



Council Approves the Heritage Project

Vote is unanimous on Old Town development.

BY JEANNE THEISMANN
GAZETTE PACKET

The controversial Heritage at Old Town development project will move forward following unanimous approval by the Alexandria City Council at its Feb. 20 public hearing.

“It’s a mega-sized environment being placed on a footprint that is much smaller than what we are about to put on it.”

—Councilwoman Amy Jackson on The Heritage at Old Town project

Despite reservations expressed by some Council members, the addition of new affordable housing units was



IMAGE VIA CITY OF ALEXANDRIA

The Heritage at Old Town project in the Southwest quadrant of Old Town was unanimously approved by the Alexandria City Council Feb. 20.

the determining factor in the decision to give the green light to New York-based Asland Capital Partners to develop several blocks in the Southwest quadrant of Old Town.

The Heritage has generated intense public debate regarding the height and density of the project, which consists of three new buildings up to seven stories high with 750 units. The Board of Architectural Review last

summer described early renderings of the project as “lipstick on a pig.”

The project has been criticized by many residents who raised concerns over the impact the project will have on the community. During the public hearing, Council members shared some of those concerns including increased traffic at the already congested intersection of Gibbon and South Patrick

streets, minimized parking, school capacity, stormwater and sewage infrastructure, and the height and unit density of the proposed buildings.

“It’s a mega-sized environment being placed on a footprint that is much smaller than what we are about to put on it,” said Councilwoman Amy Jackson.

SEE COUNCIL, ON PAGE 5

DPC Food Drive

Donations collected for Alive!, ARHA.

Members of the Departmental Progressive Club held a food and gift card drive Feb. 20 to collect non-perishable items for local families.

“We are open today to collect non-perishable dry goods for families in the City of Alexandria,” said DPC president Nelson Greene Jr. “The products we collected will be going to Alive! and ARHA and will be distributed soon for families in need.” The DPC held a similar food drive Feb. 13 but due to difficult weather conditions, decided to extend the drive another weekend.

“Most of the things we have here are staples that families can use or keep until they are needed,” Greene added. “That’s what we try



JANET BARNETT/GAZETTE PACKET

Departmental Progressive Club president Nelson Green Jr., center back, with DPC members at the club’s Feb. 20 food drive. Pictured clockwise from back left: Joseph Jennings, Nelson Greene Jr., William Chesley, Daniel Shelby, Willie Bailey and Bill Campbell.

to do in the community. Wherever contribute.” we can contribute a little bit, we

—JEANNE THEISMANN

PET GAZETTE



JANET BARNETT/GAZETTE PACKET

Carlie Buddemeyer and Meaghan Bowman with Brandy at the Fish Market Feb. 20. See more pets on pages 4, 8, and 9.

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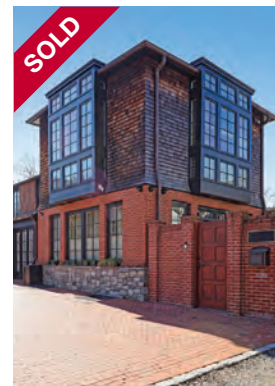
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Controlling Gun Violence

After stumbling on assault weapons, lawmakers limit guns at polling places and government buildings.

BY MICHAEL LEE POPE
GAZETTE PACKET

Fulfilling their campaign promises to take action against gun violence, Democrats in the General Assembly are sending Gov. Ralph Northam several gun-violence prevention bills. Lawmakers are taking action to exclude guns at polling places and government buildings, creating new restrictions for people convicted of domestic violence and extending the time allowed for the State Police to conduct background checks. The bills this year come after several new laws were created last year, requiring universal background checks and allowing local governments to regulate firearms.

“Virginia is a leader now,” said Secretary of Public Safety and Homeland Security Brian Moran, who formerly represented Alexandria in the House of Delegates. “We’ve gone from dead last to first in terms of responsible gun-control legislation.”

One campaign promise Democrats have been unable to accomplish is limiting access to assault weapons and high-capacity magazines, deadly equipment that has been used to commit some of the worst mass shootings in American history. After Democrats seized control of the General Assembly last year, cracking down on assault weapons and high-capacity magazines was a top priority for the new majority. But Senate Democratic Leader Dick Saslaw ended up withdrawing his own bill on the issue, and Del. Mark Levine (D-45) was unable to get his bill through the Senate. This year, nobody even bothered introducing an assault-weapons bill.

“I don’t think it has enough votes to pass,” explained Levine. “It’s misunderstood because people overstate what it is because it’s really a high-capacity magazine ban more than an assault-weapons ban because we’re grandfathering in the assault weapons.”

SOME OF THE BILLS lawmakers are sending the governor are improvements to new laws that were passed last year. For example, one of the signature accomplishments of the 2020 General Assembly session was the law requiring universal background checks. This bill closed the gun-show loophole, but it also created a new problem. If the State Police did not complete a background check within three days, the sale was permitted to go through anyway. That’s why Del. Alfonso Lopez (D-49) introduced a bill to give the State Police five days to conduct a background check.

“If we keep expanding the time, you’re

taking the pressure off the police to do it in a timely fashion,” said Phillip Van Cleve, president of the Virginia Citizens Defense League. “This whole system was sold to gun owners as an instant check, and the longer you stretch it the more that becomes a joke.”

Lopez pointed to statistics from the State Police showing examples of how background checks taking longer than three days can lead to problems. Last year, the State Police logged 787 transactions that were denied in three days or less. However, he said, 235 background checks that were eventually rejected took longer than three days. The way the laws work now, that would be hundreds of purchases in 2020 that should have been denied but weren’t because of a process known as “default proceed.”

“So a purchase would have been allowed to go forward — 235 examples,” said Lopez. “To keep firearms out of the hands of dangerous individuals who pose a threat to themselves, their loved ones and the community at large, I believe that making this one word change is the best course of action for the commonwealth.”

LAWMAKERS ARE ALSO haunted by the specter of the ghost guns, which are firearms created by 3D printers or assembled at home

“Virginia is a leader now. We’ve gone from dead last to first in terms of responsible gun-control legislation.”

— Secretary of Public Safety and Homeland Security Brian Moran

from kits. Because none of the new gun-violence measures passed last year would apply to these guns, some lawmakers are concerned that this is a class of firearms that would be able to evade all the laws designed to keep weapons out of the hands of people who shouldn’t have them. That’s why Del. Marcus Simon (D-53) introduced a bill to prohibit people buying kits and assembling ghost guns.

“It’s untraceable, and it really evades the entire system,” said Simon. “You build the gun yourself and it’s got no serial number. You require no background check. There was no age limit to purchase it.”

Although the original version of his bill outlawed all old guns without serial numbers, senators changed it to grandfather in all firearms that predated the new law. Advocates say they liked Simon’s original version better, but in the sausage-making facto-



PHOTO BY MICHAEL LEE POPE/GAZETTE PACKET

Signs like these went up across the city last year after the General Assembly gave local governments authority to regulate guns.

ry of the General Assembly this is the kind of compromise that’s often needed to get bills to the governor’s desk.

Another bill that senators changed was one that allowed school boards to prohibit guns on school property, which senators amended to apply only to school administration buildings. Guns are already prohibited at schools, but the Loudoun County School Board determined they didn’t have the authority to ban firearms in the building where they meet. So they asked Del. Suhas Subramanyam (D-87) to introduce a bill granting that authority.

“I have no problem with administrative buildings, if they want to designate it as a gun-free zone just like we passed last year with city councils or county boards,” said Sen. Chap Petersen (D-34). “I do have a little bit of an issue if a school board just buys a random property as a vacant lot and then passes an ordinance saying it’s a gun-free zone.”

THE ALEXANDRIA DELEGATION is sending two gun bills to the governor, one to prohibit firearms at polling places and another to prevent people from bringing them into Capitol Square or other state government buildings.

Levine introduced the bill to prohibit guns at polling places and vote counting centers after two Virginia men were arrested after traveling to Pennsylvania to attack a vote-counting site. Gun enthusiasts dismissed the bill as creating yet another gun-free zone.

“This is to prevent intimidation?” asked firearms enthusiast Vincent Smith during a public hearing on Levine’s bill. “There are a large portion of this country who are intim-

idated by clowns, so much so that it has a name, it’s called ‘coulrophobia.’ So are you going to also outlaw clowns at polling places?”

Levine and state Sen. Adam Ebbin (D-30) both introduced bills prohibiting guns in Capitol Square, although the two bills are different enough to send them into a closed-door conference committee where lawmakers will resolve their differences in secret. Levine’s bill includes a larger geographic area, including major streets surrounding the Capitol, whereas the Ebbin version bans more weapons other than guns, including knives.

“People don’t need to arm themselves in Capitol Square,” said Ebbin. “They potentially risk more harm than good.”

ASSAULT WEAPONS remain a lingering concern for advocates of gun-violence prevention because of the prominent role they have played in so many of the mass shootings over the last 20 years. Levine says he would have introduced an assault weapons ban if lawmakers had not been limited to seven bills because of the limited duration of the session this year.

Using one of those seven slots for a bill that would have not been successful would have been a mistake, he said, especially considering he’s sending two gun bills to the governor this year.

“It’s a conundrum why the House and the Senate didn’t want to take this up,” responded Lori Haas, Virginia director of the Coalition to Stop Gun Violence. “Clearly there’s an appetite among the voters to regulate and ban semiautomatic assault-style rifles. Polling as recent as October showed overwhelming support for doing something about these people-killers.”



A jar of peanut butter makes the perfect distraction for a dog during an exam, one of the “Fear Free” techniques used at the Animal Welfare League of Alexandria.



PHOTOS COURTESY OF ANIMAL WELFARE LEAGUE OF ALEXANDRIA
The Animal Welfare League of Alexandria’s Jeanette Acosta takes time out to entertain Momo in preparation for adoption.

‘Fear Free’ Approach Helps Reduce Shelter Animals’ Stress

BY BARBARA S. MOFFET

Toffee, a six-year-old tricolored Chihuahua/terrier mix, cowered in the very back of a crate in her kennel at the Animal Welfare League of Alexandria (AWLA). Trembling at every loud noise, Toffee was scared of the world.

Animal Care Associate Jennifer Yang decided Toffee needed a change of scenery — and sounds. One day during her lunch break, Yang carried Toffee’s crate into a quiet room in the shelter and sat with her, occasionally tossing a treat her way. After about 10 minutes, Toffee ventured out far enough to nibble a few treats, and by the end of Yang’s lunch break, she had left her crate completely. After that breakthrough — and a move to stay with a staffer in a quiet office for a few days — Toffee’s confidence grew by leaps and bounds. Within a few weeks she was ready for adoption.

Yang’s strategy was based on training she had recently completed for a program known as “Fear Free Pets,” a comprehensive training and certification program developed by veterinarian Marty Becker and other veterinary experts that seeks to reduce animals’ fear by addressing their emotional well-being. Fear-free practices can include reducing stressful visual stimuli for the pet, using soothing pheromones, calming music, prescription sedatives, gentle control techniques and improved housing and enrichment activities. All of the AWLA’s staff has completed the extensive Fear Free online certification coursework.

“From the point of entry to their exit from our facility, we want to make sure that animals are as comfortable as they can be and ensure their stress levels are managed and minimal,” said AWLA Director of Operations Katie DeMent. “Our duty is to make sure an animal is not only medically comfortable but also behaviorally comfortable. For example, during their medical exams, we use food to distract them — a lot of dogs don’t even know they got a shot if at the same time they have their nose in a jar of peanut butter.”

To reduce stress during physical exams, cats are gently wrapped in a towel, DeMent said. “If a cat gets too uncomfortable during a medical procedure, we stop what we’re doing and have the vet do an exam with light sedation the next day,” she said.

This training has expanded staff’s knowledge of canine and feline body language. “If we see a dog trembling in his kennel with his ears back and pupils dilated, we quickly move him to a quiet place, such as an office space or even foster care in a home,” DeMent said. “The first step is being aware and the second is acting quickly.

“It takes a keen and trained eye to notice the most

subtle body language changes, such as dogs that shake like they are drying off can mean they’re actually trying to release stress. Or a dog yawning out of context also can indicate they are stressed.” To provide a feeling of safety, AWLA kennels contain hiding spots and kennel curtains, giving the animals the opportunity to get out of view of humans when they need to.

“A change of environment is always stressful,” said Community Outreach and Adoptions Associate Jeanette Acosta, who helps manage adoptions, which are now done by appointment. “As soon as the animals arrive, they encounter strange people putting their hands on them, and then they’re placed in a kennel or enclosure that’s completely new to them. So following fear-free practices, we use the least amount of handling necessary. We also pay a lot of attention to the animal’s body language. When I first meet a shy cat, I try to use a soft voice.” A day in the life of an animal at the AWLA includes plenty of distracting enrichment — “busy boxes” filled with toys smeared with cheese for dogs and toilet paper rolls stuffed with treats for cats, not to mention catnip — all designed to entertain the animals and reduce stress levels. Volunteers trained in body language and handling take high-energy dogs for frequent walks, and others spend time playing with the cats in their enclosures or just sitting quietly with them as the felines’ fear of the shelter environment slowly melts away. Behavioral interactions are carefully documented in a database so that shelter staff can track each animal’s progress.

Adoptable turtles can take a few weeks before they’re comfortable enough to come out of hiding and bask in under their heat lamps. Pibb the red-eared slider finally came out of her shell when volunteers taught her to play with a red ball attached to a metal stick, rewarding her with treats. For Pibb, people no longer equal fear; they equal treats.

Acosta says undergoing the Fear Free training program has reset the compassion she feels for both animals and people, including coworkers. “With this training I have learned to take a second before I say anything or act in a certain way,” she said. “That gentle approach really permeates what we do.”

The Animal Welfare League of Alexandria is a local 501(c)(3) organization that operates the Vola Lawson Animal Shelter, Alexandria’s only open-access animal shelter. In response to the global pandemic, the AWLA has established a virtual adoption process and is operating a Pet Pantry that provides pet food and supplies to community members in need. The AWLA also offers assistance to Alexandrians with questions about wildlife and animals in the community. More information can be found at AlexandriaAnimals.org.

Pawsitive Partners

Volunteers care for Arlandria feral cat colony.

BY JEANNE THEISMANN
GAZETTE PACKET

Ever since Devon Cain was a young girl, she has loved cats. The retired art teacher has volunteered at shelters and several cat organizations but in 2013, she discovered another passion: caring for a feral cat colony in Arlandria.

“Ever since I can remember I have done my best to help cats in some form or another,” said Cain. “But the hardest and the most rewarding for me is my work with ferals. My heart belongs with the ferals, strays, and abandoned cats that deserve proper care from humans.”

— Arlandria feral cat colony volunteer
Devon Cain

port the feral cats.

“I became involved in March of 2013 and helped a trapper TNR [trap, neuter, release] the cats,” Cain said. “Many of the cats had previously been treated but the history of the colony isn’t clear. Supposedly it was started by an employee of a local business in the area.”

Despite community support, Cain chooses not to disclose the location of the colony to protect the cats.

Currently, there are 17 volunteers caring for the Arlandria colony, which varies in number at any given time.

“My heart belongs with the ferals, strays, and abandoned cats that deserve proper care from humans.”

“The original cats were Boo, Rex, Reggie, Mosby, Matty, Le Nez, the two Radleys, and Little G,” Cain said. “Sadly, we have lost all but three of the cats. One had to be euthanized due to chest cancer, we found the body of one at the site, and the rest just disappeared.”

Over the years, Cain and other volunteers purchased food and set

up cat shelters at their own expense. “After clearing the area of debris, I began creating a home for the cats,” Cain said. “I purchased cat shelters at their own expense. For several years, Cain was among dozens of volunteers to feed and care for the feral colony in Arlandria. She left the area in 2018 but still stays involved through donations of artwork to raise money to sup-

port the feral cats.

“After clearing the area of debris, I began creating a home for the cats,” Cain said. “I pur-

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Volunteers Sara DiValentine, Lynda Rasmussen, Ginny Richards and Marta Ishmael gather Feb. 22 to feed and care for a feral cat colony in Arlandria.

JANET BARNETT/GAZETTE PACKET

Council Approves the Heritage Project

FROM PAGE 1

Asland Capital Partners acquired the 136,800 square foot campus, originally built in 1978, in November of 2019. The project will increase the existing 244 units to 750 units, reduced from the original proposal of 842 units. The Heritage extends west from S. Columbus Street to S. Patrick Street and south from Wolfe Street to Gibbon Streets.

At present, The Heritage consists of 140 affordable housing units and 104 market rate units. The new development will increase to 195 the number of affordable housing units while market rate units will increase to 555.

Proponents of the project, including Councilman John Taylor Chapman, focused on the city's need for increased affordable housing.

"This is an opportunity for the city to save housing in this area," Chapman said. "There are issues in that neighborhood with stormwater and traffic but it needs

to be on us to make those areas ready for development."

Added Councilwoman Del Pepper, "We desperately need every affordable unit we can get."

Prior to the Feb. 20 public hearing, 173 letters and emails were sent to council members with 42 speakers registered to comment on the project. Many were in opposition to the project, questioning its appropriateness for Old Town. "Tell this developer to go back to the principle of the South Patrick Street Affordability Study and produce a project that respects the character of the historic district," said Gail Rothrock of the Historic Alexandria Foundation.

Despite her concerns, Jackson joined her fellow council members in voting to approve the project.

Developers will return to the BAR to review the architecture and design of the buildings with initial relocation of existing tenants slated to begin in November 2021.

BULLETIN BOARD

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

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Online Study Group. 7:30-9 p.m. Via Zoom. Sponsored by Fairlington United Methodist Church of Alexandria. Free, weekly in-depth look at the mysteries of suffering and how to make better sense of them. Join at any time.

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MEETING ON ARMISTEAD L. BOOTHE PARK ATHLETIC FIELD CONVERSION PROJECT

As part of the City of Alexandria Capital Improvement Program, the Department of Recreation, Parks and Cultural Activities will upgrade the existing natural turf athletic field at 520 Cameron Station Boulevard. The City has hired a design team led by A. Morton Thomas, Inc. to

create design and construction documents to convert the natural turf field to synthetic turf and improve the supporting field amenities.

RPCA invites the community to provide comment on the project through a virtual meeting on Thursday, February 25 at 7 p.m. For additional information, visit the project webpage or contact Bethany Znidersic, Acting Division Chief, at bethany.znidersic@alexandriava.gov or call 703-746-5492.

SEE BULLETIN, PAGE 11

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Inland Flooding

Facing storm intensities far beyond what our infrastructure was designed to handle.

BY SEN. ADAM EBBIN

With one week remaining in the 2021 legislative session, Senators and Delegates are putting the finishing touches on legislation, and preparing to head home to the districts they represent in Richmond and throughout the year.

One of the great features of the 30th Senate District, which I have been privileged to represent since 2011, is its sweeping access to the Potomac River, and the many tributaries that feed into it. Despite sitting miles from the Bay and Ocean, water is all around us, bringing with it cool, fresh air; rich, diverse marshland; and the ability to walk from the office to multitudes of freshwater activities in moments. With these benefits, as those who live in our area know all too well, also come a number of challenges.



Ebbin

The most obvious of which is the damage and danger of inland flooding.

As our climate is altered by a multitude of manmade factors, we face the reality of storm intensities beyond what our infrastructure was ever designed to handle.

In just the last year, the city of Alexandria has faced three “ten-year” storms (storms that have a one-in-ten chance of happening in a given year that drops 2.28 inches of rain over an hour or 4.81 inches in a day). The intensity of this rainfall has overburdened our stormwater management systems, creating serious backups and flash flooding in underprepared areas of Alexandria, Arlington, and Fairfax.

Areas such as Del Ray and Four Mile Run, among many, have faced serious flooding. Many individuals have felt the brunt of the inadequacy of our existing stormwater infrastructure to handle the quan-

tity of water it is facing on a much more regular basis. Basements and properties have been severely damaged, people have been trapped in cars during flash floods, and the problem is only getting worse. We face both a short and long-term problem: protecting the homes and properties of those who live in the affected areas, and also fixing an overrun and aging infrastructure system to mitigate flooding issues.

In Alexandria, residents are looking to the city to do everything possible to deal with the recurring flooding that’s impacting our community. The city is currently working on a Flood Mitigation Action Plan which includes more than \$170 million in infrastructure investments and capacity projects throughout the community which will take ten years to complete.

While that crucial long-term investment is underway, we must find ways to support those people who are being affected now. I was glad that local officials in Alexandria worked with me on legislation to give them flexibility to address the immediate needs of constituents. Often, our local officials are placed in a jam in Virginia -- they have the ideas, money, and staff to pull off incredible projects, but

their hands are sometimes tied by the “Dillon Rule.” Unlike “home rule” states, Virginia localities draw their power from the state legislature, and any new power they wish to adopt must be approved by the legislature.

In this case, localities have created a flexible grant fund, drawn from their own coffers, to address stormwater management, but they were limited in how they use those funds to address flooding. That is why I introduced SB1309, which grants increased power to preserve at-risk properties through floodproofing, grading, and other flood protection products. These cost-effective, and environmentally-friendly projects should grant some much-needed reprieve to our water-adjacent neighborhoods, protecting the most vulnerable neighborhoods while Arlington, Alexandria, and Fairfax governments work diligently to overhaul their stormwater management systems.

I was glad to unanimously pass this legislation and send it to the Governor’s desk last week. I look forward to this becoming law and will continue working to address the underlying issues resulting in environmental and infrastructure threats in our community.

Missing: Conservative Voice in Black Community

BY ANNETTA M. CATCHINGS
ALEXANDRIA

As a black female the question I am often asked is, “When did you know you were a Republican?” Think about that for a minute. There is a subtle admission baked into that question — for most Blacks in this country, from the moment you are born,

LETTER TO
THE EDITOR

you are presumed to be a Christian and a Democrat. My deviation was a result of my own introspection of my own experiences, education and world view.

Without putting in this work we are susceptible to “falling in line” to what we’ve come to know as normal, accepted, political behavior. Unfortunately for a Black person “falling in line” is often a subconscious decision that is fostered throughout your childhood. But for those who consciously have a different political voice, those views are put on blast to immediately expose the defector and then move to squelch that voice through tools

such as shaming, guilt, discrediting and isolation. I came to realize this isn’t done haphazardly but through social forces that is sometimes referred to as “racialized social constraint.”

As a child growing up in the church, I could never understand how on any given Sunday, God’s Word was preached. Yet, at election time, black churches across this country would invite politicians to speak even when their political policies ran counter to the values and principles of God’s teachings. I’m not pointing fingers. I have the utmost respect for many of the men and women in my home church who cultivated and supported my growth. But I was way too young and underdeveloped to understand the complicated dichotomy that still exists between Black Christians and the Democratic Party.

But one has to wonder what compels 86 to 90 percent of us to remain under the Democratic Par-



Annetta M. Catchings

ty’s umbrella. Despite overall diversification on political issues and a steady uptick in the number of Blacks in the middle and upper classes, we have somehow remained loyal to the Party. For all of our protesting to the contrary, we are a monolith. And

if we’re being honest, the goal of the monolith is to keep the conservative voice out.

One problem with the monolith

is that it excludes more people than it lets in. I have often wondered how further along would we be as a community if Black conservatives were given the same microphone as the liberals. If we had listened to the economists rather than the race hustlers. Would we, in 2021, still find it necessary to bring back Affirmative Action and other race preference bills if we had listened to people like Ward Connerly, a Republican who was appointed to the Board of Regents at the Universi-

SEE MISSING, PAGE 7

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Missing

FROM PAGE 6

ty of California. Connerly made a strong case to end Affirmative Action on the grounds that it discriminated against other groups of people and indirectly harmed blacks in the process. Rather than excoriate him for insisting that we stay true to non-discriminatory policies, might we have reimagined our school system years ago and put the financial investment in on the front end so that we would have little need for these programs on the back end?

The tragedy is that we'll never know and if a new generation of thinkers continue canceling out the voices that they do not agree with, we will continue to see greater dependency on the government and a deterioration of family and church.

This year my younger son turned 18 and decided not to vote in the 2020 election. His reason was simple. He hadn't taken the time to decide on the issues. I couldn't argue with that; in fact I was proud that he understood the gravity of his vote. To be honest, I have no idea who he would have voted for. I do know what he's about and who he is shaping up to be. He drops clues here and there like this one. A few months ago a reporter mentioned that a university thought that due to the pandemic, it would be good policy to allow Black students to return before the other groups of students. My son had just walked by and caught the story. With disgust in his voice he said, "Why? That's stupid." I didn't let him know it but, inside I lit up like a lightbulb.

The question is not, "When did I know I was a Republican?" The question should be, "Why." The Republican Party aligns with who I am and I don't feel that I have to deny any part of myself to align with its platform. My decision is both personal and political.

Ivan Raiklin Speaks to Local Republican Women

The Commonwealth Republican Women's Club (CRWC) hosted Ivan Raiklin as its guest speaker in February. Raiklin's background includes serving as a Green Beret, running for U.S. Senate, and being on Twitter on matters including Constitutional law with over 170,000 Twitter followers.

Raiklin discussed a wide range of topics including the 2020 election, Big Tech's monetization of its users, cancel culture, alternative

SEE IVAN RAIKLIN, PAGE 11

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In the morning, it's the Cokester and writer Mike Salmon, drinking coffee and reading the paper.



Steve the Surofish.



APD K-9 Czekaj prior to his retirement in 2019.

APD K-9 Czekaj Dies; Served from 2012-2019

Retired Alexandria Police Department K-9 Czekaj has died. He was 10.5 years old and served the APD from 2012-2019. K-9 Czekaj (pronounced Chek-eye) was partnered with Officer Robert Egan. He was certified in Patrol work and Narcotics Detection. In the course of his career, Czekaj's patrol work led to the arrests of over a dozen people suspected of committing crimes. His detection abilities led to the location and seizure of more than \$250,000 in controlled substances, currency and property related to the distribution of narcotics.

In 2018, "Czek," as he was affectionately known, and Officer Egan placed second in the region in the United States Police Canine Association Narcotics Detector trials. They also placed second in the national trials.

- JEANNE THEISMANN



People will look like their pets. Millie is a little confused by the mask Eric Miller is wearing. But it's important to be safe and it always helps to match your furry companion. Photo by Myrna Miller in Alexandria.

Suropets



Apollo, White Surocat.



Percival, Orange Surocat.



Natasha, Calico Surocat.



Giovanna Di Biccari, with Bindi and Remy, adopted from the Animal Welfare League of Alexandria. She writes: "I've read that rats are smart animals so I started looking two years ago. Being a first timer rat mom, I knew I wanted babies, females, and specific colors. I could've purchased rats from the pet store but I get more satisfaction rescuing. I got Bindi and Remy from Animal Welfare League of Alexandria. I hope to train them enough to be in commercials!"



"The best things come in threes!" says Jo Echard of Alexandria.



Mosby, the Surodog, is a 10-year-old female lab mix.



Giovanna Di Biccari, with Bindi and Remy, adopted from the Animal Welfare League of Alexandria. She writes: "I've read that rats are smart animals so I started looking two years ago. Being a first timer rat mom, I knew I wanted babies, females, and specific colors. I could've purchased rats from the pet store but I get more satisfaction rescuing. I got Bindi and Remy from Animal Welfare League of Alexandria. I hope to train them enough to be in commercials!"



Pliny and Humboldt perch in their cat condo in Alexandria while keeping a close eye on the Roomba making its way across the room. (No exceptions to building height limits were required for this condo.)

Pawsitive Partners

FROM PAGE 4

chased large storage bins and used either Styrofoam tubs to line them or I taped in silver insulation. A sprinkling of organic flea powder on the bottom of the bins, a mound of straw, and a 5-inch square opening to keep the raccoons out helped to complete the new homes."

The colony site has evolved over the years and now consists of several shelters, a storage unit and two feeding stations. The shelters are placed atop wood pallets to keep them above snow and smaller tubs contain extra compostable bowls, spoons, garbage bags, rubber gloves, scissors and tape. The site is cleaned several times per week and the shelters are changed out two times per year.

The colony volunteers see to it that the cats get regular care from a veterinarian. "Every cat in the colony has had a yearly rabies shot and other vet care is given at the same time," said Cain. "To my knowledge, only one cat was trapped due to having a wound which turned out to be chest cancer."

According to Cain, it can be difficult to trap a cat after the first time as they become "trap shy."

"Before I moved, all the cats had a three-year rabies shot which helped cut down on the necessity to trap," Cain said. "However, one cat has a skin issue and must be trapped on a yearly basis."

To Cain, the trappers are her heroes. "It takes nerves of steel or a very calm nature to be a trapper," she said. "It can also take a lot of time and effort due to special traps, conditions -- no food the day before so they are hungry, decent weather if possible, special smelly food, etc. -- and availability of caretakers to help. Usually, they need to spend the night in someone's



Mosby eats a meal under a shelter provided by volunteers in Arlandria.

home before going to the vet." Word of mouth has allowed the group to expand its support base, both with volunteers and local businesses.

"One nearby business in particular has been outstanding in its support for the colony," Cain said. "They have allowed caretakers to set up tables to sell my artwork, talk with people about the cats and to collect donations. We have a large display board with pictures of the cats and the site, and pertinent information about feral or community cats"

Cain urges everyone to support organizations that care for feral colonies, particularly those that provide TNR services.

"The plight of feral and abandoned cats is of great concern to me," Cain said. "If a stray or abandoned cat is able to join a feral cat colony and they are not neutered, their offspring will grow up feral. But if their kittens are trapped early enough -- approximately 8-12 weeks old -- they can be socialized and adopted."

Since leaving the area, volunteer Ginny Richards has become the colony's lead organizer.

"There is so much good about what we do," said Richards. "The long-term faithfulness of our volunteers means that on any given day, there are cats who don't need to worry about how they are going to eat."

Donations to the Arlandria feral cat colony may be sent to Richards via her email: ginnyrmail@aol.com.



Mosby is one of several feral cats being cared for by volunteers in Arlandria.



Ginny Richards prepares food for the feral cat colony Feb. 22 in Arlandria.



Leo, rescued from King Street Cats in Alexandria, Va. now lives with Veronica Kresse and Brian Kimm of Potomac.



"The best things come in threes!" says Jo Echard of Alexandria.

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As they delivered Meals on Wheels, Captain Sean Casey and Investigator Victor Ignacio surprised seniors with Valentine's Day goodie bags.

Sheriff's Office Remembers Seniors on Valentine's Day

The Sheriff's Office teamed up with Senior Services of Alexandria to deliver special Valentine's Day goodie bags to those receiving Meals on Wheels. To show seniors that the Sheriff's Office is thinking about them, deputies filled dozens of treat bags with Valentine cards, mini hand

sanitizers, bookmarks, lip balm, and refrigerator magnets with scam prevention tips and a File of Life kit. Then on February 12, Captain Sean Casey, Investigator Victor Ignacio and other volunteers delivering Meals on Wheels surprised seniors and others on their routes with the Valentine's Day gift bags.

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Ivan Raiklin Speaks to Local Republican Women

FROM PAGE 7
social media, bias in the news media, and upcoming Supreme Court cases. He brought the big issues home when he urged local Republicans to take the leap and run for local office such as city council and school board if their views and values are not represented. He also urged CRWC members to become trained Election Officers who will challenge any problems they see in the voting and vote counting processes.

CRWC President Linda App was pleased by the response when Raiklin asked for a show of hands for those on the Zoom meeting who are considering a run for local office. "I hope everyone who raised their hands will seriously consider a run in 2021, whether in a partisan race or the non-partisan School Board race," App said. "I could tell Ivan was inspiring them."

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

BULLETIN BOARD

FROM PAGE 5

FEMA FLOOD MAP UPDATE

The Federal Emergency Management Agency is updating its flood maps of Alexandria and has requested that the City of Alexandria provide community outreach assistance. The City will host a virtual open house on March 1, from 7 to 8 p.m. Residents and businesses are encouraged to participate to learn more about the update to the floodplain maps. Visit alexandriava.gov/FloodMap for information about the floodplain map update process and potential impacts to existing and proposed redevelopment.

THURSDAY/MARCH 11

2021 Women's Leadership Forum. 8:30-10:30 a.m. The Chamber's Professional Women's Network will host its signature event, The Women's Leadership Forum, virtually via Gather Town. After almost a year full of the unexpected and the unprecedented, this forum will bring together women at all stages of their careers for an interactive discussion filled with inspiration and insight, centered around this year's theme of resiliency, and learning how to find the opportunities amidst the challenges. Cost is \$25 for Members | \$40 for Prospective Members.



City of Alexandria FISCAL YEAR 2022 PROPOSED BUDGET



A summary of the City of Alexandria's proposed Fiscal Year 2022 budget is set out below.

Notice is hereby given of a public hearing on the proposed Fiscal Year 2022 budget for the City of Alexandria.

Due to the COVID-19 Pandemic emergency, the March 8, 2021 meeting of the City Council is being held electronically pursuant to Virginia Code Section 2.2-3708.2(A)(3), the Continuity of Government ordinance adopted by the City Council on June 20, 2020 or Section 4-0.01(g) in HB29 and HB30, enacted by the 2020 Virginia General Assembly (Virginia Acts of Assembly Ch. 1283 and 1289), to undertake essential business. All of the members of the respective public bodies and staff are participating from remote locations through Zoom Webinar. These meetings are being held electronically, unless a determination is made that it is safe enough for the meetings to be held in person in the City Council Chamber at 301 King Street, Alexandria, VA. Electronic access will be provided in either event. The meetings can be accessed by the public through: Zoom hyperlink (below), broadcasted live on the government channel 70, and streaming on the City's website.

Budget Public Hearing:

The Webinar will open at 5:00 PM to allow individuals to join while the Public Hearing will begin at approximately 5:30 PM. If you wish to use Zoom to watch this meeting or to address Council, you must register first. Those wishing to address Council should also submit a Speaker's Form using the link below.

Registration link:

https://zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_VMT9ccJJQPqJ_AAiCE8mdg

Webinar ID: 922 4064 2258

Webinar Passcode: 104225

Dial-in number: 301-715-8592

Speaker's Form:

<https://survey.alexandriava.gov/s3/2020-VIRTUAL-City-Council-Speakers-Form>
Those wishing to address Council should submit a Speaker's Form. Submission of written statements is encouraged. Please sign up after the docket is created and you are able to verify the meeting date on the City's website. If the docket is not posted, you will have to return at a later date to complete the speaker's form in order to speak at a Council meeting.

Public Comment will be received at this meeting: All persons wishing to speak before City Council must complete a Speaker's Form (see link above). If you have a prepared statement or written comments for the record, you may email it to the City Clerk at gloria.sitton@alexandriava.gov. Speakers are encouraged to submit their written comments to the City Clerk. When your name is called to speak, the Zoom host will prompt you to unmute your microphone. If you are participating via smartphone, press *6 to mute/unmute your microphone. You will be called on by your name or the last 4 digits of your phone number when it is your turn to speak. When you are finished speaking or at 3 minutes (whichever comes first), you will be muted again. If you would like to submit a written comment, you may use the "Fiscal Year 2022 Budget Input" form (linked below). Fiscal Year 2022 Budget Written Comment Form: <https://www.research.net/r/AlexandriaVA-FY2022BudgetInput>

Individuals with disabilities who require assistance or special arrangements to participate in the City Council meeting may call the City Clerk and Clerk of Council's Office at 703.746.4550 (TTY/TDD 838.5056). We request that you provide a 48-hour notice so that the proper arrangements may be made. City Council meetings are closed-captioned for the hearing impaired. Individuals requiring translation services should contact the City Clerk and Clerk of Council at gloria.sitton@alexandriava.gov or at 703.746.4550. We request that you provide 24 to 48 hour notice so that the proper arrangements may be made. Please specify the language for translation when you make the request.

SUMMARY OF PROPOSED BUDGET FY 2022

	General Fund FY 2022	All Funds FY 2022	Capital Improvements FY 2022
City Council	\$674,826	\$674,826	
City Manager	\$2,549,676	\$2,549,676	\$21,089,000
City Attorney	\$3,362,838	\$3,362,838	\$100,000
City Clerk and Clerk of Council	\$418,541	\$418,541	
Circuit Court Judges	\$1,488,463	\$1,488,463	
18th General District Court	\$142,662	\$142,662	
Clerk of the Circuit Court	\$1,834,210	\$1,899,210	
Commonwealth's Attorney	\$2,876,410	\$3,243,852	
Court Service Unit	\$1,656,559	\$1,782,548	
Juvenile and Domestic Relations Court	\$76,909	\$76,909	
Other Criminal and Justice Services	\$4,394,654	\$5,073,182	
Registrar of Voters	\$1,325,973	\$1,325,973	
Sheriff	\$30,862,275	\$31,107,317	
Finance	\$12,590,033	\$13,557,610	\$936,900
General Services	\$10,641,834	\$10,837,334	\$47,430,400
Human Rights	\$1,001,984	\$1,038,736	
Information Technology Services	\$13,292,603	\$13,797,108	\$26,202,700
Internal Audit	\$395,026	\$395,026	
Management and Budget	\$1,467,695	\$1,467,695	\$624,000
General Fund Debt Service (City)	\$36,851,668	\$36,851,668	
Debt Services (ACPS)	\$28,633,966	\$28,633,966	
Non-Departmental - Contingent Reserve	\$3,114,170	\$3,114,170	
Non-Departmental - Insurance, Memberships, Other	\$10,520,410	\$51,225,335	
Human Resources	\$4,388,525	\$4,388,525	
Communications & Public Information	\$1,572,418	\$1,572,418	
Office of Organizational Excellence	\$176,479	\$176,479	
Performance and Accountability	\$652,083	\$652,083	
Fire	\$52,014,303	\$54,550,262	\$472,600
Code Administration	\$0	\$8,447,933	\$10,000
Emergency Communications	\$9,020,282	\$9,128,600	
Police	\$60,713,172	\$62,677,373	
Health	\$7,436,308	\$7,511,430	
Community and Human Services	\$55,608,984	\$101,391,323	\$25,000
Other Health Activities	\$1,257,387	\$1,257,387	
Housing	\$6,040,611	\$10,061,189	\$7,202,000
Economic Development Activities	\$7,011,340	\$7,011,340	
Project Implementation	\$0	\$1,878,800	\$26,756,800
Planning and Zoning	\$6,225,198	\$6,780,516	\$493,000
Historic Alexandria	\$3,468,940	\$4,232,071	\$177,400
Library	\$7,377,302	\$7,871,044	
Recreation, Parks and Cultural Activities	\$24,543,633	\$27,595,543	\$10,694,000
Transit Subsidies	\$38,244,536	\$51,604,689	
Transportation and Environmental Services	\$37,766,408	\$93,691,295	\$94,884,038
Other Educational Activities	\$15,785	\$15,785	
Schools	\$239,037,296	\$320,591,172	\$55,199,200
General Fund Cash Capital	\$34,818,538	\$34,818,538	
GRAND TOTAL	\$767,562,913	\$1,031,970,440	\$292,297,038

Any person desiring to review the proposed budget may visit the City's website (alexandriava.gov/budget).

PROPERTY TAXES

The proposed budget includes a decrease of \$0.02 cents in the real property tax rate from \$1.13 to \$1.11 per \$100 of assessed valuation based upon an assessment ratio of 100% fair market value. It should be noted that City Council will set the maximum tax rate to be advertised at its March 9, 2021 meeting, at 7:00 pm and that Council may not adopt a rate that exceeds this tax rate, but may adopt an equal or lesser tax rate. The proposed budget includes no change in the current motor vehicle personal property tax rate of \$5.33 per \$100 of assessed value. All other personal property tax rates, including vehicles specially equipped to transport persons with disabilities, which are proposed to be taxed at the present rate of \$3.55 per \$100 of assessed value; Business tangible property, including office furniture, fixtures, computers and unlicensed vehicles are proposed to be taxed at the present rate of \$4.75 per \$100 of assessed value and machinery and tools are proposed to be taxed at the present rate of \$4.50 per \$100 of assessed value; Privately owned boats and water craft that are used for recreational purposes only are proposed to be taxed at the present rate of \$0.01 per \$100 of assessed value, are unchanged. The amount of real estate tax rate dedicated for affordable housing and to support existing debt service related to affordable housing is 0.6 cents.

Legals

Notice Abandoned Vessel

Notice is hereby given that the following vessel has been abandoned for more than 60 DAYS on the property of: Washington Sailing Marina. 1 Marina Dr. GWM Parkway, Alexandria, VA 22314.

Description of Vessel: 16' Prindle Sailing Catamaran White hull HIN: SUR-07608M84A

Application for Watercraft Registration/Title will be made in accordance with section 29.1-733.1 of The Code of Virginia if this vessel is not claimed and removed within 30 days of first publication of the notice. Please contact the Virginia Department of Wildlife Resources with questions.

Notice Abandoned Vessel

Notice is hereby given that the following vessel has been abandoned for more than 60 DAYS on the property of: Washington Sailing Marina. 1 Marina Dr. GWM Parkway, Alexandria, VA 22314.

Description of Vessel: 26' Macgregor Sailboat "No Worry's" white hull with daggerboard Registration: VA 6492 BJ

Application for Watercraft Registration/Title will be made in accordance with section 29.1-733.1 of The Code of Virginia if this vessel is not claimed and removed within 30 days of first publication of the notice. Please contact the Virginia Department of Wildlife Resources with questions.

Notice Abandoned Vessel

Notice is hereby given that the following vessel has been abandoned for more than 60 DAYS on the property of: Washington Sailing Marina. 1 Marina Dr. GWM Parkway, Alexandria, VA 22314.

Description of Vessel: 17' Thistle Sail-

Legals

boat Blue hull with red stripe
Application for Watercraft Registration/Title will be made in accordance with section 29.1-733.1 of The Code of Virginia if this vessel is not claimed and removed within 30 days of first publication of the notice. Please contact the Virginia Department of Wildlife Resources with questions.

Notice Abandoned Vessel

Notice is hereby given that the following vessel has been abandoned for more than 60 DAYS on the property of: Washington Sailing Marina. 1 Marina Dr. GWM Parkway, Alexandria, VA 22314.

Description of Vessel: 16' Prindle Sailing Catamaran White and blue hull HIN: SUR08108M85E

Application for Watercraft Registration/Title will be made in accordance with section 29.1-733.1 of The Code of Virginia if this vessel is not claimed and removed within 30 days of first publication of the notice. Please contact the Virginia Department of Wildlife Resources with questions.

Notice Abandoned Vessel

Notice is hereby given that the following vessel has been abandoned for more than 60 DAYS on the property of: Washington Sailing Marina. 1 Marina Dr. GWM Parkway, Alexandria, VA 22314.

Description of Vessel: 21' Clipper Marine Sailboat "The Seaward" white hull with blue deck Registration: VA 5856 BX HIN: CLM009450573

Application for Watercraft Registration/Title will be made in accordance with section 29.1-733.1 of The Code of Virginia if this vessel is not claimed and removed within 30 days of first publication of the notice. Please contact the Virginia Department of Wildlife Resources with questions.

ENTERTAINMENT



MATT LIPKIN/THE GAZETTE

The cast of LTA's production of "The Revolutionists" in rehearsal.

LTA Presents 'The Revolutionists'

Show runs in-person from Feb. 27 to March 20, 2021.

BY STEVE HIBBARD
THE GAZETTE

The Little Theatre of Alexandria is presenting a live, in-person showing of "The Revolutionists," written by Lauren Gunderson, from Feb. 27 to March 20, 2021. Come watch as four sassy women lose their heads in this irreverent, girl-powered comedy set during the French Revolution's Reign of Terror. (Three of the characters actually lived.) Playwright Olympe de Gouges, assassin Charlotte Corday, former queen (and fan of ribbons) Marie Antoinette, and Haitian rebel Marianne Angelle hang out, murder Marat, and try to beat back the extremist insanity in 1793 Paris. This grand comedy is about violence and legacy, art and activism, feminism and terrorism, compatriots and chosen sisters, and how we actually go about changing the world.

According to Director Jennifer Lyman: "The Revolutionists is funny, fresh, modern, and has something to say. It is not comedy for laughs alone, but uses comedy to discuss important subjects: feminism, equality, freedom, legacy, art, violence, and loyalty. It focuses on women trying to make their world a better place, featuring three real women who were executed by guillotine in Paris: Olympe de Gouges, a playwright; Charlotte Corday, the assassin of Jean-Paul Marat; and Marie Antoinette, Queen of France."

She added: "It highlights the similarities between their Revolutionary France and our current America: distrust of the government, wealth inequality, racism, sexism, and extremism. It sounds too serious to be funny, but it is both."

Lynn O'Connell, Co-Producer, added: "LTA has done a fabulous job, thanks to Safety Officers Stacey Becker and Ken Brown as well as President Russell Wyland and in partnership with the Alexandria Health Department, in preparing the theatre for safe, live performances with masking, sanitizing procedures, a brand-new ventilation system, and social distancing/small audiences. I feel much safer at LTA than I do at my local grocery store." The other co-producer is Kevin O'Dowd.

O'Connell added: "If it can be done safely, I think it is imperative that LTA offer our community the opportunity for live theatre – both main stage performances and through our education program. As psychologists note, live in-person theatre helps both the performers and the audience cultivate skills needed to sustain the health and well-being of individuals and communities. Definitely needed in 2021."

As far as challenges go, Melanie Kurstin, who plays the role of Charlotte Corday, said: "Just the sheer fact that, up until February, all our rehearsals have been over Zoom. This certainly has never been the way of things, but it is also amazing how quickly we have learned to adapt in order to make this work and bring live theater to audiences in many formats. I am extremely grateful for the entire team being so prepared in knowing how to stage this show in a way that would be safe for not only the actors, but the audience as well."

She added: "I would hope this play inspires the audience to delve deeper into history beyond what may have been taught from school textbooks. I hope it inspires them to have meaningful conversations about equality, privilege, and how there is still so much work to be done."

Justine Summers, who plays the role of Olympe, said: "This experience has been very different, so far. For me, a huge part of participating in theatre is the interpersonal interaction, reacting to people on stage. So, this has been a challenge, but I think one that we've met with gusto."

She added: "I've really enjoyed learning how nuanced these women's positions were. Especially with Olympe, I was so fascinated by everything she accomplished as a single woman in the 18th century."

Sophie de Waal, who plays the role of Marie Antoinette, said: "After the show I want the audience to walk away thinking about these four women. Lauren Gunderson created four incredible characters, based in history, who all made a large impact on the world. These are very different women who lived extremely different lives, but what they share is their bravery. They demonstrate how powerful and informative it can be when you actually listen to one another, which is a very important lesson to learn especially in the world we live in today."

Dayalini Pocock, who plays the role of Marianne Angelle, said she wants the audience to consider inequality among gender, among classes of society, and how it affected different people in different ways. "Rebellious women fighting for equality have been around long before the Suffragettes," she said.

The Little Theatre of Alexandria is presenting "The Revolutionists" from Feb. 27 to March 20, 2021. Tickets are \$24 per person, with a discount of \$3 for Wednesday and Thursday performances. The venue is located at 600 Wolfe Street, Alexandria, VA 22314. Call the box office at 703-683-0496 or visit the website: www.thelittletheatre.com.

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Obituary



CAROLE NOTTINGHAM HOLDEN

Carole Nottingham Holden, 80, of Hot Springs, Virginia. Passed away quietly on February 11, 2021 with her husband and son by her side.

Carole was predeceased by her daughter, Sherry Holden Mauk; her son, Charles Christopher Holden; her sister, Anne Nottingham Payne; her granddaughter, Lily Holden; and her parents, H.D. Nottingham and Mae O. Nottingham.

Carole is survived by the love of her life for 60 years, Charles F. Holden, 111; her son, Scott Holden (Landon) of Alexandria; her brother, H.D. Nottingham, Jr. (Pat) of Wilmington, North Carolina. Also left to cherish her are 8 grandchildren along with a number of nieces and nephews.

Carole graduated from Mount Vernon High School in Fairfax County, attended Furman College and The Washington School for Secretaries where her accurate typing speed of 100 words per minute set records. She was called upon constantly at VA TECH to type research and term papers by professors and students.

Carole has a passion for natural beauty which was evident in the pride she took in her gardens and her skilled flower arranging. She was a Warm Spring Valley Garden Club member as well as a Master Gardner.

Carole was a valuable Board member of the Bath County Library. She was an avid reader and known to read a book a day. In addition she served as a Board member of The Garth Newel Music Center.

Carole was a gourmet cook and was a most gracious hostess for numerous fundraisers. She enjoyed her friends and loved sharing ideas and learning new things.

Due to Covid 19 pandemic, A private burial service will be held at Goose Creek Friends Meeting Cemetery in Lincoln, Virginia. With a celebration of Carole's life to be held at a later date.

In lieu of flowers please think of The Hokie Scholarship Fund: Carole Holden Woman's Golf Team or the Chris Holden "More Better" Men's Golf Team. VT Foundation, 902 Prices Fork Road, Suite 4601, Blacksburg, Virginia. 24061

Obituary

Herbert Lain Holt

March 25, 1934 – February 13, 2021



It is with great joy for the long and wonderful life he lived that we announce the passing of Herbert Lain Holt (86) on Saturday, February 13, 2021, at sundown in Carlsbad, California. Still on his feet until just 8 days prior to his passing, Herbert long battled Parkinson's Disease and never once complained. Our hero drew his last breath peacefully at home, surrounded by loved ones. We could not have asked for more for our beloved husband, father, grandfather, uncle, coach and friend.

Herbert was born in 1934 to Otis Eldridge Holt and Martha Louise Holt (nee McDaniel) in Gibson County, Tennessee. A proud son of Trenton, Herbert attended Trenton Elementary and Middle School, and played quarterback and was captain of the football team for Peabody High School. During his high school tenure, Herb won the distinction of being voted football captain of the "Big Ten" on all ten western Tennessee high school coaches' ballots. In basketball, Herb served as captain of the junior varsity and varsity basketball teams. Aside from sports, Herb exhibited leadership as the senior class president. Herb also played baseball for the Humboldt Tennessee American Legion. Because of Herb's outstanding sports performances, he was honored in 2006 to be inducted into the Gibson County Sports Hall of Fame. Known as Ol' Twinkletoes, he was honored in 2020 to be inducted into the Peabody High School Football Hall of Fame.

Herb graduated high school in 1952, and attended Murray State University in Kentucky on a football scholarship where he played quarterback for the Racers and was co-captain of the team. He was the student body vice president and president of the Methodist Student Union. At Murray, Herb met the love of his life, Celia Maurelle Kirksey of Paducah, Kentucky, and they married over the winter break of their senior year in 1955. They recently celebrated 65 years of happily ever after.

After graduating from Murray State in 1957, Herb then earned his Master's Degree in Secondary Education Administration over the summers while he worked as head football coach and head basketball coach for three years in McKenzie, Tennessee. Herb then accepted an offer to teach and coach in Alexandria, Northern Virginia. In Alexandria, Coach Holt drew out the best from students and players and touched the lives and hearts of hundreds of students and their parents for 40 years. Herb taught physical education and English at Francis C. Hammond High School in Alexandria, where he was also the assistant football coach and the junior varsity baseball coach. When T.C. Williams high school opened, he served as head football coach, and the junior varsity baseball coach. After three years, Herb was appointed athletic director, and later became assistant principal. Coach Holt was at T.C. Williams High School fostering goodness during the time of the story "Remember the Titans." Coach Holt also will be remembered for his dedication to students at George Washington Middle School. Upon retirement from T.C. Williams in 1997, he was named "MacDaddy of the Senior Class" by the seniors.

Herb and Maurelle raised their son and daughter in Springfield and West Springfield, Virginia. Herb continued to coach kids' baseball after retirement for the Springfield Babe Ruth League. He proudly served as the Membership Chairman, Vice President and President of the Northern Virginia Athletic Directors, Administrators, and Coaches Association (NVADACA).

A natural at sports, he turned his love of sports toward golf and enjoyed golf outings and trips with his son and friends. Herb never once met a stranger and was known for his get-up-and-go, tenacity and his fun-loving spirit. Genuinely interested in people, Herb never missed an opportunity to help someone or bring out the best in them, whether a family in need, or a kindred spirit hitchhiking a country lane. Herb also saved more than a few lives as a lifeguard on Kentucky Lake in his youth. He loved country music and dancing, and became a square dance caller in the 1970s. He gave his family lots of swim and beach days with bonfires and stories, trips to music festivals and county fairs, football and basketball games, amusement parks, long country drives and especially family and friends. He loved bluegrass, spaghetti Westerns, Burt Reynolds comedies, ice cream, and U.S. historical fiction novels in no particular order. He was cool, calm and collected and supported and loved us dearly, always encouraging our independence and best selves while also being available to catch us should we fall. Herb and Maurelle moved to Carlsbad, California to be with daughter and family and were able to enjoy lots of family celebrations together.

Predeceased by his parents and sister Charlotte Brown (Memphis, TN), Herbert is survived by his wife Celia Maurelle Holt, son John Lain Holt and daughter-in-law Martee Holt of Greensboro, NC, grandchildren Lauren Maurelle Holt (currently Poulsbo, WA, engaged to Darrin Cripe) and Alexander Lain Holt of Charlotte, NC, (engaged to Claire Kane); daughter Kristen Walker, son-in-law Justin D. Walker of Carlsbad, CA, and grandchildren Scarlett, Stella, Katherine and Audrey Walker; nephews Mike Brown (Carla), Pat Brown (Bethany) and Tim Brown; the late John David Kirksey (brother-in-law), sister-in-law Alice Kirksey, niece Diane De La O, nephews Samuel Kirksey (Olga), and Matthew Kirksey, extended family and countless friends. He will be sadly missed by all who knew him and we are sure that over his 40 working years as tireless coach and teacher there will be many other stories to be shared about his kindness, support and generous spirit. Herbert made a difference in many lives and heaven is a better place for calling him home.

A celebration of life will be held when people can safely gather. Please sign the guest book and leave comments at www.accucarecremation.com/obituary. In lieu of flowers, please consider a donation to a scholarship fund in Herb's name for young college-bound athletes at Northern Virginia Athletic Directors, Administrators, and Coaches Association (NVADACA) at www.nvadaca.org or P.O. Box 305, Burke, VA 22009.

The family wishes to thank his amazing caregiver, Sandy S.

Obituary

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CALENDAR

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Not That I Don't Understand But ...

By KENNETH B. LOURIE



... So this is what the process is like trying to schedule a covid-19 vaccination. If you're lucky though, you receive an email reminder - since you've pre-registered, advising you that the time to strike is now. You click on the link, and as I'm witnessing, you wait your turn. The site says there's "High Traffic," and they'll be with you momentarily. There's no calling. There's barely any responding. There's simply sitting and staring - and waiting. There's no indication of how long you'll be waiting. There's no guarantee that the site will even open. There's only instructions to refresh your computer every 30 seconds in the hopes that an interactive-type page will appear and you'll have reached the promised land: the page where you can actually schedule an appointment.

However, as I'm sitting and waiting, I'm getting frustrated. I seem to be getting nowhere, slowly. Though I'm refreshing as directed, nothing is changing on the screen I'm staring at. I've linked but nothing is really linking. So I keep repeating myself: stare, refresh, wait; stare, refresh, wait. It's a loop of nothingness. It seems an endless pursuit. It's almost like whack-a-mole, except in your attempts to get connected, the process is excruciatingly slow and there's nothing to whack. (At least it hasn't cost me anything, other than time, that is.)

I realize that the demand is way more than supply and according to experts, it won't be until June/July when "anyone who wants to get a shot will be able to get one." Nevertheless, I would have thought, given my comorbidity: cancer and age 66, that I'd be closer to the top than the bottom. Not that I'm particularly anxious about my circumstances, but my wife Dina is very concerned about them. (I'm staring steady at the site where this column began. As yet, despite my rigorous refreshing, I still haven't passed "Go.")

I understand that patience is a virtue. But today, while staring at and refreshing this site and seeing no sign of life as we know it, I am testing that virtue beyond its stress points. This process reminds of the days of buying concert tickets online. It was nearly impossible - for a popular show, to break through the internet logjam. That is not until you received a message that all the tickets had been sold. How people ever got through, I'll never know. It was always befuddling to me.

I know however, with respect to concerts, sporting events and the like, there would be a secondary/aftermarket availability. I knew an alternative existed. I also knew the cost would be black market-ish, somewhat over the original retail. Unfortunately, or fortunately, public health solutions cannot be left to the market. In its effort not to discriminate and be fair to all recipients, we're stuck with the present communication and distribution system.

Having endured these kinds of pursuits before when calling the IRS, Social Security, Medicare and The Veterans Administration, et cetera, I know a few precautions one should take before attempting to climb these mountains. First, clear your schedule. Next, go to the bathroom. Then, go to the kitchen and get some refreshments. Find someplace comfortable and cozy from which to call; you need to be prepared for the long haul. And finally, should another call come in while you're on hold, do not risk your spot in line by clicking on your call-waiting. Technology can sometimes break your spirit.

My wait is over. The site was just refreshed. It says the center is closed. Perfect timing. I just finished the column.

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

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ENTERTAINMENT

4 Black-Owned Eateries To Add to Your Feast

By HOPE NELSON
GAZETTE PACKET



From a classic "House" dog to a banh mi-inspired concoction, a buffalo dog, a "Three-Piece Suit" and more, Haute Dogs and Fries runs the gamut.

Let's get one thing out of the way up front: There are many, many more Black-owned restaurants, cafes and eateries in and around Alexandria than this humble column can contain. So consider this an appetizer - or perhaps a buffet - of options to support those Black-owned businesses that feed the community (and caffeinate us, too).

Haute Dogs and Fries, 610 Montgomery St.

Don't be fooled by Haute Dogs' casual ambiance - they're serving up plenty of upscale hot dogs, sausages, burgers and more. Choose between an all-beef, veggie or chicken dog and then find that the sky's the limit: From a classic "House" dog to a banh mi-inspired concoction, a buffalo dog, a "Three-Piece Suit" and more, Haute Dogs and Fries runs the gamut. Be sure to order the signature fries, yes, but don't sleep on the onion rings, which are also top-notch.



Magnolia's On King, 703 King St.

Maybe you were introduced to Magnolia's from its recent Restaurant Week menu, or maybe you've been a longtime fan. Or maybe you haven't heard of them at all - which would be a shame. Chef Leonard Holton's menu is a diverse feast of Southern-inspired cuisine. Deviled eggs. Po' boy shrimp sliders. Pulled pork sandwiches. And plant-based diners won't be left out, either; Holton has dedicated a slice of the menu to vegetarian fare, ranging from "sausage" and peppers to "bacon" carbonara.

Hawwi Ethiopian, 1125 Queen St.

Tucked away in an unassuming corner spot on Queen Street, Hawwi has consistently dished out fine Ethiopian fare to the community, even in the face of the Covid-19 pandemic. From flaky sambusas to start the meal to a plethora of meat and vegetarian main course options, Hawwi is certainly comfort food personified. Pro tip: The com-

bo specials are the way to get the most options for your dinner table. With the likes of doro wat, beef alicha and vegetables for the carnivorous options and a vegan sampler for those plant-based customers, Hawwi's extensive menu makes it easy to make the right choice. (And when ordering takeout or delivery, don't be worried about how well the food will travel. Ethiopian fare is hardy.)

Abyssinia Market and Coffee House, 720 Jefferson St.

The little coffee shop just a half-block off of Washington Street has been a stalwart throughout the pandemic, offering up comfort in a cup (or bag of beans) to neighbors. From its vast array of Ethiopian coffee to a selection of beer and wine to daily pastries and other noshable items, Abyssinia Market has become a neighborhood staple, a constant in challenging times.

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.

CALENDAR

NOW THRU MARCH 29 (MONDAYS)

Yoga for Gardeners I. 9:30-10:30 a.m. At Green Spring Gardens, 4603 Green Spring Road, Alexandria. (Adults) This class features a gentle introduction to the Vinyasa method, which helps participants increase the strength, flexibility and endurance necessary for gardening. \$129 per person for 11 sessions. Class held indoors. Register online at www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/parktakes (code 6E6.JNLA) or call Green Spring Gardens at 703-642-5173.

SATURDAYS THRU MARCH

Virtual Pure Barre. 1:30-2:30 p.m. Virtual via Zoom. Pure Barre has again partnered with the National Landing BID to bring free virtual classes to the community. Visit the website: <https://nationallanding.org/do/virtual-pure-barre-intro-classes>

THURSDAYS THRU MARCH 11

Happy Hour Yoga. 5:30-6:30 p.m. Virtual via WebEx. The National Landing BID has partnered with Erin Sonn, owner of eat.YOGA. drink, to bring unique yoga experiences to you virtually. This free, hour-long class will have a different theme and playlist each week and requires registration. Visit the website: <https://nationallanding.org/do/happy-hour-yoga>

NOW THRU MARCH 24

Wednesday Morning Study Group. 10:30-11:30 a.m. Via zoom. Fairlington UMC 3900 King St., Alexandria. Join in a nine-week study of Laudato Si: Caring for Our Common Home, the groundbreaking encyclical letter by Pope Francis on climate issues and a Christian faith-based response. Visit the website: www.fairlingtonumc.org.

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