority, based on research and oral histories, the stories that serve to highlight our often untold journey. I loved learning more about the first principal at Parker Gray. It is another story of survival that is so important for

all students and citizens. These stories add to the rich tapestry of real life experiences that make Alexandria special!

Gwen Day-Fuller
Alexandria

On the 'First Principal of Parker-Gray School'

To the editor:

I would like to express my gratitude to one of your editors Char Bah. I enjoy reading her articles in the Alexandria Gazette about various different pillars of the original Alexandria community.

I heard various stories from my parents who are from the city of Alexandria. The neighbors, the community, how it use to be when they were growing up to include this principal per the article Char has written about.

I truly appreciate her captioning/ preserving the history of legends, prominent communities, the individuals of the community to include extended family members, cousins, neighborhoods my relatives grew up in. To include capturing my own parents, grand-

parents etc.

This is a legacy, Thanks to Char! I can share and pass to my children.

Please extend my gratitude and many Thanks to Char Bah!!

She has no idea how much I truly appreciate what she is doing for generations to come.

Randy Scott
Alexandria

Lobbying for Leniency?

The three prosecutors in the ultra-liberal dense urban core consisting of Alexandria, Arlington, and Fairfax have broken with their Commonwealth-wide association which includes prosecutors from less liberal places. These three and their eight like-minded colleagues in other places in Virginia somehow believe they are more benighted than Virginia's 109 other commonwealth attorneys. But they are not lobbying for justice in this month's special legislative session -- they are lobbying for leniency. Some of the crimes for which they are seeking expungement, such as drunk/drugged driving, are serious crimes. Do we really want to hide this sort of information about an applicant for a truck-driving job?

These three young prosecutors have forgotten or ignored history. In the 1960s and 70s, courts and lawmakers were taken in by these same sorts of "justice" and "fairness" arguments and relaxed laws. Soon thereafter began a crime spike (tripling in under a decade), giving rise to a reaction which generated over a quarter century of reforms making laws stricter, with the consequence that crime levels returned to near pre-1960s levels. The "war on drugs" legal reforms no doubt played a role in stanching these high crime rates.

Arlington and Fairfax's Commonwealth's Attorneys ran on progressive platforms to defeat moderate Democrat incumbents. This progressivism has led to potential prosecutorial misconduct masquerading as discretion, to

the point where judges had to reject Arlington's prosecutor's effort to set aside charges to assure the laws are faithfully executed rather than ignored. There are limits to how far progressive prosecutors can go in enforcing laws they don't like, but which are on the books because conservative Republicans and moderate Democrats in the legislature enacted them.

"Banning the box" and statutorily regulating how employers and landlords can consider elements of a criminal record are a more responsible way to handle criminal histories than engaging the courts in legal maneuvers to pretend it never happened by expunging or sealing records, which amounts to hiding them.

Dino Drudi
Alexandria

Let Us Know Your View

Connection Newspapers welcomes views on any public issue. Letters must be signed. Include home address and home and business numbers; we will only print your name and town name.

Letters are routinely edited for length, libel, grammar, good taste, civility and factual errors.

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Making Dreams Come True - Spirit Week

The City of Alexandria, Department of Recreation is truly focused on working hard to safeguard our city and communities. While COVID 19 has taken our nation by storm in 2020, the staff and campers at the Nannie J. Lee Recreation Center still have their SPIRIT even amid this global pandemic.

As our nation is adapting to many uncertainties and the new norm of wearing facial masks and practicing physical distancing, our goal remains to make our campers dreams come true safely and keep the spirit of summer fun alive! On the week of July 20th, our annual spirit week went off without a hitch. Campers and staff showed their spirit by dressing up based on our Disney

themed days. From Marvel Monday Superhero Day, Sleeping Beauty Tuesday Pajama Day, Tangled Inside Out Wednesday, Wacky Tacky & Crazy Hair Day, Monster U Thursday Jersey Day, and Back to the Ball Friday Disney Day.

Each day was filled with pure joy, FUN, and enthusiasm from the campers and staff. As we continue to serve our communities during this unprecedented time, we will continue to foster an environment that is welcoming, fun for all and creates lasting and memorable experiences. We look forward to serving our families in the fall. For more information on our programs and services, please call our R & R office at 703-746-5414.



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United States Census 2020

3/30/2020

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LIVING LEGENDS OF ALEXANDRIA

Living Legend: Rosa Landeros

BY SHIRLEY RUHE

Rosa Landeros is the parent liaison at Mount Vernon Community School, but she says her real calling is to welcome families to the community and act as the cultural broker between the students, teachers, parents and the community. Landeros has been in the school system since 1998 but at Mount Vernon since 2000. She acts as the link between school and home and explains she has been very lucky to work with administrators who believe in her work at Mount Vernon.

Out of 900 students at Mount Vernon, 50 percent come from low-income families. Landeros' role is building relationships between the school and families; she works to create a network of people who are invested in seeing students succeed, including parents, teachers, other students, and the larger school community. If a student's needs are not being met, Landeros connects the students and their families to the supports and services necessary for academic and social success. She feels very lucky to have great support from the community for their many projects.

For instance, at the beginning of the year for the last six years she has worked with the First Assembly of God Church to provide backpacks full of supplies, this year for 160 students. The church contacts the school in the spring before the next school year to find out the needs of the children so they can



Rosa Landeros is a 2020 Living Legend of Alexandria.

order supplies. "The church brings the backpacks here. Families contact me to request what they need. It is a wonderful cooperative effort."

She points out they are also grateful to a local chain store which has a fundraiser every year to provide shoes, 100 pairs last year, for those who request them at Mount Vernon. She receives referrals from teachers and the school nurse who recommend children who need shoes and can provide the sizes. Landeros says it is really

a team effort.

The community also donates the blue pants or skirts and red polos for the school uniforms and the school maintains a closet where parents volunteer and organize the clothes. She says this way they get to know each other. Landeros credits the wonderful school PTA with working hard to raise funds that go directly to the students at Mount Vernon. She says it is not a typical "bake and sell" PTA. "They work so hard to give opportunities to all of the students at Mount Vernon."

For weekends, Landeros organiz-

es Blessings in a Backpack which sends 100 less-privileged children home with non-perishable food for Saturday and Sunday. They have been providing this important help for the students for five years. She says the school is very blessed to have money donated to the PTA for the supplies, three people in charge of the program who order and pick up the food, volunteers to pack up the bags and those who drive the food to the school. It takes a lot of teamwork to make this happen.

But Landeros believes the common tie underlying all of these efforts is "to help us understand each other." She points out we are an example to our children. Her proudest effort is the Neighbors to Friends program which she first envisioned as a project in her Parent Leadership Training Institute class in 2008.

The underlying idea is integration within the community, to provide a space where English and Spanish speaking parents can get together to learn each other's language and culture. This is now happening in regular Tuesday meetings which brings teachers, parents and staff members together in an informal setting where they can learn about each other. She says it is also important because it assists parents with helping their children at home.

"The vision I had in 2008 is blooming. It took a long time for the dream to become a reality. It takes a long time to build trust."

Landeros says her own experi-

ence has helped her do the job she does today. She came from Mexico where she was a social worker with her husband, Agustin, and her two small children, Saray and Ignacio. They didn't speak a word of English.

Life was very hard. But she remembers when she had to do all of the jobs she had to do to make life work, she always kept in mind that she wanted her children to get an education. Now Saray, 34, is a forensic scientist, and Ignacio, 31, is a mechanical engineer.

She says she had to go through the whole process herself to understand the families she works with today. She explains what she has done is put together her role as the mother, the immigrant and the social worker to become the cultural broker.

She says when people share their culture, they find they have more in common than differences. Landeros encourages having the children share their holidays such as the Mexican Día de los Niños in April, which is a celebration of childhood with parades and presents. "And we love to dance."

She says in 20 years she knows a lot of people and they all believe in what she does. They give her the opportunity and freedom to embrace everybody, to build relationships and see everybody's talents. Landeros remembers she had a lot of mentors to help navigate the new world when she came to the United States. "When you have that, it is powerful," and now she does that for others.

Three Living Legends of Alexandria Gather at The Lyceum

Carolyn Griffin (left), Kathleen Baker (center) and Nina Tisara (right), friends since the 80s and each recognized as Living Legends of Alexandria, gathered at Alexandria History Museum at The Lyceum this past weekend to see "Witnessing Worship," Tisara's 1985 photo documentary of worship in Alexandria. For now, The Lyceum is open on Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays, 11 a.m. – 4 p.m. To ensure social-distancing, entry is with a timed ticket that can be reserved on their website, <https://www.alexandriava.gov/Lyceum#EventTickets>.

For info about the exhibit see <https://www.alexandriava.gov/uploadedFiles/historic/info/lyceum/WitnessingWorshipExhibit.pdf>.

Delayed exposure photo by Kathleen Baker (she set the shutter and jumped in.)



BULLETIN BOARD

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

SATURDAY/AUG. 8

E-Recycle Plants Trees. 9 a.m. to 6 p.m.

At More Vang, Inc., 4214 Wheeler Avenue, Alexandria. Join this safe, drive-through e-recycling event and go 'double-green'. Bring your used laptops, monitors, cellphones, pay a modest disposal fee, and 10 trees will be planted. Visit the website: <https://treecycle001.eventbrite.com>

CITY REOPENS FOOD WASTE COMPOSTING

The City of Alexandria's food waste composting stations reopened at the Del Ray and Old Town farmers' markets on Saturday, Aug. 1, and at the Four Mile Run and West End markets on Sunday, Aug. 2. Service will resume during the normal operating hours, which are available at [alexandriava.gov/Food-Waste](https://www.alexandriava.gov/Food-Waste).

First Homicide of the Year

The Alexandria Police Department is asking for help to locate Ibrahm Elkahilil Bouaichi, who is wanted for the July 29 murder of Karla Elizabeth Dominguez Gonzalez. Bouaichi is described as a 33-year-old man of Middle Eastern descent, 6 feet 2 inches tall, weighing approximately 180 pounds.

Bouaichi should be considered armed and dangerous, and poses a potential threat to anyone who comes into contact with him, according to police.

Police report that Bouaichi was last known to be driving a stolen, black, 2013 Nissan Altima sedan with Maryland tags 1CN3103.

Anyone with information regarding Bouaichi's whereabouts is asked to call the Alexandria Police Department immediately at 703.746.6751. Anyone who sees or comes into contact with Bouaichi should call 911 immediately. In some places, including in Alexandria, you can text 911 if you can't call. Anyone with information about the July 29 murder or Bouaichi's whereabouts may provide it



Ibrahm Elkahilil Bouaichi

anonymously.

On July 29, 2020, at 6:20 a.m., the Alexandria Police Department responded to a call regarding shots fired on S. Greenmount Drive. Of-

ficers found the body of a woman with gunshot wounds to her upper body.

This was the first homicide in Alexandria in 2020.



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APPETITE

Thai Signature Wants to Leave Its Mark on King Street

BY HOPE NELSON
GAZETTE PACKET

Nestled in the heart of King Street, there's a new Thai flavor coming to town. Thai Signature has opened its doors at 722 King Street, formerly the longtime home of Geranio Ristorante, and it's aiming to bring some of Thailand's best street food to American palates. It's the cuisine that reminds owner Golf Wiwattanachaisaeng of home.

"Because I'm from the countryside of my country -- not in the city -- I like to eat street food, food from the countryside," Wiwattanachaisaeng said.

And he wants to win Alexandri-

ans over with it as well.

Some of the highlights of Thai Signature's menu include the Crying Tiger, a traditional Northeast dish featuring grilled sirloin steak with basil and red onions served alongside a papaya salad and sticky rice. Or, Wiwattanachaisaeng says, try the E-Saan Chicken, a grilled marinated chicken dish also served with a papaya salad and sticky rice with spicy tamarind sauce and sweet chili sauce.

"The middle of Thailand, they like to eat a little bit sweet, so I recommend the Khao Moo Dang," Wiwattanachaisaeng said. "It's like a steamed rice with marinated pork with our spices and herbs. We marinate and we grill and we serve with a gravy, rare pork, and moo

IF YOU GO

Thai Signature, 722 King St.

Hours: 11:30-10 p.m. Sunday-Thursday; 11:30-11 p.m. Friday-Saturday.

Try this: "For the appetizer, you must try the Thai chicken wing, pork stick, fried pork or fried chicken," says owner Golf Wiwattanachaisaeng.

dang sauce."

And for Thai-food fans looking for something a bit more familiar, Wiwattanachaisaeng assures diners he's there for them.

"You can see some dishes different from the other restaurants, but I also have standard dishes also, like pad Thai, drunken noodles," Wiwattanachaisaeng said.

And he says the curries are standouts, as well.

"I love the curry; we have very good curry, green curry and Panang curry are very good," he said.

pickup. Or dine in, either in the restaurant or outdoors, with all the distancing and safety requirements in effect.

After Thai Signature's soft opening, Wiwattanachaisaeng says the feedback has been largely positive.

"We're getting better and better," he said.

And, he says, he's happy to finally have opened the restaurant's doors in Alexandria.

"I love Old Town -- not really city, and not really country," he said. "... I love this area."

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.



A worker from Sweet Fire Donna's Restaurant prepares the outdoor seating patio in the 500 block of John Carlyle Street as area restaurants continue to adjust to COVID-19 dining guidelines.



Patio seating for Tequila & Taco Restaurant is open along Emerson Ave. in the Carlyle section of Alexandria.

PHOTOS BY 'MANCO' MIKE ANDERSON

FUN THINGS TO DO THIS SUMMER

SUMMER

ENTERTAINMENT SERIES

Beginning July 30, the Fairfax County Park Authority will livestream 25 free summer concert events featuring a mix of nationally known performers and singer-songwriters. These virtual events provide a new way to enjoy great performances from the safety of your home. To view a livestream concert, go to the Fairfax County Park Authority's Summer Entertainment Series main page at www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/performance, select the date on the calendar for this performance, and click on the links for the livestream video.

Schedule

Thursday, Aug. 6 -- Willow Hill (County), 7:30 p.m.
Friday, Aug. 7 -- The Jakob's Ferry Stragglers, 7:30 p.m.
Saturday, Aug. 8 -- Ordinary Elephant, 7:30 p.m.
Thursday, Aug. 13 -- John McCutcheon, 7:30 p.m.
Friday, Aug. 14 -- Alice Howe with Freebo, 7:30 p.m.
Friday, Aug. 21 -- Lee District Nights: Frank Solivan, 7:30 p.m.
Sunday, Aug. 23 -- Starlight Cinema:

Oshima Brothers, 7:30 p.m.
Saturday, Aug. 27 -- The End of America, 7:30 p.m.
Saturday, Aug. 27 -- Mount Vernon Nights: Los Texmaniacs, 7:30 p.m.

AUG. 17-21

Summer Virtual Camp. 9 - 10 a.m. Virtual presentation. At 1605 Cameron Street, Alexandria. Art That Takes You Places. Ages 10 - 12. You may be staying close to home this summer, but while you are in this class you will be whisked away -- make some art that takes you places. Virtual camp fees are \$75 per screen for each week with an additional \$10 fee if you wish to purchase a material kit. Email: info@upcyclecrrc.org. To register, visit www.upcyclecrrc.org/camps. Zoom link will be sent the day before the camp starts to access the virtual classes.

AUG. 25 -- ACT ONE

"Saltwater Farm" by Ann Timmons. 7:15- 9 p.m. Presented by Pipeline Playwrights in association with MetroStage, a two-part reading of the complete script-in-progress. Aug. 25: Act One and Sept. 1: Act

Two. As an old Maine family's wealth is disappearing, siblings face hard choices while confronting their own past in a changing world. Can't make both nights? Watch live when you can, then catch up on YouTube. Link of YouTube will be posted on Pipeline Playwrights' website (www.pipelineplaywrights.org) when available. Register at <https://forms.gle/4ptA5Y2BtUGX5u519>

Online Coding Classes for Kids

CodeWizardsHQ is offering online after school coding classes for kids and summer coding classes for kids with a structured curriculum that is comprehensive, developmental, challenging, and fun. Students get to code a project in every class. Expect the most fun and effective live, teacher-led coding classes for kids with support, including live office hours and 24/7 access to their proprietary coding platform. Their teachers take a students-first approach to teaching Python, Java, HTML/CSS, and JavaScript that guarantees students will reach their potential. New summer classes are starting on August 3. Visit www.CodeWizardsHQ.com.

THE BIRCHMERE REOPENS

The Birchmere in Alexandria is reopening with limited capacity. During the public health emergency, there will be a \$25 food and beverage minimum and a \$5 Covid fee. There will be no bar service and no gathering in the stage or bar areas. Customers will be escorted to their seats, and those without reserved seats will be seated by staff to ensure social distancing.

Schedule of Shows:

Friday, Aug. 7 -- The Ron Holloway Band
Saturday, Aug. 8 -- Motown & More: The Legacy Lives
Friday, Aug. 14 -- Eli Cook Band
Friday, Aug. 21 -- Michael Clem (of Ed-die From Ohio) and Rusty Speidel (of SGGL)
The venue is located at 3701 Mount Vernon Avenue, Alexandria. Visit the Birchmere's website: <http://www.birchmere.com/>

TYSONS CORNER

DRIVE-IN MOVIES

Tyson's Corner Center is hosting Drive-In Movie Nights, in partnership with the Hyatt Regency Tysons Corner Center, on the second week-

end of each month. Located along Fashion Blvd. between Nordstrom and Bloomingdale's, will open for parking, be sure to bring your ticket. Show starts at 8:30 p.m.

Friday, Aug. 14 -- "Aladdin"
Saturday, Sept. 12 -- "Mrs. Doubtfire"
Reserve your spot - space is limited. Reservation and movie details are located at <https://www.tysonscorn-center.com/Events>

DRIVE-IN MOVIES

South Riding Town Center in Chantilly will host a free Summer Drive-In Movie Series each Tuesday evening now through August 18. Attendance is limited to South Riding residents and advanced registration is required. Spectators must remain in their car during the movie but may roll down their windows. South Riding Inn and Dominos will be available for delivery to vehicles and other food options are available for takeout. No alcohol. Registration is available on the events page at www.southriding.net. The movie begins at sunset and lineup for the summer is as follows:

Aug. 11 -- "Aladdin"
Aug. 18 -- "The Lego Movie"

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Republican Women Honor the 100th Anniversary of the 19th Amendment Ratification

The Commonwealth Republican Women's Club (CRWC) met briefly - with masks and social distancing - to commemorate the 100th Anniversary of the ratification of the 19th Amendment granting women the right to vote in August of 1920.

Members and guests took turns reading biographical information while showing photographs of some of the well-known figures from the decades of leadership of the women's suffrage movement beginning in the early 1800's until the ratification in 1920. The program highlighted efforts at coordination and synergy between the abolitionist and suffragist movements, the turn-of-the-century black women's Republican Party clubs, the "Silent Sentinel" protests in Washington, DC, and the "Night of Terror" in nearby Occoquan. The leaders highlighted included: Sojourner Truth, Harriett Tubman, Susan B. Anthony, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Lucy Burns, and Alice Paul.

Special guest Wendy Gade, wife of the Republican nominee for U.S. Senate Daniel Gade, provided clos-



Republican women with photos of the suffragists they profiled at the CRWC celebration with special guest Wendy Gade (center), wife of Republican nominee for U.S. Senate Daniel Gade.

ing comments regarding the law's ratification in 1920. Attendees wore white with "Votes for Women" sashes and purple, white, and gold ribbons in honor of the colors worn by the suffragists. CRWC President Linda App said, "We owe those women a debt of gratitude, and we all need to remember what a sacred duty it is to cast a vote. Voting today determines the path our community and our nation will

take tomorrow. We must choose wisely." CRWC is the Alexandria chapter of both the Virginia and the National Federation of Republican Women (VFRW and NFRW). More information is available at www.alexandriacrwc.org. NFRW has posted a special message on the important historical role of the Republican Party supporting the right of women to vote at <https://www.nfrw.org/women-suffrage>

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Kiewit-McNally Constructors, AJV (KMJV) invites all firms who are certified as an MBE/WBE by the State of Virginia or City of Alexandria to submit proposals, along with a Letter of Certification, for the following project: River Renew Tunnel System, Alexandria, VA. Major scopes on the project include slurry walls, foundations, utility work, concrete work and building trades. To assist certified MBE/WBE contractors and suppliers and foster participation, we will divide work packages into economically feasible packages.

Proposals for subcontractor scopes of work are being accepted on varying dates through the end of August 2020. KMJV utilizes BuildingConnected for vendor communications regarding plans/specs/addenda distribution. Please contact Jaryd Frost for project information at Jaryd.Frost@kiewit.com. KMJV is an Equal Opportunity Employer.

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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

Safeguarding My Future

By KENNETH B. LOURIE



Whether or not I'm certain about my attitude toward being a dual cancer threat (non small cell lung and papillary thyroid, cancer), only my subconscious knows for sure. This was recently made clear to when I provided my supermarket shopping preferences to my wife, Dina, who for reasons she takes very seriously: my health, won't let me go into stores to buy anything. Ergo, my list. And I may add, there is much adieu about those preferences. It's like a negotiation. Though not exactly partisan, the debates rage on and I'm lucky, if I see more than a handful of requests honored from my list. In effect, Dina is my gatekeeper (you'll note I didn't say jailor).

There are some requests which are rarely obstructed: health and fitness, fruits and vegetables, meat and potatoes and any other non-desert/snack-type item. I'm not going to bore you readers by saying how long it's been since I've had a Hostess cupcake or an Entenmann's cake or a TastyKake anything; I wouldn't want you to feel sorry for me. In spite of this food censorship, I'm hardly wasting away. Though I've lost some weight, mostly due to my low iodine diet a few months back (as part of my thyroid cancer treatment), it was weight I could certainly afford to lose.

Now that I've lost it, Dina doesn't want me to gain it all back. Which I can understand and appreciate. Overweight often leads to any number of problems: hypertension, diabetes and even heart disease, to name a few possible complications. Still, I have my food requirements (OKAY, needs) and unless I get them, Kenny will become even more of a dull boy than he already is. So far, Dina is not budging. I wouldn't quite say she's the immovable object, but she definitely remains an obstacle to my caloric happiness.

And the 'caloric happiness' to which I refer are basically Kenny's four food groups: cake, cookies, candy and ice cream, which also explains my presumptive epitaph: "He never met a carbohydrate he didn't eat." But when the conversation moves to other less controversial items, the conversation is much less problematic and maybe even indicative of who I am, what I've become and how I assess my future prospects (life expectancy).

When one receives a cancer diagnosis, your brain gets rewired (figuratively speaking) and your choices become sort of a window to your soul. Things you want/ don't want become tells of what's being debated in your brain. Initially, after hearing your cancer diagnosis, it's unnatural almost to want what you used to want. It feels trivial. Your frame of reference - and context, narrow and shorten. When the future you anticipated is snatched away, it's not only time which is taken. Hopes, dreams and normalcy are snatched away as well. And sometimes, without even realizing it, a request is made which inadvertently illuminates the route to the light at the end of the tunnel.

That moment occurred for me during last week's supermarket list discussion. Aside from the usual stuff that likely would need to be re-ordered, I ordered something new, without it being considered in the context of cancer (basically an abbreviated timeline). I asked Dina to order me an eight-pack of soap bars, an amount of soap that would probably last a few months, at a minimum. A 'minimum' which you don't necessarily anticipate. Not that a cancer diagnosis automatically shortens your life, but generally speaking, it is bad for business, if you know what I mean? A business which, apparently, I'm now willing to invest in. Maybe time is on my side after all.

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

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NEWS

Dangling Liberty

FROM PAGE 1

ple, police officers can now pull over vehicles if the driver is talking on a cell phone or if a passenger in the car is not wearing a seat belt. They can also pull over a vehicle if a child is not in a car seat. These are some examples of recent additions to the code Democrats supported for so-called primary offenses, actions that can now serve as a primary reason for an officer to pull over a vehicle.

"When I got to the General Assembly in 2003, there were people on the Democratic side of the aisle who were concerned about giving police pretexts to stop people," said Sen. Mark Obenshain (R-26). "Sometime along the way, those concerns evaporated and were consumed by a desire to change people's behavior."

During the discussion about cell phone use, for example, Obenshain said making it a primary offense would lead to police officers being able to pull over any driver on the suspicion that they might have been touching a cell phone. He lost that argument. And now that the criminal-justice reform effort is shining a new spotlight on the issue, he says lawmakers should take a look at all the other pretextual stops and be consistent about the issue.

"All of a sudden these defend-the-police activists in the General Assembly have decided that we need to crack down on pretextual stops by police," said Obenshain, who is a member of the Senate committee that will be considering criminal-justice reforms during the special session.

"If you're concerned about pretextual stops, you ought to be concerned about it across the board, not just in limited circumstances."

CRIMINAL JUSTICE REFORM has emerged as a political flashpoint after the death of George Floyd, a Black man who was murdered in Minneapolis by white police officers.

That event touched off nationwide protests calling for reforms like better training for police officers and use-of-force standards. But Justice Forward Virginia points out that police officers in Minneapolis had escalation training, implicit bias training, use-of-force standards and three civilian review boards. Minnesota requires more than twice as many training hours as Virginia, an indication that training might not be an easy solution to the problem.

"If we're really going to solve this problem, we need to get at it at its root," said Haywood, executive director of Justice Forward Virginia. "You don't solve racism in policing by asking police officers to be less

racist, and you don't solve excessive force by asking them to be gentler when they take somebody into custody."

Instead of focusing on new training requirements or new use-of-force standards, Haywood says, lawmakers need to focus on laws that enable police officers to focus on

"The reason they're pulling cars over at 11 o'clock at night is not because they're worried about signaling. It's because it's part of their drug-enforcement strategy."

— Andrew Elders, a deputy public defender for Fairfax County

the laws that enable racist policing. The best way to do that is to reduce pretextual policing, which he says often serves as a cover story for officers to act on their implicit bias. That way police officers can stop Black people simply for having rosary beads dangling from their rearview mirror or a license plate tag light that's not working.

"I've been pulled over plenty of times. No police of-

ficer has ever asked to search my car," said Haywood, who is white. "I don't think white people think about this enough, just how damaging that can be to one's psyche and how damaging that can be to the trust between the police department and the community they're supposed to be serving."

POLICE OFFICERS have hundreds of reasons they can use as a pretext for pulling over Black people, everything from a high-mount brake light that's not working to a Washington football team license plate frame that partially obscures a license plate. The way Virginia law works right now, officers don't need to be certain that a violation of the law is happening. All they need is essentially a hunch that a parking tag from Fort Lee might be obstructing a driver's view of the road.

"The reason they're pulling cars over at 11 o'clock at night is not because they're worried about signaling," said Andrew Elders, a deputy public defender for Fairfax County. "It's because it's part of their drug-enforcement strategy."

Elders remembers a case back in 2006, when he represented a man who was pulled over because he had an object dangling from his rearview mirror. The officer found drugs in the car, and the man was charged with possession of marijuana. When the case got to court, the police officer could not remember anything about the dangling object that served as the pretext to the traffic stop — nothing about what it was or how big it was or where it was.

Elders tried to suppress the evidence gathered in the stop, but the judge allowed the case to move forward anyway.

"Nobody in my neighborhood gets pulled over for that stuff, and that's what this is all about," said Elders. "It's not about the thing. It's about stopping the person in the car and wanting to ask them some questions because you think they are the kind of person who might be committing a crime."

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