

Day Is Done

Bugler honors lives lost to COVID-19.

BY JEANNE THEISMANN
THE GAZETTE

PHOTOS BY JANET BARNETT/THE GAZETTE

It was a simple enough request. Retired Navy Captain Charlie Kropf, now in his late 80s, asked his neighbor Paul Johnson if he would play Taps at sunset. The date was April 4 and thus began the nightly tradition that continues in the Williamsburg Manor North neighborhood.

"I had stopped in to check on how Charlie was doing during the quarantine," said Johnson, a retired Navy Master Chief and former member of the Navy band. "When I first moved to the neighborhood in 1991 Charlie and another neighbor, Lou Genario, a retired Army colonel who has since passed on, asked me to come out and play morning colors while Lou put his flag out on his garage. We did that a couple of times but Charlie remembered and asked me again."

Johnson didn't hesitate to honor his friend's request, but instead of a one-time performance, the 30-year Navy veteran has continued performing each night at sunset as neighbors gather in somber silence in memory of lives being lost each day to the COVID-19 virus.

"Paul has saved my heart," said Nedra Darling, who stands in memory of lives lost on Indian reservations across the county. "I am far away from my Navajo reservation and know 35 people who have died due to COVID. Those who have lost loved ones during this time can't have closure so this is



Retired Navy Master Chief Paul Johnson plays Taps outside his Williamsburg Manor North home Aug. 21 to honor those who have died from COVID-19. The former Navy band member began the nightly tradition April 4 and will continue for the foreseeable future.

closure for the evening. And thank God he's there the next evening giving us closure every day that we can get some rest and then we start again."

Said another neighbor, Deborah Mat-



Residents of the Williamsburg Manor North neighborhood gather to listen to retired Navy Master Chief Paul Johnson perform Taps at sunset Aug. 21.

"I was thinking maybe I will play until we get a vaccine."

— Paul Johnson, Bugler

thews, "Paul plays Taps for people who die every day of COVID. I am grateful that he is a neighbor and gives us a place to gather every evening."

Johnson, who arranged for a substitute on the two occasions he was out of town, has no set date for ending the nightly tradition.

"I was thinking maybe I will play until we get a vaccine," Johnson said. "I began this to bring some comfort to Charlie but said to him 'Charlie, if it's meaningful to you I know it will be meaningful to other people too.'"

Dedicated to the Notion of Every Child by Name and By Need

Successful virtual start planned for FCPS' special education children.

BY MERCIA HOBSON
THE CONNECTION

Fairfax County Public Schools held a Special Education Town Hall on Aug. 16, part of its Back to School Countdown. The event featured Dr. Scott S. Brabrand, Superintendent joined by Michael Bloom, Acting Assistant Superintendent for Special Services, Mikaela Antonio, Churchill Road's Special Education Lead Teacher and Ed Windhausen Preschool Teacher Region 3. View at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=84P4GhMZf2U&feature=youtu.be>.

"We recognize the challenges of a virtual start. This is the right approach as we begin the year," Brabrand said. "We are committed to bringing back small cohorts of kids during the first quarter of the year, and prioritizing our special needs kids, including those in special education."

Many parents wondered how their child

would receive related services and how they integrate during the school day in the virtual environment. Bloom said that related services - speech and language, occupational therapy, physical therapy and counseling - would take place on a continuum of support following the student's Individualized Education Program. The plan would be updated if needed.

"We have some related services that will be provided within a general education setting. Others might receive their related services as part of a pullout small group setting, and some can be delivered individually," Bloom said. As for timing, parents might find related services provided during an asynchronous time. "You, as parents, will be talking with case managers, looking at your child's schedule, and then determining the best time," he said.

Brabrand turned his attention to a caller question about the new attendance policy. He said they were taking a more flexible ap-

proach to attendance and needed to focus on engagement. "There can be ways to have flexibility for kids to step out, who need to step out, who need to take that screen break... We're not going to be counting those minutes against them," said Brabrand.

According to Bloom, case managers had worked with parents and students, looking at each child's schedule with time built in for both synchronous and asynchronous learning. He added some teachers would record their lessons for students to access later. Also, case managers planned to help students organize materials. Bloom said they would "be scheduling individual time with students to review those lessons (and) maybe do some level of reteaching for those students... who have executive functions deficits."

A CALLER asked what the technology department could do to simplify the multi-step process to log on for students with severe disabilities and make sure they could engage. Bloom said, "We do know that there are certain populations of students that may have a more difficult time accessing the technology and so there are some supports

that can be provided." He said Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) coaches could work with teachers to identify areas of technology students might have a more difficult time accessing. The division could provide parental coaching sessions. "Our ABA coaches will want to make sure that we utilize as many resources as we can," Bloom said.

According to Brabrand, some of the most vulnerable students would be back to school in-person soon. "I'll be providing an update on Sept. 15, and I am very hopeful," he said. Looking at a phasing model for in-person learning, some of the decision-making centered on not wanting to mix students. "Our first group are preschoolers, our students in our preschool autism classrooms in our early childhood class based classrooms...The second group would be those students again who are accessing the adapted curriculum. These are more of our students that are in self-contained classrooms," said Bloom.

BRABRAND asked Edward Windhausen, a preschool special education teacher at Rose

SEE SPECIAL EDUCATION, PAGE 14

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US ARMY PHOTOS



This area where the nuclear reactor is located at Fort Belvoir will eventually go back to its natural state.



A 1950s photo from the early days of the reactor.

Fort Belvoir Nuclear Power Plant Removal Moves Forward

Contract signed with Alexandria-based company.

BY MIKE SALMON
THE CONNECTION

The decommissioning and dismantling of the Deactivated SM-1 Nuclear Power Plant at Fort Belvoir took one step closer to reality this month when the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Baltimore District, awarded a \$67.98 million contract to joint venture APTIM AE-COM Decommissioning LLC of Alexandria.

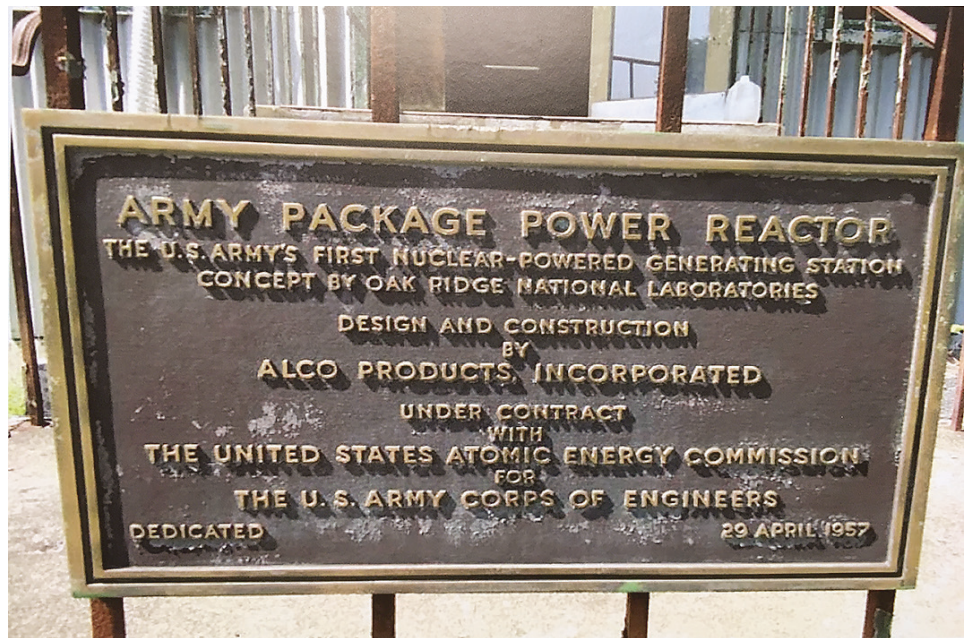
The process for selecting a contractor took over two years and was comprehensive which gives the SM-1 team a high degree of confidence that the A2D team will be able to get the job done in a safe and efficient manner, officials said.

According to Fort Belvoir, the decommissioning contract includes all aspects of the project, including the removal of all reactor components, transportation and disposal of the material and site cleanup and restoration. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers team will work with the decommissioning contractor to ensure all aspects of the project will be done safely.

"The Army Corps has worked diligently to award the contract for this very complex and challenging project," said Baltimore District Commander Col. John Litz. "Our radiological experts have safely executed projects like this in the past, and our team of trained professionals will use proven techniques, precautions and engineering controls to prioritize and ensure the continued safety of our workers, installation community and public."

From 1957 until it was shut down in 1973, nuclear technicians from all branches of the military trained at the SM-1 facility at Fort Belvoir. SM-1 was partially decommissioned from 1973 into 1974, which consisted of the removal of the majority of the site's radioactivity. This included the removal of nuclear fuel and control rods, minor decontamination, shipment of radioactive waste, sealing of the reactor pressure vessel, and installing appropriate warning signs and monitoring devices.

The majority of SM-1's remaining low-level radioactivity is within activated metals and components of the reactor system, which are all secured within the walls of the facility's containment vessel. During decommissioning, work will be completed within containment, and all material will be prop-



The historical significance of the nuclear facility was looked at as well, but it will only be preserved in documentation.

erly packaged before leaving the site. The property will be restored for future use by Fort Belvoir.

Crews are expected to begin mobilizing in early 2021, and the work is anticipated to take approximately five years to complete.

The SM-1 at Fort Belvoir is one of at least three identified deactivated reactors, along with the SM-1A at Fort Greely in Alaska and the MH-1A that was aboard the STURGIS barge which is currently in the late stages of decommissioning in Galveston, Texas.

BULLETIN BOARD

LABOR DAY HOLIDAY SCHEDULE

Fairfax County Government offices are closed Monday, Sept. 7, in honor of the Labor Day holiday. However, some facilities are open and schedules vary, particularly as some offices continue to feature reduced hours in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Additionally, the county government is providing many essential services online, by phone and by mail.

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

NOW THRU SEPT. 14

Crafting Democracy: Fiber Arts and Activism. At Woodlawn & Pope-Leighey House. Woodlawn & Pope-Leighey House is hosting Crafting Democracy: Fiber Arts and Activism, a traveling exhibition from Rochester Institute of Technology (RIT), inside our Woodlawn historic house museum from now until Sept. 14. The show seeks to highlight examples of con-

temporary craft activism that have recently soared, placing them into conversation with their historical precedents including, for instance, references to the women's Suffragist movement through banners and sashes. This exhibit demonstrates the ways in which craft is employed as a tool of expression that gives voice to people who seek an active role in democracy. Tickets available at the website: www.woodlawnpopeleighey.org.

woodlawnpopeleighey.org.

TUESDAY/SEPT. 15

UK Genealogy Research. 1-2:30 p.m. Zoom Meeting. Genealogist Shannon Combs-Bennett of the Mount Vernon Genealogical Society will speak about genealogical research on UK ancestors. Online access information to be emailed to members and registered nonmembers. Email registration by Sept. 11 to

contact-us@mvgenealogy.org. See <http://www.mvgenealogy.org>.

FLU SHOTS AT SAFEWAY

Local Safeway pharmacies will be giving flu shots starting Aug. 29 at 112 Eastern Division stores in the region. Flu vaccines can be administered on a "walk-in" basis and are offered on a daily basis. The flu shot is free with most insurance, so there is no co-payment unless required by the plan. Visit the website www.safeway.com/flu

Former Lee District Supervisor Joe Alexander, 90, Dies

His efforts in Lee District show signs that will be forever remembered.

BY MIKE SALMON
THE CONNECTION

In his 32 years and eight terms as Lee District Supervisor, Joe Alexander (D) was determined to help people in the Franconia area so much that when Metro eyed another site for the Blue Line station, he “persuaded Metro,” to move it to the present location and combine it with other transportation systems, and it’s now named the “Joe Alexander Transportation Center.”

On Sunday, Aug. 30, Joe Alexander died at the age of 90, leaving behind a legacy in the Springfield area that will live on.

“Joe got it relocated,” said former Lee District Supervisor Dana Kauffman, who was Alexander’s assistant for many years before being elected to Supervisor.

“Joe was known as the ‘pothole politician,’ and no request was too small,” Kauffman said.

Alexander was sitting at the table when President Jimmy Carter signed the Metro funding bill in 1980.



Joe Alexander and Carl Sell pose for the cover of the Springfield Connection during the Franconia Museum’s Eighth Annual History Day in October 2009.

“He was magnificent in reaching out and engaging,” Kauffman added.

When he first started at Lee District, there were several different water companies serving the district, and Alexander looked at that as a challenge. “People couldn’t flush

with confidence,” Kauffman said. Alexandria worked with the companies and when he was finished, everything was merged into Fairfax Water.

In the 1960s, there were many gravel operations dominating the landscape, including a stretch of land that went from behind



PHOTO COURTESY OF CARL SELL
Joe Alexander and Carl Sell, left, at the Lee District sign placement.

Edison High School to an area behind Hayfield Secondary School. In the early 1970s, the gravel companies were winding down operations, and it became one big dirt track for motorcycles and a dumping ground, before Alexander stepped in. He worked with the companies, and now the old gravel pits are Kingstowne, Manchester Lakes, dotted with a few ponds and parks.

SEE JOE ALEXANDER, PAGE 7

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All our team members are following COVID-19 infection control protocols, including wearing a mask. Number of visitors allowed inside is limited, to maintain appropriate social distancing.



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Alexandria, VA 22314

Things to Know About Coronavirus Testing

If you think you have coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) or have been exposed to someone who was confirmed to have the disease, contact your health care provider or visit one of the testing sites listed here. <https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/health/novel-coronavirus/coronavirus-covid-19-testing>

Here are more things to know about testing:

- ❖ Each week, about 10,000 COVID-19 PCR tests are done in the Fairfax Health District. During the week of Aug. 16, 2020, 10,750 PCR tests were collected. That's substantial, but not the whole picture of COVID-19 diagnosis in our community. For individuals who do become infected and seek medical care, their medical provider may make a diagnosis based on symptoms (for example, loss of smell and lives with someone already diagnosed with COVID-19) and exposure history and not conduct a test.

- ❖ Percent positivity has waxed and waned.

The percentage of positive COVID tests in August has fluctuated between 5.2% and 5.8%. With restrictions easing up as part of the phased reopening, people are more mobile than during earlier phases of the pandemic when stay-at-home orders were in place so there are more opportunities for exposure.

To keep COVID-19 cases down, everyone needs to continue social distancing, wear a mask, wash hands frequently, consult their healthcare provider if they develop symptoms, and to follow all public health recommendations if contacted by the health department and identified as a close contact to a confirmed case.

Find more information on the COVID-19 data dashboard.

- ❖ The time it takes to get COVID-19 test results varies. It could take from 1 to 7 days or sometimes longer to get your result.
- ❖ While waiting for results, stay away from others, especially people who are at higher risk for getting very sick from COVID-19, such as older adults and people with other medical conditions.

Learn more about what to do while waiting for your COVID-19-test result.

There are more than 30 places in the Fairfax community offering COVID-19 tests, including locations that do not require a doctor's referral or an appointment. The Fairfax County Health Department can also assist people in getting a test if they are deemed a close contact of a case.

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HISTORY

Vanishing Act of The Mount Vernon Trolley Line

Tea time stops also include bootleg whiskey, bawdy houses.

BY MIKE SALMON
THE CONNECTION

At one time in Mount Vernon's history, skirting around the depression years, the ladies of Old Town rode the trolley down to Mount Vernon and visited the tea room for some Earl Grey and crumpets.

Faded black and white photos show the train and the tea house somewhere near the present day circle where the parkway ends at George Washington's Mount Vernon. Along came the automobile and the paved parkway, and there's no sign of the trolley line from those days.

As the story goes, the railway/trolley line ran from Pennsylvania Ave and 13th Street, NW, right to the circle here at Mount Vernon. The tea room and station were operated by Charles Edward Gibbs and Annie Laurie Hemphill Gibbs. Mrs. Gibbs was the telegrapher and Mr. Gibbs was the freight station agent. They were succeeded by their son, Edward Curtis Gibbs and his wife, Louise McGirrpaft Gibbs in 1924. They kept the line in operation until 1932.

All signs of this trolley line seem to have disappeared, fallen victim to weather, kudzu and time. Fort Hunt resident Hal Nesbitt lives along the old rail bed, which is somewhere behind the 7-11 and gas station on Elkin Street. "That's what I heard when I bought the place," he said. There's no sign of any railroad, but while doing yard work, he found a few horseshoes and rusted nails that were big enough to possibly be railroad spikes.

Even the historical expert in the George Washington library has barely a paragraph about the train line, and concludes his research this way: "That pretty much summarizes the file (which is pretty slim!). The train line was in op-



PHOTO BY MIKE SALMON/THE CONNECTION

The horseshoe that was found in an area where the trolley line reportedly went in Fort Hunt.



The Malm's house in 1921.

eration until 1932, one source said, but there is a picture of "E.C. Gibbs," on the last day of the rail service, dated Feb. 28, 1930, so the puzzle continues."

The Tea House where the trolley stopped was once on the land of George Washington's Mount Vernon, but some have it as being moved to the Woodland Park area, and is now a blue house that is inhabited. There is a historical plaque on one of the front porch pillars.

Barbara and Jason Malm live next door to the blue house in their own historical house that dates back to that time. They have a picture from 1928, and there is a structure in the backyard that is called the "servants quarters," on an official land record they located. The Malm's have restored the quarters, and "we tried to bring it back to the way it was," said Barbara Malm.

Under a section in the Mount Vernon Libraries documentation called "Refreshments in the 19th Century," there is a photo of a tea house or restaurant, with a trolley car out front and cars parked on the side that look like 1920's era cars. One of the photo captions says the trolley started in 1892.

Dyke Marsh Station

Between Alexandria and the George Washington's Mount Vernon, there were 25 trolley stops. Glenda Booth who currently leads the Friends of the Dyke Marsh, has investigated the trolley line, and wrote about it in 2012. Apparently there was a house "known as the J. W. Kruettner mansion," Booth wrote, and it may have been used as the trolley stop at Dyke Marsh. "Some locals have long believed the ruins to be parts of a former rail station," Booth wrote. It was called the Wellington Villa station, and at that time, "the only parts of the station that have survived are the pillars, now on a house on Northdown Road near the bridge, and the station's doors, now part of Lyons's garage."

As with many historic stories in this time period, bootleggers were involved, and Booth



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

E.C. Gibbs on the trolley's last day in 1930.

cites a 1978 book by Frederick Tilp called "This Was Potomac River." Tilp talks about "bawdy houses," in Mount Vernon, and a famous local was a man known as "Cigarette Smith," who allegedly ran a robust bootlegging operation from a boat, known as an ark, in Dyke Marsh.

"And it recaptures inimitably the human foibles, frailties, and eccentricities that have touched life along its expanses," a synopsis of the book read.

One community the trolley ran through is Stratford Landing, and rumor has it the trolley ran down Wittington Boulevard, which is one of the straightest streets in the neighborhood.

Mount Vernon Gazette

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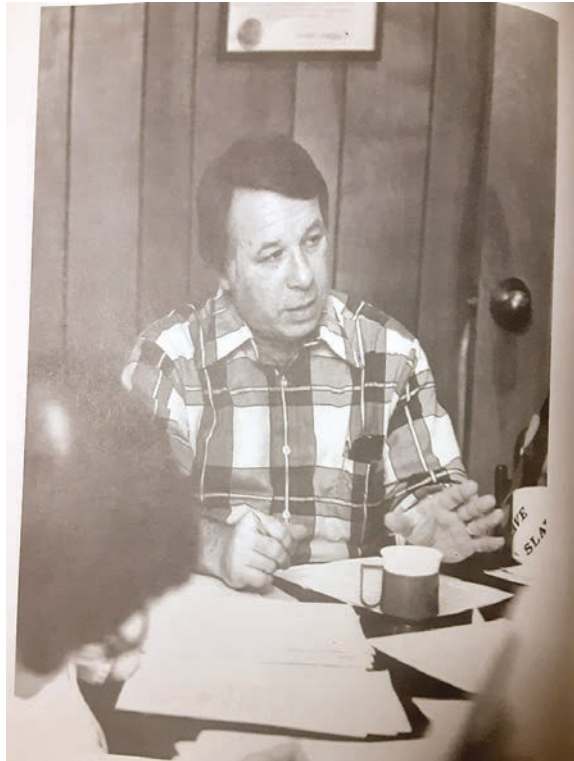
Former Lee District Supervisor Joe Alexander, 90, Dies

FROM PAGE 4

He was also involved with turning parts of the gravel operations into Lee District Park and the Greendale Golf Course.

At one time, Mike's American Grill had the "Joe Alexander Burger," on the menu. It was a bacon-cheddar cheeseburger with mustard and mayonnaise.

JOE ALEXANDER was born on Dec. 21, 1929 in Pittsburgh. His father landed a job at Fort Belvoir, so the family moved to the Franconia area in 1931. Joe went to school in Fairfax County, and was on the Mount Vernon High School football team. In 1953, after training to be a pilot at a local airfield, he became a fighter pilot in the Korean War. He followed in the legacy of his father, Milton Alexander, who was the chief magistrate of Fairfax County in the early years, and went into local politics in the early 1960s. The family owned Franconia Hardware for years, which was located right across the street from the current Franconia Government Center. His mother, Celia, was the postmaster in Franconia.



As the Lee District Supervisor, Joe Alexander made things happen around the district. Alexander died on Aug. 30.

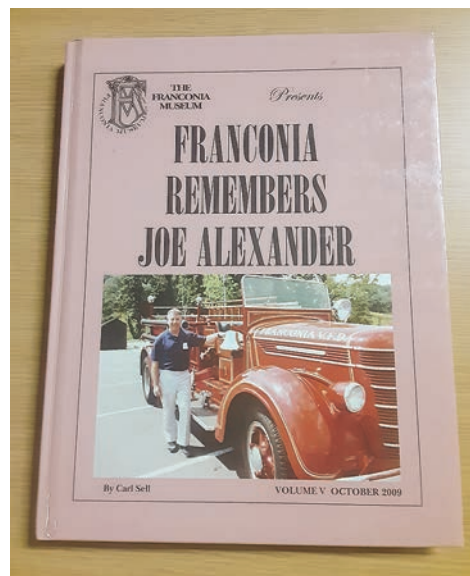
"He was a role model for me as I made my way through Fairfax County Government."

— Chairman Jeff McKay

"Joe Alexander – Lee District's longest serving Supervisor, a veteran combat pilot, respected local banker and business owner who will best be remembered as an architect of the region's Metrorail system and transformational pothole politician, passed away over the weekend," wrote Chairman Jeff McKay, former Lee District Supervisor. "Joe not only lived through the transformation of Fairfax County from farmland to Virginia's burgeoning economic engine, he oversaw its transformation. He was a role model for me

"He was magnificent in reaching out and engaging."

— Dana Kauffman



There's a book about Joe Alexander available at the Franconia Museum.

as I made my way through Fairfax County Government."

Alexander could have run for higher office, but chose to stay in Lee District. He became a volunteer docent at the Franconia Museum at one point.

Carl Sell, one of the founders of the museum, wrote a book in 2009 called "Franconia Remembers Joe Alexander," and it's currently available at the museum.

Joe Alexander's funeral is planned for Sunday, Sept. 6 at noon, at King David Memorial Garden in Falls Church, 7482 Lee Hwy, Falls Church, Va.

Your Future is in Your Hands



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Off the Menu: Restaurant News Notes

BY HOPE NELSON
GAZETTE PACKET

From more time to pick up great restaurant deals to lifting a glass at a new outdoor watering hole to carb-loading with thick and chewy bagels, the city is bursting with flavors. Here's a rundown of the latest news.

Alexandria Restaurant Week To-Go Extended Through Labor Day

Can't get enough of this summer's carryout and curbside meal deals? You're not alone. This August's celebration of the city's best restaurants was so popular that it's been extended through Labor Day, Sept. 7. Most participants are offering dinner for two for \$49 and are packing a wallop in every menu. From Haute Dogs to Mia's to Bugsy's to Sweet Fire Donna's and more, the partici-

pating restaurants – and their offerings – are a diverse lot, offering something for everyone.

Say Hello to The Alley at Captain Gregory's

The festive tiki bar adjacent to Elizabeth's Counter is spreading its wings a bit and taking over some of the outdoor space to allow for al fresco dining (and drinking). Breathe in the night air while toasting to whatever the week has in store. The Alley launches Sept. 9 with a soft opening; reservations required via Resy.com.

Chewish Deli Bagel Truck Back on the Road

After a 10-week layoff due to an accident, the Chewish Deli's food truck is back in action, delivering bagels across the city. Consider this a prelude to the upcoming open-



The Alley at Captain Gregory's: The festive tiki bar adjacent to Elizabeth's Counter is taking over outdoor space for al fresco drinking and dining.

ing of the deli's brick-and-mortar space at 807 Pendleton Street, but in the meantime, scope out the Chewish Deli's social media page for the latest food truck locations.

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.

HISTORIC ALEXANDRIA

Remembering Parker-Gray

Celebrating the 100th Anniversary

In September 1920, the Parker-Gray School opened for African American students grades 1 - 8. Located on Wythe Street, the school was named for the two principals of the previous segregated elementary schools in Alexandria - Principal John Parker of the Snowden School for boys and Principal Sarah Gray of the Hallowell School for girls. Henry T. White was its teacher-principal with a staff of nine additional teachers. Parker-Gray was the only elementary school in Alexandria with an auditorium because of Mr. White's insistence that one be placed in the architectural plans. The boosters and parents had to buy chairs for the auditorium, a stage curtain, wastebaskets, desk clocks, coat racks for teachers, \$1,000 worth of equipment for the Home Economics room, reference books, roller maps and

globes, a typewriter, a Victrola and records, a lantern slide with 600 slides as well as cover half of the cost of window shades for the building.

Select Office of Historic Alexandria Museums are open with new safety protocols in place, including masks required indoors and hand sanitizing stations. Admission to all City-owned museums is free for City residents.

Just Opened-Alexandria Archaeology Museum

The Museum is now open Friday and Saturday, 11 a.m. - 4 p.m. and Sundays 1-4 p.m.

Visitors can view the museum's most recent exhibit "Preserving Alexandria's Maritime Heritage," featuring a 1:12 scale model of the Hotel Indigo Site ship and an

artifact case showing Alexandria's links to the world. The exhibit tells the story of the vessel from excavation to preservation, and contextualizes Alexandria's role within the broader 18th century maritime world.

The Alexandria History Museum at The Lyceum

Fridays and Saturdays, 11 a.m. - 4 p.m. and Sundays 1-4 p.m. Timed Tickets are required, and can be purchased here.

Guests can enjoy the recently opened exhibit Witnessing Worship: A Photographic Study of Faith in Alexandria. In 1985, photographer Nina Tisara documented fifty worship groups throughout the City of Alexandria. She sought to document "the breadth, variety, and vitality of worship in the city." She came to call her project Converging Paths because the experience led her to conclude that, despite the many

different paths worship takes, "we are all kin."

This online exhibition provides a sampling of the photographs.

Gadsby's Tavern Museum

Fridays and Saturdays, 11 a.m. - 4 p.m. and Sundays 1-4 p.m., For a discount on admission, purchase timed entry in advance here.

Come tour the Museum at your own pace and immerse yourself in the spaces and stories of the tavern. Take a selfie with the "Learned Pig." Reenact a ball as you dance to music in the ballroom. While touring, you'll learn how all social classes and people—free and enslaved, men and women, African American and white—were part of not just the tavern but the creation of Alexandria and the young nation.

FUN THINGS TO DO THIS SUMMER

SUMMER CONCERTS ON THE GREEN

The Celebrate Great Falls Foundation announces a schedule of five Summer Concerts on the Green beginning August 30, 2020. Each concert will begin at 6 p.m. on the Village Centre green (in front of the gazebo).

September 6 - Mike Terpak Blues Explosion;
September 13 - The Oxymorons;
September 20 - The Unfinished;
September 27 - Wes Tucker and the Skilletts.

Celebrate Great Falls Foundation organizers are putting in place several new protocols to help ensure a safe, socially distant evening. After each concert, they will

assess whether to proceed with the remaining concerts and implement any needed changes in our protocols. This will be announced on the Monday prior to each concert. The safety and wellness of our bands, volunteers and the Great Falls community is of paramount importance in all of our decisions.

DRIVE-THRU DRAMA

The Alden in McLean is bringing back its Drive-Thru Drama performances in September. The new show, "From the Ash Baxter Files: The Search for the Stolen Spyglass," will be performed Friday through Sunday over three weekends on Sept. 11-13, Sept. 18-20 and Sept. 25-27. Show times are from 4-7 p.m. Tickets are \$20, \$15

for MCC tax district residents. A limited number of timed tickets are available and must be purchased in advance at www.aldentheatre.org. The Alden is a division of the McLean Community Center (MCC), located at 1234 Ingleside Ave., McLean.

NIGHTMARE ALLEY AT WORKHOUSE ARTS CENTER

The Workhouse Arts Center announces that "Nightmare Alley" Haunted Drive-Thru is coming to Lorton for this year's Halloween season. "Nightmare Alley" is the first immersive, contactless drive-thru Halloween experience in the region. Zombies, swamp creatures, creepy clowns, and scary dolls are among 13 different scary scenes taking up

residence on the Workhouse campus during the month of October. These new campus inhabitants will scare and entertain visitors experiencing the attraction from the safety of their cars. Tickets are on sale now. There will be 13 nights of fright, starting on Friday, Oct. 2 through Sat. October 31. Fridays and Saturdays will run from 7-11 p.m. each weekend in October, and the three Sundays in the middle of the month (October 11, 18, and the 25) will run from 7-10 p.m. The Workhouse is holding auditions for scare actors and is accepting volunteers to assist in this year's event. (Students wishing to volunteer are eligible to receive service hours.) For sponsorship opportunities, contact: elenaromano@workhousearts.org

ALEXANDRIA DRIVE-IN THEATRE

The Alexandria Drive-In Theatre, presented by Alexandria based businesses ALX Community and The Garden, is now opened. The six-part movie series will run on Saturdays through October 3 and will feature a popular collection of movie classics and family favorites. The drive-in theatre will be located in the Eisenhower section of Alexandria in the parking lot connected to commercial space owned by real estate developer and event partner Stonebridge. The lot can accommodate up to 215 cars per screening. Alexandria Drive-In Movie Line Up: Saturday, Sept. 5, 2020 -- "Back to the Future"

SEE FUN THINGS, PAGE 9

WWW.CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM

FUN THINGS

FROM PAGE 8

Saturday, Sept. 12, 2020 -- "Trolls"
Saturday, Sept. 19, 2020 -- "Field of Dreams"

Saturday, Sept. 26, 2020 -- "ET"
Saturday, Oct. 3, 2020 -- "Mamma Mia"

Website: www.AlexandriaDriveIn.com. Cost: \$30 per car/per screening. No refunds. 100% ticket costs go to two local Alexandria-based charities.

TYSONS CORNER DRIVE-IN MOVIES

Tysons Corner Center is hosting Drive-In Movie Nights, in partnership with the Hyatt Regency Tysons Corner Center, on the second weekend 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.

Saturday, Sept. 12 -- "Mrs. Doubtfire"
Reserve your spot - space is limited.

Reservation and movie details are located at
<https://www.tysonscornercenter.com/Events>

GIRLS WHO MATH

Girls Who Math is a student-run charity started by high schoolers at Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology. They provide free individual tutoring and group classes to students of all ages. Although initially created as a way to empower girls with interest in STEM, they have opened up their programs to students of all gender identities to encourage all students to keep learning during the COVID-19 pandemic. The classes they offer cover a wide variety of STEM topics from computer science to biology, and are held once a week. The one-on-one tutoring is suitable for students with a wide variety of needs. In the time that they have been established, they have helped over 600 students from over 25 different countries. They also often host seminars and information sessions to inform students of competitions, career opportunities, and scholarships. To learn more about Girls Who Math and programs that are currently offered, visit their website at <https://girlswhomath.net/>

THE BIRCHMERE

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, Sept. 4 -- The Johnny Artis Band

Saturday, Sept. 5 -- The Seldom Scene

Friday, Sept. 11 -- The Eric Scot Band

Saturday, Sept. 12 -- 33 Live's Killer Queen Experience

Friday, Sept. 18 -- Eaglemania


Thursday, Sept. 24 -- Kick -- The INXS Experience

Friday, Sept. 25 -- TUSK -- The Ultimate Fleetwood Mac Tribute

Saturday, Sept. 26 -- The Nighthawks

The venue is located at 3701 Mount Vernon Avenue, Alexandria. All shows at 7:30 p.m. in the Music Hall. Visit the Birchmere's website: <http://www.birchmere.com/>

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LETTERS

Vote Yes on Amendment 1

As a volunteer over the last four years advocating to end gerrymandering and reform the way our legislative districts are drawn, I wanted to let you know that we have a chance to approve a state constitutional amendment to create the Commonwealth's first ever redistricting commission. By joining me in voting yes on Amendment 1, you can help end the long-time practice of allowing politicians to pick their voters instead of the voters electing the politicians.

We redraw electoral districts every ten years, and in Virginia, we've left this critical responsibility up to members of our state General Assembly. As a result, our "elected" officials have drawn maps to protect their own interests and keep themselves in power.

If we pass Amendment 1, we can create a transparent, bipartisan, citizen-led commission to draw legislative districts. This means that instead of shady back-room deals, the new system will be completely open to the watchful eyes of all citizens. Public meetings will be held across Virginia, with all the proceedings

available for public scrutiny for the first time.

The amendment also adds the minority protections of the federal Voting Rights Act into the Virginia Constitution to protect against lapses in federal-level safeguards. For decades, Virginia has depended on federal protections for minority voting rights, but those have been steadily

eroded. Amendment 1 ensures that "districts shall provide, where practicable, opportunities for racial and ethnic communities to elect candidates of their choice" no matter what.

Amendment 1 has support from a bipartisan list of Virginia-based advocacy groups, nationally recognized anti-gerrymandering organizations, major Virginia newspapers, and over 70% of registered voters in the Commonwealth. Join me and so many other Virginians in taking the pledge to VOTE YES ON AMENDMENT 1 and transform Virginia into a state whose redistricting process is finally fair.

Bonnie Hershberg
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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BULLETIN BOARD

FROM PAGE 3

LCNV FALL CLASS REGISTRATION

The Literacy Council of Northern Virginia (LCNV) is hosting beginning-level adult English language classes from October to December. Due to the situation of COVID-19, classes for the fall semester will be held on virtual platforms only, which require students to have a computer, tablet, or smartphone and internet access to participate. Registration begins Monday, Aug. 17, and runs through Friday, Sept. 18, with options to register via text message, phone calls, or in-person at certain locations and times.

Classes offered this fall include: Beginning English Class: provides adult English language learners the fundamental skills to understand and communicate in English, helping them to better engage in the community and advance their careers.

Family Learning Programs (FLP): provides English language instruction for parents or caregivers, so that

they can better communicate with their children and support their education.

Classes are \$85.00 with books and assessment included. Registration is required for enrollment. Registration times and dates are available at LCNV's distance learning page (<https://lcnv.org/distance-learning-fall-session/lcnv-classes/>), or call 703-237-0866.

FLU SHOTS AT GIANT FOOD

Flu shots are now available at all Giant Food store pharmacies for both adults and children. The vaccinations will be administered by Giant's pharmacists, require no appointment and are often covered in-full by most insurance plans. No appointment is needed and insurance companies, including Medicare, are billed directly, often at \$0 copays. Standard flu shots as well as the high dose flu vaccine for customers over the age of 64 are available. For more information, or to schedule an onsite flu clinic for your office, call 800-950-4678.

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WELLBEING

Impact of Extended Social Isolation on Teens and Tweens

BY MARILYN CAMPBELL
THE CONNECTION

After a summer of postponed vacations, closed pools and limited summer camps, all a byproduct of COVID-19, parents are concerned about the well-being of their children. "My kids have heightened anxiety now and they're awkward when they do see people," said a Bethesda mother of three.

"He's so bored and misses his friends," said a McLean mother about her 12-year-old son. "My husband and I work, so he's spent a lot of time alone this summer."

Mother and child psychologist Amanda Dounis, adds, "My 12-year-old son emphasizes how terrible it's been," and "He claims many of his friends are depressed."

As a new school year begins under a cloud of uncertainty that could prolong the disconnection from peers, child psychologists and psychiatrists are expressing concern about the current, and possibly long-term, effect these restrictions will have on children, particularly teens and tweens. Some are wondering if the benefits of social connection are important to balance against degrees of safety measures for COVID-19.

"For middle and high school students, socialization teaches them lessons as important as math or English," said psychiatrist Dr. Carole Lieberman M.D. "During these years at school, they learn how to face the challenges of making new friends, becoming popular, trying on social values, [and] developing leadership skills. Social isolation, however, robs them of these opportunities and sets them back on their psychosocial phases of development."

The mental health damage can be overlooked, says child & adolescent psychiatrist Dr. Marilou Jimenez, M.D. chair of the Addiction and Mental Health Center at MedStar Montgomery Medical Center. "The potential impact that prolonged social isolation will have on these kids is profound," she said. "We're seeing that Generation Z is uniquely impacted by this pandemic. COVID-19 has caused prolonged social isolation, missing important milestones, an increase in social media usage and screen time, and prevalence of extreme stress among adolescents."

Those with preexisting mental health conditions like anxiety and depression can be affected most significantly, says Jimenez. "It can wreak havoc on their mental state," she said. "Social distancing can greatly impact and exacerbate mental health issues. We have seen, and are going to continue to see, a dramatic rise in depression and anxiety among these kids that will carry over long after enforced isolation and the pandemic are over."

Attending classes in person could offer a layer of protection for students who might be experiencing mental health concerns, particularly for those who have limited family support. "When children are in school, de-



PHOTO BY MARILYN CAMPBELL

Parents should encourage their children to have in person social interactions using proper precautions, advises therapist Darby Fox.

tection occurs because educators and other adults may be the first to notice, said psychiatrist Dr. Gail Saltz M.D., associate professor of psychiatry at the NY Presbyterian Hospital Weill-Cornell School.

However, not every child misses attending school. "There are some kids who find it less stressful because they don't have to deal with bullying or peer pressure," said Saltz.

While Zoom and other social media platforms have filled some of the social voids, this form of communication cannot replace the benefit of in-person contact. "From the first few days of life we begin to bond based on social cues, and it is very difficult to read tones on a screen," said Darby Fox, Child & Adolescent Family Therapist who sees patients in Fairfax, Great Falls and Arlington. "Social media is very staged and relies on external cues. To build a solid sense of self we need to teach our adolescents to develop their internal strength. This cannot be done if they are constantly worried about external judgment and acceptance."

Pandemic safety precautions like the cancellation of sports can also stunt a child's emotional growth, says Darby. "The physical benefits are undisputed, but mental toll of missing sports is underestimated," she said. "Kids count on the sports [not only] for exercise, but for socialization, discipline and even college recruitment. Many of these kids' entire sense of identity is built around who they are as athletes, so there's a great sense of loss for them."

Balancing the physical health risks of COVID-19 with the cost of mental health perils is an important part of mitigating damage, advises Darby. "Parents need to still insist their kids have live social interactions," she said. "The restrictions have relaxed enough that most people are able to connect with others while following appropriate protocols. There is no substitute for asking a date out live or meeting their parents."

Spending time outdoors on sunny days has proven to be therapeutic for Dounis and her son. "We eat breakfast there and absorb Vitamin D from the sunlight, she said. "My son also became the master barbeque chef. We wheel the grill to the front and connect loud music and let him cook."

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Library Board Under Scrutiny

Trustee Rosenthal apologizes for disruption.

BY MERCIA HOBSON
THE CONNECTION

Two members of the Fairfax County Library Board of Trustees, Phil Rosenthal, Springfield District Representative and Darren Ewing, Dranesville District Representative, made statements during the July 29 public meeting of the Fairfax County Library Board Trustees that caused the public, organizations, and top County leaders to voice concern. The ensuing aftermath continues to unfold more than a month following initial calls for Trustee removal from office.

Emails from the public to the Library Board include statements that Rosenthal's remarks made during the meeting were dangerous. He contradicted Library policies and disparaged the needs and concerns of the community he was appointed to serve. On Aug. 11, Chair Fran Millhouser, Fairfax County Library Board of Trustees, released "Letter to the Public Regarding the July 29 Library Board Meeting from the Library Board Chair." In it, she wrote: "I have received many emails voicing public concern for statements made during that July meeting. If you have not had a chance yet, I invite you to watch the Board meeting in full. I do not take your comments lightly and am setting up our next meeting, scheduled for Wednesday Sept. 9 at 7 p.m. via Zoom, to allow for ample time for a presentation and Board discussion."

AN AUG. 20 LETTER, signed by the twenty-seven organizations, faith-based groups and unions of NOVA Equity Agenda Coalition catapulted public outcry concerning statements to the highest levels in Fairfax County government. The Coalition said that Rosenthal "made unmistakably racist, homophobic, anti-Semitic, and anti-Islamic comments while criticizing the County's attempts to promote inclusion in its library catalog." The Coalition addressed its letter to Chairman Jeffrey McKay, Fairfax County Board of Supervisors and Millhouse. The Coalition copied all members of the Board of Supervisors and Public Library Board of Trustees. It called on both bodies "to formally and publicly condemn Mr. Rosenthal's statements."

Ewing, an appointee of John W. Foust, Dranesville District Supervisor, commented during the meeting. He resigned on Aug. 25. Supervisor Foust provided a copy of Ewing's resignation. In it, Ewing wrote: "My remarks were not to lend support to Mr. Rosenthal's comments but to examine the idea of more neutrality in the presentation of the library's collection... I have decided to tender my resignation effective immediately. Perhaps my vacancy will help the board in developing a more diverse representation to further the library's mission."

Supervisor Foust responded in a statement that he had known Ewing for many years and many different volunteer roles. "He has and continues to provide valuable services to our community. That is especially



PHOTO BY FAIRFAX COUNTY

Trustee Phillip Rosenthal, (Springfield District), Fairfax County Library Board of Trustees



PHOTO BY FAIRFAX COUNTY

Trustee Darren Ewing (Dranesville District), Fairfax County Library Board of Trustees

true of his many years of service on the Library Board. As noted in his resignation statement, he recognizes the value of having a Library Board that is more diverse and looks more like the community that it serves. As he suggests, I will seek to advance that goal when I appoint his replacement."

Unlike Ewing, recent outrage did not lead Phil Rosenthal, an appointee of Pat Herrity, Springfield District Supervisor, to resign. The NOVA Equity Agenda Coalition said on its Facebook page it was "sickening to hear Mr. Phillip Rosenthal... make unmistakably racist, homophobic, anti-Semitic, and anti-Islamic comments while criticizing the County's attempts to promote inclusion in its library catalog...To listen to his remarks, skip to the 1:37 mark." <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YQvU2CvpGUI>

THE COMMENTS led Chairman McKay to post a statement on Twitter saying he hoped "Mr. Rosenthal resigns." <https://twitter.com/jeffreymckay/status/1298982854693552135?s=12>

Rosenthal responded to Chairman McKay's statement the next day. He said, "I have the utmost respect for Chairman McKay, and I sincerely apologize for any disruption that my remarks caused and the way they have been interpreted. My intention was to address that all sides of the discussion should be highlighted at the library and on the library website. I am sorry that I offended anyone with my remarks." According to Rosenthal, he planned to meet with Supervisor Herrity's office sometime during the week of Aug. 31.

Supervisor Herrity issued the following statement: "My office has also received feedback supporting our appointees' views. I have always believed that open honest discussion gets us to better answers. Interestingly several other trustees agreed there was a need for further discussion and possible action to have the website present a diversity of opinions. The public library is one of the most important institutions in our democracy. For that reason, it is especially important that it offers a balance of viewpoints to remain neutral and nonpartisan in representing many ideologies, religions, ethnicities, and stories. I look forward to seeing how the Library Board of Trustees works to more holistically encourage diversity of thought for readers in Fairfax County."

Assembly Bills to Protect Right to Vote

On Friday, Aug. 28, the Virginia General Assembly Senate and House of Delegates passed budget bills supporting safe elections during the pandemic. These bills are now heading for crossover, the next step in the Special Session of the Virginia legislature.

"The General Assembly is working to protect access to the ballot box for Virginia voters during the health crisis," says Deb Wake, president of League of Women Voters of Virginia. "Preserving public health and our democratic institutions are key. Secure drop off locations for absentee ballots is a proven, secure method of collecting votes."

"We have taken steps today to ensure we protect Virginians' sacred voting rights from interference," says Speaker of the House Eileen Filler-Corn. "There is nothing more vital to our democracy than the right to vote. Virginians deserve to have their voices heard this November."

"This bill is critically important to make sure that all citizens who wish to vote have the opportunity to do so," adds Virginia Senator Creigh Deeds, chair of the Senate Privileges & Elections Committee.

"In a time where we must prioritize the public health of our citizens, this bill ensures no Vir-

ginian will be forced to choose between their well-being and the right to vote. I am grateful we can provide numerous options and flexibility for all voters in our communities," says House bill sponsor Delegate Mark Sickles.

The General Assembly votes today advanced the governor's plans to let voters safely deposit their absentee ballots during the COVID-19 health crisis. More than 30 states already permit, or are passing measures for, secure drop-off ballot collection. These states use security measures ranging from in-person monitoring by election officers to remote surveillance of locked metal drop boxes in concrete.

The League of Women Voters also supports provisions for prepaid return postage on absentee ballots and enabling absentee voters to correct errors on their ballots. These will help ensure all voters can make their voices heard at the polls.

The League of Women Voters of Virginia applauds these important protections for voters and urges the General Assembly to swiftly finalize the bills.

For more information, visit the League of Women Voters of Virginia at lwv-va.org and on social media @lwvva and @leagueofwomensvoters.

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River Bend Bistro, with Local Roots and French Training

River Bend Bistro offers a comfortable restaurant experience with simple, good food and quality wine, all a part of the menu of local chef and owner Caroline Ross.

The menu features an array of local comfort foods, enticing entrées, refreshing salads, and specials that are sure to impress. For libations, you will find a full bar, beer selections, and an international wine list with wines by the taste, full glass, or bottle. You can even purchase bottles of wine to go.

Chef Caroline worked and made a name for herself in local restaurants for more than nine years before she was awarded a scholarship in 1990 from Les Dames d'Escoffier, philanthropic organization of women leaders in the fields of food, fine beverage and hospitality, to attend the Ecole de Cuisine in Paris, France.

After working in many respected American, French and Italian restaurants over the past thirty years, Chef Caroline's menus at River Bend Bistro showcase her American comfort food with Mediterranean influences.

Opened in 2013, River Bend Bistro is owned and operated by Caroline and Bill Ross, both having deep roots in the Mount Vernon area. Caroline went to Fort Hunt High School and worked for many local restaurants before opening River Bend Bistro in the Hollin Hall Shopping Center, 7966 Fort Hunt Road, where there is plenty of parking.

Due to Covid-19 restrictions, reservations are only accepted for groups of four or less. Call 703-347-7545 or visit www.riverbendbistro.com to make reservations online. Eat in the charming dining room, enjoy outdoor seating, or order carry-out with curbside delivery.

The restaurant receives the highest ratings on TripAdvisor, Yelp, Facebook and other rating platforms. Chef Caroline has also been a consistent winner in

the George Washington Birthday Celebration Cherry Challenge in multiple categories.

River Bend Bistro is the "Restaurant of the Week" from Mount Vernon Lee Chamber of Commerce. Restaurants are an industry deeply affected by the Covid-19 pandemic. Support local restaurants and help retain the variety of wonderful eateries in our community.

PHOTOS COURTESY OF MOUNT VERNON LEE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE



The charming dining room of River Bend Bistro showcases the menu of local chef Caroline Ross who owns the restaurant with her husband Bill Ross.



River Bend Bistro is open for dining or carry out at 7966 Fort Hunt Road. Call 703-347-7545 for reservations or visit www.RiverBend-Bistro.com

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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

Not Exactly the "Canswer" I Was Hoping For

By KENNETH B. LOURIE



If this past week's test results (EKG, blood pressure and lab work) pass muster, then I will join the ranks, full time, of the thyroid cancer community. At present, the medical plan is to pivot, completely, from any lung cancer treatment - which for the past 18 months has been immunotherapy bi-weekly, and focus instead, exclusively, on my stage IV, papillary thyroid cancer. If I can go forward, I'll be taking three pills a day, at home. No more visits to the Infusion Center and of course, no more infusions. And not that I'm paranoid about getting exposed to the coronavirus, but less exposure to whatever can be transmitted by droplets, door knobs, elevator buttons, etc., can't be a bad thing. The question remains however: Is the medication I'll be receiving likely to have a positive effect? As in, will it cure my thyroid cancer?

What little I already know is that the type of papillary thyroid cancer that I've been diagnosed with recently - after three biopsies, is unfortunately not curable. It is treatable though, just as my previous lung cancer diagnosis was described. I like curable much better. But, treatable I'll have to live with, hopefully for a long time, as I have for 11 and 1/2 years with the originally diagnosed stage IV non small cell lung cancer. My attitude then, as it will be now, is to try and stay alive until the next new drug comes along which might actually cure my thyroid cancer. The interim goal, different from the ultimate goal is stability; turning the incurable disease into a chronic disease, like diabetes, for example. And though curable is the preferred outcome, for those of us with our rear ends in those barcaloungers, stable is perfectly acceptable. In fact, for the many years I was treated for lung cancer, 'stable' became my new favorite word. Shrinkage, cure, remission and N.E.D. (no evidence of disease) was certainly the ideal. But for those of us in the trenches, our reality is often very different.

Living, even in those trenches, is the best reward, and as cancer patients, you learn that any guarantees, presumptions or even entitlements are best left outside the examining room's door. Because once inside, reality takes over (as it likewise does late at night, as you're lying in bed contemplating your predicament, when it tends to get late, early, if you know what I mean?). My friend Sean often jokes by asking me if I'm still on the clock (meaning am I still terminal-ish). I'm on the clock, alright, as I have been since February 27, 2009 when my oncologist first told Team Lourie of my "terminal" diagnosis. Cancer then, as now, is the dreaded disease. Eventually though, the conversation ends and a treatment plan is initiated.

Treatment is often predicated on a series of definite maybes/"we'll see's". Success is measured one lab result, one appointment, one scan and one surgery at a time. No promises are offered and rarely are other patient histories relevant to one's own circumstances. Patients have unique characteristics and it's never quite right to draw parallels. Being a cancer patient is the opposite of being on a "Merry Go 'Round." It's a "Not Very Merry Doesn't Go 'Round" - without the music. Moreover, there's never a brass ring to grab, only an intangible thing called hope.

However, hope is a wonderful thing. Though it doesn't necessarily get you across the finish line, it does enable you to endure the journey. You're where you are and where you're going to be so any kind of assistance - mentally or otherwise, is greatly appreciated. In my mind, the only pathway is forward. And though the challenges seem endless, a proper positive attitude that leaves open the possibilities of living life with cancer rather than succumbing to it creates a kind of karma that reflects off of others and is reabsorbed back into you. It's this positivity loop which makes the unbearable a bit more bearable. At least it does for me.

My father used to say: "Every knock is a boost." Imagine what every boost would mean to a cancer patient? It's almost like medicine, but without the negative side effects. And who doesn't need that? Those of us diagnosed with two types of cancer, that's who!

Don't knock it if you haven't tried it.

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

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NEWS



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(From left) Town Hall participants Mike Bloom, Interim Assistant Superintendent of Special Services, Dr. Scott Brabrand, Superintendent, Mikaela Antonio, lead special education teacher at Churchill Road Elementary School and Ed Windhausen, class based preschool special education teacher at Rose Hill Elementary.

Special Education Online

FROM PAGE 1

Hill Elementary, to tell everyone how they would keep the youngest learners engaged in a virtual environment. "Tell us the secrets," Brabrand said. "We try to make learning as fun as possible... Children's work is play. Young children are learning through their curiosity, through their experiences, through their experimentation...We can speak through a screen. There was a famous teacher who did that his whole career. Mr. Rogers did that... He taught virtually his whole career, and he was probably one of the best teachers that ever lived," said Windhausen.

Brabrand introduced his last special guest, Michaela Antonio, Churchill Road's Special Education Lead Teacher. She walked everyone through what a school day might look for a special education student. Students meet with their general education class in

the morning—time to connect with class and friends. The middle part of the day would be to access core content with their general education teacher. Students could be accessing the mini-lesson and then going with the special education teacher to do IEP work or a specialized program. "In each of the grade levels there's going to be that specialized instruction block where some students might do asynchronous work," she said. Still, a special education teacher or instructional assistant would be working with the student. A 30-minute lunch followed and the afternoon for finishing up content work. "There's going to be at least 10 to 15-minute breaks in between," Antonio said.

Fairfax County Public Schools wants this to be a successful school year... It will be a year, unlike any other in Fairfax County Public Schools, but I'm confident that we will continue to communicate with you (and) to partner with you," said Brabrand.



Mikaela Antonio, Churchill Road's Special Education Lead Teacher Fairfax County Public Schools.



Mike Bloom, Interim Assistant Superintendent of Special Services Fairfax County Public Schools.



Dr. Scott Brabrand, Superintendent Fairfax County Public Schools.



Ed Windhausen, class based preschool special education teacher at Rose Hill Elementary Fairfax County Public Schools.

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Over the past 3 months, four clients of ours switched agents and trusted us through the buying and selling process. During these unique times, the agent you choose matters more than ever. Here are two examples of their experiences!

★★★★★ Highly likely to recommend

The White Family Group is THE DREAM TEAM! They know the Alexandria area better than anyone, and switching realtors to them was the best decision I made in my buying process. They found me an off-market home in Mt. Vernon that checked all my boxes, and more, for a fantastic price. I was a nervous first time home buyer, but they made the entire process painless! They always made themselves available to me and stopped at nothing to find me a home. I will be using them again in the future and would recommend them to anyone who is looking to find their dream home in the Alexandria area!!

★★★★★ Highly likely to recommend

While I had seen Chris White's name and his listings in our neighborhood for years as well as his number of successful sales, I initially chose another agent to list my house. So we listed our house and I then found a wonderful house. Ironically, Chris was the listing agent for the house we wanted to buy. He was wonderful to work with on that end and even guided my buying agent through the hoops so as to complete the sale. While we're happily the owners of a new home, my old house had not sold even though it had been on the market for 3 months. I wondered why he kept selling houses and my house was just sitting on the market, fairly priced... My husband and I called Chris and his team and immediately hired them. Within 8 days we had a ratified contract! Chris is simply the best there is in real estate. His contacts and wonderful relationships with other realtors, contractors, and the community make him stand out. His knowledge of the area, his marketing, his plan to sell your house or to help you buy a house will not fail. He will make a what could be a stressful situation seem effortless. He will handle all the details; you will feel cared for and reassured that he and his team will make the buying or selling of your home a success story. There is a reason he is a top realtor in the country. I would never recommend any one else when it comes to real estate!

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