Fairfax County Fire and Rescue, in partnership with Firefighters and Friends to the Rescue, continued its annual toy drive with a scaled down distribution day Dec. 15 at Penn Daw Fire Station 11.

More than 50 schools, shelters and nonprofits were provided with holiday gifts for families and children in need. “This is my third event since I became the Fire Chief here in Fairfax County and every year I am amazed at the support and generosity of our business community,” said Fire Chief John Butler.

“Not to mention the firefighters at Penn Daw Fire Station 11 stepping up several times a year to make this event and others a success. I am grateful to be a part of this worthy cause.”

Representatives from local organizations provided information to the firefighters and picked up bags full of gifts collected by the firefighters and provided by sponsors. “Though we are in a pandemic our sponsors were not going to let that prevent them from supporting the event this year,” said Deputy Battalion Chief Willie Bailey, who began the toy drive more than 20 years ago. “We received several calls from our sponsors hoping that we would find a way to pull off the distribution. Because of those calls we decided to put on the event this year.

To be safe we used less volunteers and obviously no children were allowed to attend. But those children will still be receiving their holiday gifts.”

Sponsors for the toy drive include: Jack Taylor Toyota; Ken & Kelly Savittiere Foundation; Apple Federal Credit Union; Progressive Firefighters of Fairfax; Local #2068; Fire & Rescue Retirement Assoc.; Nationwide Credit Corporation; Medocracy, Inc.; Marsh & McLennan Agency, LLC; Five Guys; Fransmart; Promax Realtors (Ron Riddell); FCAC Delta Sigma Theta Sorority; Union Street Public House (Bruce Wittuck); Democratic Women of Clifton & NoVa.; Walmart (Store #2258); Kelly's Irish Times; and The Movement Studio.

“I have been asked for so many years why I do this,” Bailey said. “All I can say is that I learned to give not because I had much but because I know exactly how it feels to have nothing. This year especially, it is teamwork that makes the dream work.”
It's not a stretch to say that Marcella Kriebel has always been an artist and a lover of nature. As a local Washington, DC artist, Marcella's work has been featured in the Washington Post, NPR, Epicurious, and Williams Sonoma. Visit her at the downtown holiday market or see more of her work online at www.marcellakriebel.com.
Virginia is the only state in the country that does not guarantee a right to appeal, allowing circuit court judges to make decisions with little oversight or scrutiny. Critics have been calling for reform ever since the Court of Appeals was first created in 1985. The Supreme Court of Virginia recommended an appeal of right as a “long term goal” in 2018. Now, Gov. Ralph Northam says he wants lawmakers to add four judges and support the Court of Appeals to guarantee a right to appeal a court ruling they feel is flawed.

“The Supreme Court barely takes any cases, so the circuit courts are effectively the court of last resort,” said Sen. Scott Surovell (D-36), who will be working in the Senate Judiciary Committee on the issue. “That gives circuit court judges a tremendous amount of power because their decisions are rarely reviewed.”

Soon after the governor announced his support for funding the proposal in a speech outlining his budget priorities for the upcoming General Assembly session, Republicans unleashed a buzzsaw of opposition. The chairman of the Republican Party of Virginia called the proposal to increase the appeals court from 11 judges to 15 judges a “court-packing plan.” The conservative Family Foundation said it was an effort “to protect the left’s radical new policies.” Senate Republicans said they would stand in opposition to the proposal.

Governor Northam’s proposal to pack the Court of Appeals politicizes Virginia’s Judiciary,” said Sen. Ryan McDougle (R-4), chairman of the Senate Republican Caucus. “I will adamantly oppose this effort by the governor.”

The fight over Virginia’s Court of Appeals comes after a blue-ribbon panel issued a 71-page report endorsing the idea of allowing appeal of right in all circuit court cases. A few months ago, a 24-member working group unanimously supported expanding judicial. That was followed by an endorsement from the Judicial Council of Virginia, a group of judges, lawmakers and lawyers who voted unanimously in support of the proposal. A statement from the Virginia Bar Association explained that while some members raised concerns about systemic advantages and a potential for less efficient administration of justice, “An appeal of right would give litigants from all walks of life the comfort of knowing that they received meaningful process and review of their causes,” wrote Valerie O’Brien, executive director of the Virginia Trial Lawyers Association. “Receiving reasoned decisions and explanations for why a given result.”

Lawmakers are about to consider a proposal that could dramatically remake criminal and civil procedure in Virginia.

“The Supreme Court barely takes any cases, so the circuit courts are effectively the court of last resort. That gives circuit court judges a tremendous amount of power because their decisions are rarely reviewed.”

—Sen. Scott Surovell (D-36)

Appealing Bad Rulings

Lawmakers to consider expanding appeals court, providing new oversight and scrutiny to judges.

By Michael Lee Pope

Gazette Packet

Lawmakers are about to consider a proposal that could dramatically remake criminal and civil procedure in Virginia.

“In a larger scale, the Court of Appeals makes law because it gives judges clarity about difficult questions.”

Despite opposition from some Republicans, the proposal to provide an appeal of right has overwhelming support from lawyers and business groups. The Virginia Chamber of Commerce and the Virginia Manufacturers Association support the effort, pointing out that the current system “undermines the quality of justice delivered in Virginia.”

The Virginia Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers supports the effort, adding that its members want to make sure every criminal appeal has an opportunity to present oral arguments.

The Virginia Trial Lawyers Association also supports the proposal, although its members raised concerns about systemic advantage of well-funded interests and a potential for less efficient administration of justice. “An appeal of right would give litigants from all walks of life the comfort of knowing that they received meaningful process and review of their causes,” wrote Valerie O’Brien, executive director of the Virginia Trial Lawyers Association. “Receiving reasoned decisions and explanations in all cases would promote confidence in the judicial system in that it would provide both the litigants and the public with a better explanation for why a given case produced a given result.”

Mount Vernon Gazette  December 24, 2020 - January 6, 2021  3
Between Dec. 14 and Jan. 5, volunteers will fan out across the Washington metropolitan area and count birds -- birds foraging in fields, hopping around front yards, poking in the leaf litter, perching in trees, wading in wetlands, feeding at feeders, flying, bathing, swimming, sleeping, all the things birds do. These volunteers are bird enthusiasts who will conduct the National Audubon Society’s Christmas Bird Count (CBC), a census of Western Hemisphere birds.

The Christmas Bird Count began in 1900 as an alternative to shooting birds, then a holiday sporting competition. That year, Frank Chapman, an ornithologist, proposed counting birds instead of destroying them and 27 people stepped up.

Volunteers register in advance and conduct each count in an established, 15-mile-wide-diameter circle. They count every bird they see or hear. Generally, there are four surveys in Northern Virginia. A National Audubon map of count circles shows surveys extending from Hawaii east to Newfoundland and from the Arctic south into South America.

Surveyors identify the bird species and record the number of each species. Beginners can pair with experienced birders. Counts are highly variable, affected by factors like weather, vegetation, time of day, pets, human activity and the observers’ limitations.

Many birds are missed. Volunteers record birds as common as the American robin and as rare as a greater white-fronted goose.

Last winter, for the eastern Fairfax County count, 170 volunteers braved the cold and tallied 108 species. Two other counts in the northern and western part of the county and Prince William County had 237 volunteers.

What’s called the Manassas-Bull Run count identified over 20,000 birds, 86 species.

“Compiling the Manassas-Bull Run Christmas Bird Count with the support of over 100 birders is a challenging and rewarding physical and mental exercise. It’s great to help birds and have a key role in this oldest, largest, citizen-science project on Earth,” said compiler Phil Silas.

Why This Matters

Birds are one indicator of the health of the environment and help people understand trends. Tom Blackburn, president of the Audubon Society of Northern Virginia, explains why surveys matter. “Bird surveys are vitally important to understanding the long-term trends in bird populations. The tens of thousands of citizen scientists who participate in these surveys provide information that professional researchers could not possibly replicate and that is used to develop strategies to protect birds and their habitat.”

Local Trends

Larry Cartwright has been surveying birds in the region for almost 30 years and offers a personal perspective.

Volunteers count birds along the Potomac River.
Season’s Greetings

During the Holiday Season, I find myself reflecting on the past year and on those who have helped us shape our business.

Thank you for your continued support.

Wishing you and yours a Happy Season and a New Year filled with Peace and Prosperity

Rex and Doris Reiley, Liz Reiley, Kelly Palmer, and Jay Hutton

The 121st Audubon Christmas Bird Count

From Page 4

some general observations. Woodland birds are stable. This includes most resident woodpeckers (downy, hairy, red-bellied, northern flicker and pileated). Red-tail and red-shouldered hawk populations are stable. Edge habitat species like cardinals are doing well or even increasing.

“Grasslands birds have been hit the hardest,” Cartwright maintains. “Northern bobwhites are gone and grasshopper sparrows are gone except from areas like the Lorton landfill.” Grassland habitats are rare in Northern Virginia. He’s seen a “gradual but steady decline” of great blue herons. Great blue herons are 46-inch-tall, long-legged, bluish-gray wading birds that frequent wetlands.

In the last 50 years, North America has lost three billion birds, 29 percent of the population, according to the September 2019 Science magazine. A 2019 National Audubon study found that two-thirds of North American birds are at risk of extinction because of global temperature rise.

What Birds Need

People can support birds by planting and preserving native plants and trees that provide food and shelter for birds. To learn about Northern Virginia native plants, visit https://www.audubon.org/native-plants and enter your zip code and visit Plant NOVA Natives at https://www.plantnovanatives.org/.

Merry Christmas

“Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.”

The pages of the Connection (including the Alexandria Gazette Packet, the Mount Vernon Gazette, the Potomac Almanac and the Centre View) are usually full of holiday spirit, beginning before Thanksgiving. While in this, the year of COVID, the year 2020, a year like no other, the holidays have been muted in so many ways. Still we have celebrated help for the needy whose numbers have expanded with the pandemic; collecting toys and warm coats for children who might not otherwise receive them; holiday celebrations, concerts and performances via Zoom; socially distanced Santa, tree lightings; stories of giving; the Virtual Nutcracker; and more.

And still, Christmas is about the birth of Jesus Christ. Whether you believe the Christmas story literally or in spirit, you know it is the story of joy, hope and love, with the promise of redemption. In this holiday of 2020, like no other as we keep saying, we need the Christmas story more than ever. And when we see you sick or in prison and go to visit you? “Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.”

Matthew 7:12: “So in everything, do to others what you would have them do to you.”

Matthew 25:35-40: “For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me. ‘Then the righteous will answer him, Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you something to drink? When did we see you a stranger and invite you in, or needing clothes and clothe you? When did we see you sick or in prison and go to visit you?’”

“Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.”

SO SHARE the verse relating the birth of Jesus from the Bible, Luke 2: 4-19:

Whether you embrace the Christmas story literally or in spirit, it is the story of joy, hope and love, with the promise of redemption.

And Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, unto the city of David, which is called Bethlehem; because he was of the house and lineage of David. And thus was fulfilled that which was spoken by the Lord through the prophet, saying, ‘Out of the fruit of thy body shall come one to bind up the intervals of the people; because there was before no room for thee in the inn.’ And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid. And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. ‘For unto you is born this day in the city of David, a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord. And this shall be a sign unto you; Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger. And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.’

— Mary Kimm

mkimm@connectionnewspapers.com

Editorial

Cutting Pollution for Our Health

Ella Kiti-Diabrah had severe asthma, frequently visiting the ER with cardiac and respiratory arrest. She died in February 2013. On Dec. 16, in a landmark decision in the UK, the coroner’s court found that air pollution “made a material contribution” to Ella’s death.

Under the Clean Air Act, Virginia has the legal authority to limit tailpipe pollution. Cars, SUVs, and pickup trucks are the largest source and produce greenhouse gases and other pollutants that harm us all, particularly children and the elderly. In 2016, Virginia had 750 deaths from transportation pollution. Virginia Delegates Lamont Bagby and Richard “Rip” Sullivan are working on legislation to reduce tailpipe emissions by joining 13 other states in the Advanced Clean Car Program. This program addresses both low emissions vehicles (LEV) and zero emissions vehicles (ZEV).

The LEV component reduces total emissions from gas- and diesel-powered vehicles. Car manufacturers must meet emissions standards based on average emissions across their entire fleet. Thus, manufacturers decide what combination of vehicles to sell to meet the standards. Buyers can still decide which vehicle to buy. Over time, the standard will get more stringent.

The ZEV component requires that approximately 8% of new vehicles sold in Virginia be electric or other zero-emission technologies. Consumer demand for electric vehicles in Virginia is higher than supply. A ZEV standard would make more electric models available, and competition will reduce prices.

The Advanced Clean Car Program has a two-year lag between when the regulation is finalized and when manufacturers must comply. Therefore, time is of the essence. The Virginia Assembly’s next legislative session begins Wednesday, Jan. 13. Let your representatives know you want cleaner cars. I’ll be writing Senator Peterson and Delegate Keam, and I’ll be doing it for our health.

Find your representatives at https://virginialegencer assembly.gov.

Linda Brown
Vienna

Correction

In October, the County and School Boards’ Joint Environmental Task Force (JET) submitted a list of recommendations for consideration by the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors and Fairfax County Public Schools Board to slow the impacts of global warming. Both Boards accepted the JET report and directed their respective staffs to develop an action plan based on these recommendations for consideration by the Boards in spring 2021.

Let Us Know Your View

Connecticut Newspapers welcomes views in any public issue. Letters must be signed. Include home address and home and business numbers; we’ll only print your name and town name. Letters are randomly edited for length, style, grammar, good taste, clarity and factual errors.

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Contributing Writer

Letter to the Editor

Opinion

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An independent, locally owned weekly newspaper delivered to homes and businesses.

Published by

Local Media Connection LLC

1606 King Street
Alexandria, Virginia 22314

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NEWS DEPARTMENT:
gazette@connectionnewspapers.com

Jeanne Theissmann
jtheissmann@connectionnewspapers.com

Marcia Hobson
mhobson@connectionnewspapers.com

Mike Salomon
msalmon@connectionnewspapers.com

Ken Moore
kmoore@connectionnewspapers.com

ADVERTISING:

For advertising information

sales@connectionnewspapers.com

703-779-9431

Debbie Funk
Display Advertising/National Sales
debfunk@connectionnewspapers.com

Helen Walutes
Display Advertising, 703-779-9410
hwalutes@connectionnewspapers.com

David Griffin
Marketing Assistant
dgriffin@connectionnewspapers.com

Classified & Employment Advertising

Helen Walutes
703-779-9431

Circulation

Publisher

Jerry Vernon
703-549-6004
joernon@connectionnewspapers.com

Editor & Publisher

Mary Kimm
mkimm@connectionnewspapers.com

Art/Design:

Laurence Young, John Healy, Ali Stedall

Production Manager:

Govan Fletes

CIRCULATION

Circulation Manager:

Ann Oliver
circulation@connectionnewspapers.com

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Landmark Deal
Hospital to relocate to site of old shopping mall on West End.

Bridgette Adu-Wadier
GAZETTE PACKET

In a landmark move that could have repercussions for generations to come, city leaders are striking a deal with Inova to relocate the Alexandria hospital to the site of the old mall on the West End. The proposal calls for mixed-use urban development, including residential development, with transportation and park networks. Construction of the site could begin in 2023, with the first buildings completed in 2025.

“This plan for the future of the Landmark site is exciting, long-awaited news for our community,” said Alexandria Mayor Justin Wilson in a release. “The project would be a catalyst for the West End, providing significant benefits for Alexandria and the region at a time when focus on our long-term future is critical.”

Before construction, applications for special use and zoning permits from developers will have to be sent to the city for review and approval, a process that could begin as early as February. The hospital is expected to be a part of the initial construction process, according to city spokesperson Craig Fifer.

“We are thrilled for the potential to build a new hospital and medical campus, one that would allow us to expand our seamless system of care, increase our services, and elevate the facilities in Alexandria and throughout the region for decades to come,” said Stephen Jones, president and CEO of Inova.
Children’s & Teens’ Gazette

Riverside Elementary

Pictures created by individual students at Riverside Elementary School in Alexandria, Va. Riverside Elementary School is a part of Fairfax County Public Schools. Art specialist and teacher Nancy Libson.

Maryam Hassan, 11, Grade 5
Mery Miranda, 9, Grade 4
Layla Simms, 10, Grade 4
Christopher, Robot of the Future, 4th Grade, Riverside Elementary, Ms. Land
Mackenzie, Time Traveler, 4th Grade, Riverside Elementary, Ms. Land

Ramin Alam, 10, Grade 4
Nabika Ahmed, 10, Grade 5
Dilia, Painting with Scissors, Kindergarten, Riverside Elementary, Ms. Land's class

Muhammad Salar, 10, Grade 4
Mary Hassan, 11, Grade 5

Elisabeth Fortin, 9, Grade 4

Hollin Meadows Elementary School

Cara Stocks
4th Grade
10 years old

Julia Lipner
4th Grade

Haroon, My Dream Home, Kindergarten, Riverside Elementary, Ms. Land

Hollin Meadows Elementary School
Stratford Landing Elementary School

Mrs. Burke, ART Teacher

Darcey Goad – 1st Grade – Mrs. Froehlich

Eymi, Ming Dynasty Pottery, 5th Grade, Riverside Elementary, Ms.Land

Mariangel Holiday Home, 2nd Grade, Riverside Elementary, Ms.Land

Evans Schwartz – 1st Grade – Mrs. Jarboe

Brayden Banfield – 1st Grade – Mrs. Jarboe

Michelle Me as an Architect, 6th Grade, Riverside Elementary, Ms.Land

Viviene, 2nd Grade, My Ideal Community, Riverside Elementary, Ms.Land

William, My Family Dream Home, 1st Grade, Riverside Elementary, Ms.Land

Karrington Carter – 1st Grade – Mrs. Froehlich

Cecilia Schwartz – 3rd Grade – Ms. Lee

Jackson Saloom – 3rd Grade – Ms. Lee

Jeimy Hernandez Galeas – 3rd Grade – Mrs. Wegner

Riverside Elementary

Darcey Goad – 1st Grade – Mrs. Froehlich

Eymi, Ming Dynasty Pottery, 5th Grade, Riverside Elementary, Ms.Land

Mariangel Holiday Home, 2nd Grade, Riverside Elementary, Ms.Land

Evans Schwartz – 1st Grade – Mrs. Jarboe

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Viviene, 2nd Grade, My Ideal Community, Riverside Elementary, Ms.Land

William, My Family Dream Home, 1st Grade, Riverside Elementary, Ms.Land

Jeimy Hernandez Galeas – 3rd Grade – Mrs. Wegner
St. Louis Catholic School
Art teacher Sarah Balough.

Alana Fallon, 3rd Grade
Alison Nienaber, 7th Grade
Bernadette Gorman, 4th Grade
Bennett Larrabee, 4th Grade
Annabelle Lovelace, 2nd Grade
Abigail Graf, 2nd Grade
Catherine Bobrowski, 7th Grade
Nora Costello, 2nd Grade
Clara Dibella, 5th Grade
Eren Allison, 2nd Grade
St. Louis Catholic School
Art teacher Sarah Balough.

Cole Michaels, 5th Grade
Felix Ferguson, 5th Grade
Frances Miller, 7th Grade
Genevieve Theroux, 5th Grade
Isabel Graf, Kindergarten
Kyla Conner, 2nd Grade
Hannah Suwandhi, 3rd Grade
Nolan Kennedy, 3rd Grade
Kyla Matheis, 7th Grade
Mia Gagan, 4th Grade
Makenna Widhalm, 1st Grade
Quinn Powell, 1st Grade
Reesa Benitez, 5th Grade
Will Fletcher, 1st Grade
Surviving Christmas Day in Solitude
Ideas for coping with being alone of the holiday.

While Christmas Day will be different and difficult for many this year, will be especially difficult for seniors who live alone and will be in solitude because of COVID-19 risks. This is particularly this case for those who are spending it without loved ones or who are missing religious or social observances for the first time.

Part of making it through the next few days, and other milestones that come before widespread vaccination, is accepting that there will be highs and lows, excitement and disappointment and acknowledging that the day will pass.

Local churches have found creative solutions to fill the void of those who are missing religious services, such as those held on Christmas Eve and Christmas Day. “Though we’ll have two limited-capacity outdoor Christmas Eve services in our cemetery, most of our parishioners will be attending church through our prerecorded virtual service,” said Elizabeth Rees, Senior Associate Rector at St. Paul’s Episcopal Church in Alexandria. “We have been working hard to include as many parishioner faces as possible through prayers, readings, choir pieces put together digitally, and candle-lighting montages.”

In addition to calling homedown, elderly parishioners, Rees says the church created Advent calendars which include scripture passages. “It is a hard time for seniors especially, since many of them aren’t as facile with things like Zoom and FaceTime that allow them to at least see people remotely,” she said.

The lack of social celebratory connections can be challenging, says Alice Clark of the Older Life-long Learning Institute (OLLI) at George Mason University, who suggests pre-arranged virtual group chat sessions, such as those organized by OLLI.

“We have launched a 24/7 chat room for our members to jump on at any time to an ongoing open Zoom session and chat with friends,” she said. “They can even arrange for friends to login at a certain time for an organized group chat. It is meant to serve as a social lifeline between terms and during the holidays.” A virtual dinner on Christmas Day with family and friends can also provide comfort.

Creating an hour-by-hour or minute-by-minute plan is the strategy of 77-year-old Beth Gibbs, who will be alone on Christmas, has developed a plan to make it through the day.

“Smiling eyes above a masked face help but don’t replace the close physical contact of a hug from my son.” — Beth Gibbs

Beth Gibbs, who will be alone on Christmas, has developed a plan to make it through the day.

For those who are missing the majesty and grandeur of Christmas music, one option is a virtual holiday concert, entitled, “Joy” by the nonprofit Encore Creativity for Older Adults, the largest choral organization for adults 55 and older. This year, the Christmas concert will include more than 400 singers from Maryland, Virginia and other parts of the country, as well as musicians playing string, brass, woodwind and percussion instruments.

“The concert is free for viewing between terms and during the holiday,” said Gibbs of Flourish From The Ground Up, a blog that seeks to help others develop self-awareness. “Smiling eyes above a masked face help but don’t replace the close physical contact of a hug from my son, my brother and his family and all the nieces and nephews. I’ll really miss seeing them in person during the holidays. I guess I’ll have to be okay with Zoom.”

Gibbs has a few ways of coping: creativity, laughter, yoga and 20 minutes of meditation each day. “I’ll be employing all of them during the holidays,” she said. Her creativity comes in the form of writing. “I write every day for two to three hours,” she said. “I finished a book that I’ve been working on for two years and started two others. I also laugh out loud every day.”

For those who are missing the majesty and grandeur of Christmas music, one option is a virtual holiday concert, entitled “Joy” by the nonprofit Encore Creativity for Older Adults, the largest choral organization for adults 55 and older. This year, the Christmas concert will include more than 400 singers from Maryland, Virginia and other parts of the country, as well as musicians playing string, brass, woodwind and percussion instruments.

“Since the pandemic, Encore had to pivot and we created Encore University, a comprehensive virtual program of singing, rehearsing and a wide range of courses in vocal technique, music history and music theory,” said Georgetta Morque of Encore. “Many of the singers say singing brings them joy, gives them purpose and keeps them engaged with others, even virtually.”

The concert is free for viewing until Jan. 16. “This is a very different way of celebrating Christmas this year for everyone,” said Rees.

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Landmark Deal

from page 7

in a statement.

The hospital relocation could also heavily impact the West End’s perceived identity. The expanded hospital, along with the rest of the redeveloped site, could be a distinguishing factor for the Landmark Mall area. “Landmark Mall really has the opportunity to be a gathering spot for the West End,” said Brig Bunker, chief operating officer of Foulger-Pratt, a real estate firm partnered with the city government and the hospital in the relocation. “The new design will be anchored by large outdoor gathering spaces and parks that will really engage the community — not just those that live and work in Landmark Mall but the entire West End community. This project is no small expense. Inova plans to invest about $1 billion dollars to create, expand and relocate its campus to Landmark Mall. According to the proposal from Inova and DC Area-based real estate firm Foulger-Pratt, acquiring the land to lease to the hospital is estimated to cost about $54 million. Preparing the site and infrastructure could cost an additional $76 million. “We are investing a significant amount of time and we are investing significant amounts of equity,” said Bunker. The hospital relocation could push the capital Bikeshare road to residential developers before relocating to Landmark Mall, which means a separate process would begin to have the area rezoned for residential use. Inova plans to work with the city to request zoning for residential use will be further discussed at a virtual meeting on January 6 at 7 pm. Inova is collaborating with local restaurants in this year’s Project Sticker Shock campaign, an annual youth-led initiative to educate adults about the serious penalties for providing alcohol to minors under 21 years old. The Substance Abuse Prevention Coalition of Alexandria (SAPCA) and Alexandria youth, who spearhead the campaign each year, are providing participating restaurants with window clings and bright warning stickers for delivery boxes and bags. While the initial group of partners includes pizza restaurants because the delivery boxes easily and Alexandria is collaborating with local restaurants in this year’s Project Sticker Shock campaign, an annual youth-led initiative to educate adults about the serious penalties for providing alcohol to minors under 21 years old. The Substance Abuse Prevention Coalition of Alexandria (SAPCA) and Alexandria youth, who spearhead the campaign each year, are providing participating restaurants with window clings and bright warning stickers for delivery boxes and bags. While the initial group of partners includes pizza restaurants because the delivery boxes easily encourage drivers to participate. Youth age 13 and older have reported in national polls that it is easy to get alcohol from adults, including sometimes from parents with substance use disorders. Providing alcohol to a person under age 21 is a Class 1 misdemeanor in Virginia, punishable with a driver’s license suspension and a fine of up to $2,500, and up to 12 months in jail, or both.

CAPITAL BIKESHARE EXPANDS

The City of Alexandria will expand the Capital Bikeshare Program to the West End several years ahead of schedule, starting in early 2021. The City will purchase seven previously deployed stations in good condition, which will accelerate the system expansion by two to five years. See Bulletin, Page 1G

BULLETIN BOARD

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

TUESDAY, JAN. 19
Genealogy in Print 1-2:30 p.m. Zoom online network – Mount Vernon Genealogical Society monthly meeting. Genealogist Sharon MacKinnon will speak about how to find and download county and family history books, articles, newspapers, manuscripts, etc. Online access info to be emailed to Society members and registered nonmembers. Email registration by January 15 to contact-us@mvgenealogy.org. Visit the website: www.mvgenealogy.org/eventListing.php?nm=20

LIBRARY TO OFFER ACADEMIC RESOURCES

The Alexandria Library will soon offer free academic resources and online tutoring from Tutor.com. All customers with a library card can use the service to get help with homework, class projects, papers—even test prep. Tutoring is available in all core K-12 subjects – math, science, English, social studies and writing, including AP-level assistance. Students can access live, online tutoring from any Internet-capable device. Visit: https://olb.lib.alexandria.va.us

PROJECT STICKER SHOCK

Throughout December, the City of Alexandria is collaborating with local restaurants in this year’s Project Sticker Shock campaign, an annual youth-led initiative to educate adults about the serious penalties for providing alcohol to minors under 21 years old. The Substance Abuse Prevention Coalition of Alexandria (SAPCA) and Alexandria youth, who spearhead the campaign each year, are providing participating restaurants with window clings and bright warning stickers for delivery boxes and bags. While the initial group of partners includes pizza restaurants because the delivery boxes easily encourage drivers to participate. Youth age 13 and older have reported in national polls that it is easy to get alcohol from adults, including sometimes from parents with substance use disorders. Providing alcohol to a person under age 21 is a Class 1 misdemeanor in Virginia, punishable with a driver’s license suspension and a fine of up to $2,500, and up to 12 months in jail, or both.

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et's face it: Sometimes, you find yourself at Christmas Eve Eve and still have yet to procure a gift or two for some loved ones on your list. No problem: These restaurants and cafes have you covered. Gift cards to the rescue – and your recipients will never know the difference. Buying restaurant gift cards also helps rescue the restaurants.

The Dairy Godmother, 2310 Mount Vernon Ave.
Is someone in your life especially deserving of a sweet treat? Let The Dairy Godmother sprinkle some magic on your behalf. From thick, rich custards to lighter sorbets to some decadent dairy-free options as well, there's something for any elf on your list. A gift card will help you stuff stockings with ease. Egg nog custard, anyone?
Chadwicks, 203 Strand St.
Give the gift of hearty American fare with a certificate to Chadwicks. The stalwart along The Strand has faced 2020’s challenges head-on and pivoted – and pivoted along. The Strand has faced 2020’s challenges head-on and pivoted – and pivoted again – as events warranted. To wit: Hosts challenged head-on and pivoted – and pivoted along

APETITE

BY HOPE NELSON
ALEXANDRIA GAZETTE PACKET

Last-Minute Stocking Stuffers to Support Restaurants

Treats from Dairy Godmother. Instagram @thedairygodomom.

other eateries, curbside pickup has become the name of the game. With Chadwicks’ extensive menu, a gift card certainly wouldn’t go amiss with most any recipient.

Elizabeth’s Counter, 804 N. Henry St.
Get a card, give a card to help those in need – isn’t that what the holidays are all about? Along with purchasing a card from Elizabeth’s Counter for a friend, you can also buy one to support ALIVE, a food pantry and services organization that helps the city’s most vulnerable. This purchase helps two groups: The recipients at ALIVE and also the staff at Elizabeth’s Counter, which like so many cafes is struggling during the pandemic. With their card, your loved ones can splurge on an array of doughnuts and hearty plant-based comfort food (including fried chick’n and burgers).

Bagel Uprising, 2307-A Mount Vernon Ave.
For breakfast, lunch, dinner or even snack time, bagels get you where you need to go. And Bagel Uprising aims to keep the holiday season merry and bright with a selection of gift cards, which recipients can use to buy a baker’s dozen of bagels, order some sandwiches or even pick up a pizza bagel or two (or more).

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.

NOW THRU JAN. 3 Ice & Lights: The Winter Village at Cameron Run. At Cameron Run Regional Park, 4001 Eisenhower Ave., Alexandria. Opens nightly 5 to 10 p.m. Ice and Lights: The Winter Village at Cameron Run will return this year, featuring an ice rink, more than a dozen holiday light displays perfect for Instagramming, retail area, food, music and more. The Ice and Lights Village is a short drive from Old Town. Masks are required in all areas of Ice & Lights except when eating or drinking in the concession areas. Admission: $8.16 for general admission to Village; $20.68 for admission with food and beverage. Visit novaparks.com/events/ice-lights

NOW THRU DEC. 31 Small Works Show. 10 a.m. to 11 a.m. At Gallery Underground, 1200 Crystal Drive, Arlington. “Small Works, Great Joy!” an all-member, all-media show of compelling small-scale works by our artists, priced affordably for holiday shopping. Visit the website: https://galleryunderground.org/

NOW THRU JAN. 30 Winter Wonderland. At King & Rye’s courtyard (480 King Street, Alexandria) is transforming into a Winter Wonderland. In addition to general courtyard seating with heat lamps and holiday décor, new stretches of ice will be created so folks can stroll the new Winter Wonderland. The area is tuned for updates about live music. Be sure to check out last minute deals in the Museum Shop. Tours of the first floor with timed entry on the hour and half hour.

Space is limited and reservations are required. All COVID-19 safety procedures will be in place during this tour. Admission: $10 per adult; $3 per child; $20 per family. For children under 6 years old Tickets are available on Eventbrite. Visit novaparks.com. See Calendar, Page 15

Calendrier
December 26–28
Winter Glow at Mount Vernon. From 5:30 to 8:30 p.m. At George Washington’s Mount Vernon, 3200 Mount Vernon Memorial Hwy., Mount Vernon. Experience an enchanted evening of winter lights at Mount Vernon. See the estate illuminated with soft lights and holiday patterns as you listen to Christmas carolers and visit an 18th-century winter encampment. You can also meet Aladdin the camel, shop for artisan-made goods, purchase warm food and holiday drinks at the Mount Vernon Inn Food Truck and more. Admission: Starting at $25 for members; $30 for non-members. Visit mountvernon.org/christmas

Thursday/Dec. 31
First Night Alexandria’s A Night of Nostalgia. 6:30 p.m. and 9:30 p.m. At 5001 Eisenhower Ave., Alexandria. New this year, First Night Alexandria celebrates New Year’s live with A Night of Nostalgia, a drive-in and virtual concert experience. Load up the car and celebrate the arrival of 2021 in the West End of Alexandria with a drive-in concert experience of pre-recorded music and comedy projected on the big screen. Sing along, dance and enjoy a night filled with classic hits, local food truck favorites and exciting giveaways. Or let First Night Alexandria be the soundtrack for your at-home celebration, featuring the same great music as the live event, streamed to you virtually. Admission: Per car – $60 general/$75 VIP; Per virtual – $20. Visit FirstNightAlexandria.org

Thursday/Dec. 31
Torpedo Factory Art Center’s Virtual Olde Year’s Day. Welcome 2021 from the comfort of your home with our art videos and projects to create and share. Visit torpedofactory.org.

Thursday/Dec. 31
Holiday Open House at Carlyle House. 5 to 8 p.m. (tours on the hour). At 121 N. Fairfax Street, Alexandria. Wrap up your year with a visit to Carlyle House on New Year’s Eve. Guests will learn about holiday traditions of old, some which we still enjoy today. Stay tuned for updates about live music. Tickets are available on Eventbrite. Visit novaparks.com

Saturday/Jan. 2
Twilight Boardwalk Stroll. 4:30–6:30 p.m. At Huntley Meadows Park, 3701 Lockheed Blvd., Alexandria. On this outing for family members age 6 to adult, you will take a guided walk along the park’s forested paths to the wetland. A park naturalist will help interpret what you see. Watch and listen for beavers, owls and other nocturnal residents. The program runs from 4:30 to 6:30 p.m., and the cost is $9 per person. Call 703-768-2525.

Jan. 8–30
Hidden World Art Exhibit. Regular gallery hours are Thursdays 12–6 p.m., Fridays 12–6 p.m., and Saturdays 12–4 p.m. At Del Ray Artisans Gallery in the Colasanto Center, 2704 Mount Vernon Ave., Alexandria. The “Hidden World” See Calendar. Page 16.

2020 VIRGINIA REDISTRICTING COMMISSION

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Accepting applications November 30th through December 28th
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SUNDAY/JAN. 10 From Noon to 3:30 p.m. Via Zoom. Enjoy an evening of robust sea chanteys with Forty Degrees South, coming to you live from Austin, TX! Twenty-five years ago, Forty Degrees South began their first engagement at the University of Texas. Their first year of performances went so well the group returned to the campus for many more years. The group’s repertoire now includes more than 150 sea chanteys from various countries, spanning the entire 19th century. Forty Degrees South is a Baltimore-based a capella sea chanteys group. Their performances feature solid harmonies of 4-partTTBB, 3-part TTB, and 2-part TB, as well as rich, clear harmonies. They have performed at dozens of events as well as numerous universities and colleges. Their evening will feature a mix of traditional sea chanteys, as well as many of their own original pieces. As with previous performances, Forty Degrees South will provide a free, accessible live performance via Zoom. Contact Operation Paws for Homes, a Virginia based, tax exempt 501(c)(3) organization, at info@ophrsucare.org or call 703-303-4060.

JAN. 13 AND JAN. 24 Catch a Critter. Jan. 13 from noon to 3:30 p.m.; Jan. 24 from 1-2:30 p.m. At Huntley Meadows Park, 3701 Lockheed Blvd., Alexandria. On these special days, program participants will have the chance to see, touch and study wetland creatures up close under the guidance of a park scientist. The general locations recommended in Alexandria’s ‘Transportation Master Plan (p. 55) are being used as a starting point for the bike share stations and are being considered in coordination with the bikeshare operator and adjacent property owners. The City is looking at approximately 75 miles of bike routes through unchartered territory. As such, my wife and I will be getting covid tests after a week or so of being at home. Though still symptom free, it seems the virus is still out there and we are dependent on the health of people (family, friends, and other host susceptible enough to keep the virus from spreading to us.)

BRIDGES NEEDED TO HELP SENIORS Mount Vernon At Home is a nonprofit organization serving senior citizens in the Mount Vernon area of Northern Virginia. They are in critical need for volunteers to assist members with driving to medical appointments and grocery shopping. Mount Vernon At Home will supply you with necessary personal protective equipment (PPE) and can provide a donation receipt for your millage. Volunteers can sign up for driving assignments through the online system which makes it easy to see and accept assignments. Give what you can, there is no minimum or maximum number of hours. If you have some time to give to the community and can spare several hours a month, visit info@mountvernonathome.org.

Volunteers Needed Assistance League of Northern Virginia, a volunteer nonprofit, invites community members to join the organization to participate in its Reading Express program. Volunteers provide one-on-one tutoring to first grade students during school year. To learn more contact VP Membership Mary Gronlund at gronbiz@alexandriava.gov or call 703-246-3460.

Volunteers Needed to Help Local Seniors The Birchmere in Alexandria is reopening with limited seating in order to maintain the public health emergency. There will be a 25 food and beverage minimum and a $5 Covid fee. There will be no service for food or drink in the stage or bar areas. Customers will be escorted to their seats, and those seats will be reserved. Patrons will be seated by staff to ensure social distancing. Schedule:
• Sat. Dec. 26: Mousey Thompson & The James Brown Experience
• Sun. Dec. 27: The Glee Project - Canceled
• Mon. Dec. 28: Deanna Bogart – Canceled
• Tues. Dec. 29: Live at the Fillmore
• Wed. Dec. 30: Kindred The Family Soul – Canceled
• Thu. Dec. 31: New Year’s Eve with The Seldom Scene, Siddone, Shannon Bielski & Moonlight Drive 8 p.m. 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.thebirchmere.com/
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