Victory Center Transformed for Vaccines

High-capacity Covid-19 vaccination site to open in Alexandria as the one year mark in the pandemic passes.

By Jeanne Theismann
Gazette Packet

A large-scale vaccination center for Northern Virginia is slated to open by the end of March at the long-vacant Victory Center with the ability to provide upwards of 6,000 doses per day of the Covid-19 vaccine.

Alexandria Mayor Justin Wilson, Fairfax County Board of Supervisors Chairman Jeff McKay and Inova Health Systems CEO Dr. J. Stephen Jones joined together March 9 to give a preview of the Inova Stonebridge Vaccination Center, which houses 64 vaccination stations in the 50,000-square-foot space on Eisenhower Ave.

“This is an opportunity to collaborate with local partners on a community and region-wide response to Covid-19,” Jones said. “We will be open by the end of the month and able to administer 6,000 doses a day immediately with the ability to double that capacity up to the plate and agreed to partner with the City of Alexandria, with Inova and with Fairfax County to make this facility happen,” Wilson said. “This is obviously not the ultimate vision we have for the future of this facility but appreciate the flexibility and Herculean efforts of everyone involved in making this happen so quickly.”

City of Alexandria has delivered at least one dose of Covid vaccine to more than 36,000 people; about 17 percent of Alexandria’s population. More than 10,000 City residents have tested positive for Covid; 126 people have died. Register for the vaccine through the Virginia Department of Health at Vaccinate.Virginia.gov.

In Fairfax County, 68,932 people have tested positive as of March 10; 1,052 Fairfax County residents have died. Slightly more than 220,000 people in Fairfax County have received at least one dose of vaccine. Those living in Fairfax County can register at FairfaxCounty.gov/health or through the state registration system.

“In Fairfax County today, roughly half the county is eligible to get vaccinated,” McKay said. “That is over 500,000 people and right now we are getting 19,000 doses per week. That is up from 13,000 a few weeks ago but we have been told by the Virginia Department of Health to expect a major increase in doses in the weeks and months ahead. The importance of this center is knowing that we will have the infrastructure in place to take advantage of every single one of those doses.”

Jones acknowledged the hesitation of some to get the vaccine, even as thousands of people scramble every day to try to get an appointment to be vaccinated.

“I know there is still some skepticism among some communities about the vaccine,” Jones said. “Nothing is 100 percent, but these vaccines are too close to 100 percent to be ignored. Critically, every single one of the currently available vaccines have been proven in studies to be 100 percent effective against severe Covid-19 and 100 percent effective against Covid-19 fatality.”

Jones continued, “There are still almost 2,000 Americans dying every single day of this terrible disease. I consider the risk of the vaccine tiny compared to the risk posed by COVID-19. This is the most compelling risk-benefit analysis that has happened in almost 40 years in medicine.”

The state recently expanded the 1B eligibility group to include food service workers. Strict PPE requirements, social distancing and cleaning and sterilizing practices will be observed at the vaccination center, which will be staffed by 64 vaccinators, 30 pharmacists and 20 administrators.

“I feel an overwhelming responsibility to do whatever it takes to get as many people in our community vaccinated as soon as possible,” Jones said. “I feel very strongly that these vaccines are safe, effective and necessary and that everyone who is eligible should get the vaccine as quickly as possible if not for yourself but for your family, your friends and for your community.”

Added McKay, “Continue to practice social distancing, continue to wear your mask, continue to follow CDC guidelines and make the necessary act of charity to get yourself vaccinated when it is your turn.”

In Alexandria: Vaccine supplies are limited, but you qualify right now if you:
- Are 65+ years old
- Have existing medical conditions
- Work in one of these jobs: Healthcare; Police; Fire and Hazmat; Corrections and homeless shelter workers; Childcare and K-12 teachers and staff; Agriculture; Manufacturing; Grocery store workers; Public transit workers; Mail carriers (USPS and private); Officials needed to keep government working; Cleaning/Janitorial staff; Faith Leaders.

Register for the vaccine through the Virginia Department of Health at Vaccinate.Virginia.gov.

In Fairfax County
Vaccine Update: The county finished sending first dose invitations for people who regist...
McEnearney Associates has always had one motto in mind... not to be the biggest, but the best. For more than 40 years, our Associates have lived in and supported Alexandria, helping to build our town into the thriving community it is today. To learn more about our Associates and our firm, visit www.WeAreAlexandria.com

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**Braddock Cove | $925,000**
Beautiful home with wood floors on main and upper levels. Renovated kitchen adjoins family room with stone fireplace. Primary suite with a sitting room and large bath. Sun-filled rec room on lower level with third full bath. Two-car garage and loads of storage.
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Delightful 3-bedroom, 2.5-bath home in sought-after Franklin Park. Renovated (2017) kitchen opens to the family room with a stacked stone fireplace, wet bar, and glass door leading to the private deck. Primary bedroom with spa-like bath. 1909 Rhode Island Ave.
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CaseyShawHomes.com

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OPEN SUN 3/14, 1-3:30PM

OPEN SAT 3/13 & SUN 3/14, 12-2PM
Starting from a Clean Slate

Governor considers compromise on expungement that has automatic expungement for some misdemeanors and petition-based sealing of the record on some felonies.

By Michael Lee Pope

Marijuana convictions will be automatically expunged under a bill now under consideration by Gov. Ralph Northam, although convictions for crack cocaine will require missing a day of work and probably hiring a lawyer to go to court and seal the record. The legislation is a compromise crafted late in the General Assembly session by House Majority Leader Charniele Herring of Alexandria and state Sen. Scott Surovell (D-36), who clashed repeatedly over the last year about how the process should work.

“This bill combines both bills to come up with a process for a clean slate for Virginians,” said Herring. “There is some record retention, but still the records will be destroyed after a time.”

House Democrats were pushing for an automatic model of expungement, allowing people to get rid of old drug convictions without having to hire a lawyer and miss a day of work. But Senate Democrats were advocating for a petition-based model, which would allow a judge to review the individual circumstances of each individual case before making a determination. The governor began the session by calling on the two sides to find a compromise during his State of the Commonwealth Address, although he pointedly declined to publicly take a side in the debate.

“It’s time to act during this session to have the robust debate about how to best conduct the process of expunging people’s records,” said Northam in his State of the Commonwealth address. “This will make our system more just and equal. And it needs action this year about how the process should work.”

Ultimately Herring and Surovell worked together on a mashup of the two bills, taking parts from each version to craft a compromise version for the governor to consider.

The version of the bill now on the governor’s desk includes automatic expungement process for nine misdemeanor convictions, including fake ID, disorderly conduct and marijuana possession. It would require a petition to a court to seal the record for more serious charges, like possession of crack cocaine or resisting arrest. “You have to go in front of a judge and a commonwealth’s attorney,” said Surovell. “And you have to show you’ve led a good life and you’ve changed and if you were addicted to drugs you’re not addicted any more and if you’re an alcoholic you’ve gotten counseling and you’re through all that.”

CURRENTLY VIRGINIA has almost no way for people to seal records of old convictions, leading to problems for people who want to get a job or find a place to live. “Democrats tried and failed to find a compromise on this issue last year during the General Assembly session and then again during a special session. So the compromise version of the bill now on the governor’s desk is a major step forward for a criminal-justice reform effort that would allow an estimated 1.6 million Virginians to start over with a clean slate.”

“You have to go in front of a judge and a commonwealth’s attorney and you have to show you’ve led a good life and you’ve changed.”

Del. Charniele Herring

“You have to go in front of a judge and a commonwealth’s attorney and you have to show you’ve led a good life and you’ve changed.”

Sen. Scott Surovell

“These reforms, if enacted, would transform lives and strengthen families, communities and the economy.”

— Phil Hernandez, senior policy fellow at the Commonwealth Institute for Fiscal Analysis

The version of the bill now on the governor’s desk is a major step forward for a criminal-justice reform effort that would allow an estimated 1.6 million Virginians to start over with a clean slate. “These reforms, if enacted, would transform lives and strengthen families, communities and the economy,” said Phil Hernandez, senior policy fellow at the Commonwealth Institute for Fiscal Analysis. “This legislation also represents an important step to address racial injustice and unequal outcomes that permeate our criminal justice system.”

One of the major topics of disagreement was how to handle drug convictions. Lawmakers were mostly in agreement about automatically expunging marijuana convictions. But the discussions were more difficult around other drug crimes, which are all felonies. Because convictions for possession of cocaine, heroin or LSD are felony crimes, they would require petition-based sealing under the compromise bill now under consideration by the governor. Some prosecutors say Virginia should end the war on drugs, especially now that marijuana has been decriminalized and is about to become entirely legal. “I don’t think possession of drugs should be a felony. I think it should be a Class One misdemeanor,” said Alexandria Commonwealth’s Attorney Bryan Porter. “If we could amend that down to a misdemeanor, it’s still a crime but it’s a much less serious one. Then that problem wouldn’t exist.”

THE DETAILS of the legislation include a delayed enactment, giving lawmakers until October of 2025 to tweak bits and pieces of the process so that it will work in courthouses across Virginia. Misdemeanors offenses that are eligible would go away after seven years, and people would be able to petition to seal the record on felony offenses after 10 years.

The legislation also creates new penalties for third-party vendors, essentially private businesses that buy and sell old criminal records to people doing background checks or opposition research. “That’s an important component of reform here,” said Andrew Elders, policy director for Justice Forward Virginia. “That was a big problem for a long time.”

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**News**

**Victory Center Transformed for Vaccines**

**March 17th - Bridesmaid’s Brunch; March 24th - Wednesday Wine Night; Location: Arlington Cinema & Drafthouse, 2903 Columbia Pike, Alexandria VA 22304; Website: http://www.arlingtonDrafthouse.com**

**THURSDAY/MARCH 18**
Braddock’s Tars: Common Sailors and the Braddock Expedition. 7 p.m. At Carlyle House via Zoom. A little known party of 33 Royal Navy sailors marched with Braddock’s army in the 1755 expedition to attack Fort Duquesne that ended in disastrous failure on the banks of the Monogahela. In Braddock’s Tars: Common Sailors and the Braddock Expedition, Kyle Dalton will use their story as a lens to look at the larger picture of common sailors in the British Atlantic World and tell us what we can learn from ordinary people in extraordinary situations.

**FRIDAY/MARCH 19**
La Sacre du Printemps by Bowen McCaughey Dance Company. 6 p.m. The Rite of Spring. A free Virtual Screening of The March 2012 Kennedy Center World Premiere. Choreographed by Lucy Bowen McCaughey. Live Artist Discussion at 5:30 p.m. with Lucy along with Present and Past Principal Dancers Alicia Curtis, Dustin Emblahl, and Alvaro Palacios. Email: dance@bmdc.org to RSVP.

**Saturday/March 20**
Basic Pruning Techniques for Shrubs. 10 a.m.-12 p.m. (Adults) Learn to prune like a pro with this walk and talk led by pruning instructor Peter DeSilva. Discover which shrubs and evergreens need pruning in late winter and learn techniques for keeping your plants healthy and beautiful. Bring gloves and disinfectant sprays, $23 per person. Register online at www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/parktours (424. USSH) or call Green Spring Gardens at 703-642-5173.

**One Year Later...**
There have been more than 68,000 Covid-19 cases in Fairfax County since the pandemic began a year ago. 1,052 Fairfax County residents have died as a result of as of March 10.

at least 6 feet away from others, avoid crowds and poorly ventilated spaces, wash your hands often, and stay home when sick. [https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/health/novel-coronavirus](https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/health/novel-coronavirus)

**March 5-27**
In the “Give Me Shelter” art exhibit, local artists explore the meaning of the word “shelter” as a noun and verb. We all have learned what it means to shelter in place. The current crisis has nearly 40 million Americans at risk of homelessness. Seeking donations during this exhibit to benefit the Carpenter’s Shelter. 

**March 13-14**
Mini Photo Sessions. 9:30-6 p.m. At The Rectory on Princess Street. 

**MARCH 14-APRIL 3**
Upcoming Exhibition: 11th Annual March150: Special Exhibition and Art Sale. March 150 is Target Gallery’s biggest event of the year. This annual special exhibition and art sale returns with all proceeds supporting new exhibitions and programs at Target Gallery and Torpedo Factory Art Center. More than 100 artists created work on 10” x 10” panels. All artwork is priced at $150. It’s one of the best ways to support your local creative community as well as grow your collection of local art. Public sales begin Sunday, March 14, at 10 a.m. with a preview day on Friday, March 12. Visit Target Gallery in person, with a maximum of 10 people in the space at any time. The forthcoming catalogue will be posted to the website and Target Gallery’s Facebook page. Remote sales can also be made by phone at 703-546-1930 or email via tgerätiegaly@alexandria.va.gov.

**March 13th - Bridesmaid’s Brunch; March 24th - Wednesday Wine Night**

**NOW THRU MARCH 24**
Wednesday Morning Study Group. 10:30-11:30 a.m. Via zoom. Fairlington UMC. 

**NOW THRU MARCH 24**
Forty + Fire Pit Party. Virtual and In-Person. Featuring: Choreographer Jane Franklin, Dates: Weekly, every Wednesday, beginning March 24 - March 24; from 3 - 4 p.m. and Sunday, March 21; from 4 - 5 p.m. Forty + Projects celebrates the collective creativity of people past the age of 40 resulting in unique collaborative performances. Projects explore movement and performance techniques within a creative premise. Forty + will meet weekly on Zoom with occasional in-person, socially distanced outdoor rehearsals at the film locations. The Forty + Fire Pit is an on-site filmed project of all ages. Tuition: $100. Visit [https://www.eventbrite.com/e/march-magnolia-mini-photo-sessions-at-the-rectory-on-princess-street-tickets-140868804143](https://www.eventbrite.com/e/march-magnolia-mini-photo-sessions-at-the-rectory-on-princess-street-tickets-140868804143).

**FRI/MArch 12**
Garden Talk: Designing an EcoSavvy Garden. 1-2:30pm. (Adults) Learn to work with nature’s resources to develop a beautiful, low-maintenance urban garden. With a little bit of knowledge, careful planning, and some effort, see how native trees/shrubs provide structure and year-round interest, along with colorful annuals and perennials that add seasonal color splashles. Extension Master Gardeners show you how to create a sustainable, and eco-savvy garden. $12 per person. Register online at [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/parktours (802.973)#](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/parktours (802.973)#) or call Green Spring Gardens at 703-642-5173.

**Saturday/March 13**
Floral Design Workshop: Swing into Spring. 1:30-2:30pm. (Adults) Learn to work from a modern Hogarth curve floral design—a gentle curving design that leads your eye through the floral composition. Certified floral designer Betty Ann Galway will show you how to make these graceful shapes for your spring floral project. Tables will be separated for social distancing and masks are required. $19 per person (plus $30 supply fee). This workshop is also available as a virtual demo. Register online at [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/parktours (981.S697#)](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/parktours (981.S697#)) or call Green Spring Gardens at 703-642-5173.

**Saturday/March 13**
Virtual Floral Design Demo: Swing into Spring. 1-2:30pm. (Adults) Learn how to create a modern Hogarth curve floral design—a gentle curving design that leads your eye through the floral composition. Certified floral designer Betty Ann Galway will show you how to make these graceful shapes for your spring floral project. $22 per person. Virtual participants will receive a link to connect via Zoom and a supply list prior to the program. This workshop is also available in person. Register online at [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/parktours (261.NPOM#)](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/parktours (261.NPOM#)) or call Green Spring Gardens at 703-642-5173.

**March 14th - Bridesmaid’s Brunch; March 24th - Wednesday Wine Night; Location: Arlington Cinema & Drafthouse, 2903 Columbia Pike, Alexandria VA; Website: http://www.arlingtonDrafthouse.com**

**One Year Later Is the End in Sight?**
220,000 Fairfax County residents have had at least one dose of Covid-19 vaccine.
Honoring Women on Front Lines of Pandemic

The Fairfax County Commission for Women celebrates Women’s History Month 2021. This year, the Commission is holding a Facebook Live Forum on March 15, 2021 at 7 p.m. “Honoring Women Warriors on the Front Lines of the Pandemic” for their leadership, courage and commitment to service during this Coronavirus pandemic. Join the Fairfax County Commission for Women in honoring the highest ranking women in the county’s health, police and fire departments. You may submit questions to the panelists in Facebook Live comments section before or during the Forum. Check the website for more information soon: https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/family/services/bords-authorities-commissions/commission-for-women.

For those interested in learning more about the Fairfax County Commission for Women and Women’s History Month Forum, you can also check Twitter @fairfaxcfw and Facebook and Instagram as @commissionforwomen.

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

THURSDAY/MARCH 18

TUESDAY/APRIL 20

FARMERS MARKET VENDORS STILL DELIVERING
The McCutcheon/Mt. Vernon Farmers Market won’t reopen until April 21, but in the meantime some of the market’s vendors are taking orders online and delivering them to the Sherwood Hall Library parking lot on Wednesdays. Note that you must order in advance and that not all the vendors deliver every week. The vendors making deliveries include: Alex/Riverside Estates $736,000 8314 Orange Court Riverside Estates’ largest split foyer model (Concord) w/ 2 car garage & lots of updates, i.e., roof 2001, HVAC 2012, baths 2010, furnace 2001, updated double pane windows 2019. Kitchen was opened to the dining & living rooms & is absolutely stunning: granite & quartz counters, large island w/ seating capacity & beautiful hued floors. Oversized MBR & MBA share a lovely gas FPL, a 4th BR & 3rd full bath. Plenty of storage behind the 2-car garage. Large lovely fenced bykdy, perfect for entertaining. 5-minute drive to Ft. Belvoir (S), 15 minutes to Alexandria, (N), 25 mins to National Airport (N) and 33 mins to the Pentagon (N).

For more information: www.RexReiley.com
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We are here for you and your loved ones. Visit Sunrise of Old Town for a one-on-one tour of our brand new models. You’ll get a sneak peek of our community’s amenities, activities, and dining program. We look forward to sharing our personalized approach to assisted living and memory care, coming to Alexandria in the spring of 2021.

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www.ConnectionNewspapers.com

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Opinion

What is ‘Fair’?

By Richshaw Adkins Roane

About the Author
Richshaw Adkins Roane is an Afri-
Can-American daughter, sister, wife, and mother living in Great Falls. Roane works at the intersection of philanthropy, policy, and advoca-
cy for economic, racial, and gender justice. She writes, tells stories, and leads philanthropic grantmaking at a national education-focused founda-
tion based in Northern Virginia.

I

f Black people had a dollar for every individual, organization, and company that publicly professed a commitment to antiracism and racial equity while holding up progress in the name of “fairness,” we could have closed the racial wealth gap ten times over. These performative profes-
sions have been described as “feel-
good gestures that cost nothing and shift no power.”

When people talk about fairness in this context, they usually are not motivated by a desire to ensure groups have equal resources, but rather is an immoral mandate to prevent cer-

tain groups from getting resources they don’t “deserve.” It’s particularly shocking when people of fair-

champion fairness in this way since grace - unmerited and unearned fa-
vor - is a foundational principle of many spiritual traditions.

Since before inception, our na-
tion has preached a false moral narrative of fairness while ensnir-
ging discrimination in our found-
ing documents and utilizing the forced removal and genocide of Indigenous peoples and the forced enslavement and brutalization of African peoples as building blocks. Fairness is what folks cry when they want to profess racial justice but not practice it, when they want to perform equity and not pay for it.

We need to get over this collec-
tive preoccupation with fairness which, at best, is a national myth, and at worse, prompts calls for in-

Q:

Racial Equity while

Fairness is what folks cry when they

ask if a proposal is fair, ask your-

self whether the policies that led to

the need for the proposal were fair. Q:

Is it fair to make the admis-
sion process for Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Tech-

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Today, many Black people have experienced trauma to their brains from head injuries and have developed TBI.

MARCH IS BRAIN INJURY AWARENESS MONTH.

Some of us experienced this trauma due to the pandemic.

There is a common misconception that PTSD and depression are the two main symptoms of TBI.

The signs of a TBI can be subtle.

Today, many Black people have experienced trauma to their brains from head injuries and have developed TBI.

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There is a common misconception that PTSD and depression are the two main symptoms of TBI.

The signs of a TBI can be subtle.
Go Green, Go Native

By Glenda C. Booth
Mount Vernon Gazette

The manicured lawn may be an iconic symbol of the American suburbs, but lawns have ecological downsides, and there are alternatives, Tami Sheiffer told members of the Friends of Mason Neck at a March 7 Zoom meeting titled “Mow Less, Grow More.” Sheiffer is the coordinator of the Fairfax County Park Authority’s “Watch the Green Grow” program. “Americans love their lawns,” she said, but traditional turf provides little support for wildlife, and pesticides and fertilizers often used on lawns can wash down storm drains and pollute streams.

She urged attendees to “mow high,” keep grass between 3.5 to 4 inches tall. Typical turf grass has short roots and leaving grass at that height can encourage longer root growth which helps with drought tolerance. She also advised mowing every other week instead of weekly, especially in the spring, to help insects like bees. She encouraged “grasscycling,” leaving clippings in the lawn where they decompose quickly and return nutrients to the soil.

It’s true that some lawn may be needed, for example, for children’s play or high foot-traffic areas, but Sheiffer cautioned that grass won’t grow in some areas like shade, even with fertilizers and weed killers.

Using traditional gas-powered lawn mowers creates carbon emissions that contribute to global warming. “A gasoline-powered lawn mower pollutes as much in one hour as an automobile driven 20 miles,” according to a county brochure. In a brief report, Mason Neck Education Specialist Elizabeth Sieglinger said that six Virginia state parks have reduced regularly mowed areas by 63 percent since 2017 and saved $7,000 a year.

Nature’s Interconnections

Native plants, once established, can mean no mowing, low maintenance and healthier habitats, Sheiffer said. Native plants are naturally-occurring plants that have evolved in a specific area, have adapted to local soil and climate conditions, do not need water except during droughts. Most are perennials. Many wildlife species depend on the plants with which they co-evolved. “Plants and animals evolve together to create unique natural communities, weaving a complex web of interrelationships,” according to Virginia’s Department of Conservation and Recreation. Many native plants provide nectar, pollen and seeds which are food for native birds, butterflies, bees and other wildlife. As an example, Sheiffer said that monarch butterfly caterpillars feed only on milkweed, their host plant. An oak tree is a “super plant,” she explained because oaks can support over 500 species butterfly and moth caterpillars. Most invasive or non-native plants, introduced from other parts of the world, can spread and crowd out native plants. Sheiffer urged removing invasives like English ivy, bamboo and stiltgrass. English ivy can ultimately kill trees by blocking the sunlight they need. Stiltgrass, likely brought to the United States from Japan as packing material, can grow in shade and sun, carpet the ground and take over. She urged everyone to dispose of invasives by putting them in plastic bags and in the regular trash. A new county policy requires other yard waste to be put in paper bags because the county composts it and most plastic does not readily biodegrade.

Urging people to compost at home, she said, “Dumping yard waste in the forest is not composting. It can smother native plants and spread invasives.” The Northern Virginia Soil and Water Conservation District sells compost tumbler kits.

Less lawn and more natives, that was the message.

Mow less, mow high, grow more, choose nature.

The Audubon at Home Program encourages people to plant native plants and offers “ambassadors” who give free consultations.

More information

Watch the Green Grow, https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/nature-history/watch-green-grow
Plant NOVA Natives, https://www.plantnovanatives.org/
Audubon at Home “Ambassadors,” https://www.audubonva.org/wildlife-sanctuary-program

Entomologist Douglas Tallamy created the Homegrown National Park initiative to encourage replanting gardens with native plants to restore biodiversity and ecosystem function. He argues that national parks and forests alone will not sustain healthy ecosystems, that small efforts by many people can make a difference. Visit www.homegrownnationalpark.com.

Photos by Glenda Booth
Planning Commission Recommends Denial of Flag Limitations

T he Fairfax County Planning Commission voted 11-0 to recommend denial to the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors to replace the current zoning ordinance establishing specific regulations for flags and flagpoles in the New and Modernized Zoning Ordinance (zMOD Updates) countywide. Mason District Commissioner Julie M. Strandel was absent from the March 3 vote. The proposed regulations would include different standards appropriate to lots with single-family dwellings or manufactured homes and lots developed for multi-family or non-residential.

Commissioner Timothy Sargeant, Member-at-Large, introduced the motion regarding flags and flagpoles. He said the proposed regulations were intended to establish “reasonable limits” on the size and number of flags and flagpoles’ height. Sargeant recognized that the United States Supreme Court ruling of Reed versus Town of Gilbert, Arizona prevented regulation based on content and prohibited extinguishing the United States flag while regulating other types of flags.

Sargeant said, “There has been an exceptional number of public comments with concerns about this amendment, suggesting that at the least additional time is needed for consideration.” The current zoning regulation on flags and flagpoles is a maximum of three per lot. Sargeant recommended retaining the limit and not the adoption of additional limitations as recommended by Fairfax County staff.

Libraries To Reopen For Some Services

F airfax County Public Library will reopen for interior Express Services on Monday, March 22. Customers will be able to visit library branches for up to 30 minutes, on Monday and Tuesday 10 a.m. to 8 p.m. and Wednesday through Saturday 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Learn more about Express Services.

Curbside pickup of materials on hold will remain available to customers Monday through Saturday 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Capacity limits will be in place: up to 30 members of the public at a time may be in community branches and up to 60 may be in regional branches.

Library programming will remain virtual and meeting rooms will remain closed at this time.
‘Better Than I Deserve’

Roy Gravatte dies at 84.

By Jeannie Theismann
Gazette Packet

For most people, the cursory greeting “How are you?” elicits a cursory “Fine, and you?” But for Roy Gravatte, it was a chance to show his gratitude in life with his signature response to anyone who asked, “Better than I deserve.”

Gravatte, who divided his time between Northern Virginia and Bethany Beach, Del., died Feb. 15 at his Bethany Beach home. He was 84.

Leroy Trice Gravatte III was born July 23, 1936, in Washington D.C. He grew up in Alexandria and attended George Washington High School, where he rowed for the G.W. national championship crew team. From an early age, he spent summers in Bethany Beach at his family’s vacation home and was a lifeguard for the Bethany Beach Patrol.

After graduating in 1960 from Virginia Tech with a degree in civil engineering, Gravatte served for a time in the U.S. Naval Reserve, then worked at the GSA until creating his own engineering firm, Professional Engineers. Later in his career, his engineering focus shifted to expert witness work in the elevator and escalator industry until his retirement. He was also a licensed real estate broker, where he invested in real estate in the D.C. and Bethany Beach areas.

In 1974, Gravatte purchased the Addy Sea, a historic oceanfront bed-and-breakfast in Bethany Beach, from the Addy family, founding members of Bethany since 1901. The Addy Sea became his passion and a symbol of the Gravatte family legacy in Bethany Beach. Through his vision and restoration, it became a premier destination on the Delaware coast and is still operated by his family today.

While in college, Gravatte married his high school sweetheart, Gail Fitzpatrick, and together they raised three children in their family home in Springfield, Va. Gravatte was an enthusiastic Virginia Tech Hokie, endlessly flying his Hokie flag and dressing in Hokie apparel. He was a Virginia Tech football season passholder until 2019.

Gravatte was an active and dedicated Rotarian, joining the Alexandria Rotary Club in 1996. He volunteered as Santa on King Street each Christmas and in Delaware hosted the annual Christmas breakfast of the Rotary Club of Southern Sussex at the Addy Sea. Gravatte was a member of the Masons, as was his father, and was elected to the Bethany Beach Town Council.

In addition to spending time at the beach, Gravatte enjoyed socializing with friends, an annual birthday party, rounds of golf, dips in the ocean and spending winter months in Florida with his girlfriend of 24 years, Sue Coolcy. A devout Christian, he attended Ocean View Church of Christ, the Beach Fellowship in Bethany Beach and the McGregor Baptist Church in Ft. Myers, Fla.

Gravatte was preceded in death by his parents, Frances Miller Gravatte and Leroy Trice Gravatte II; and his sister Martha Lu Gravatte. He is survived by his brother, Charles and his wife, Frances; his children and their spouses, Trice and Laurel Gravatte, Gini and Neal Bepko, and Jeff and Sherene Gravatte; his grandchildren, Jessica (and Ian Loch), Tyler, Meredith, Adam (and Allison), Laura, Addy, Jamie and Sarah; and his two great-grandchildren, Rowan and Carter Loch.

A graveside service for Gravatte was held in Alexandria. In lieu of flowers, memorial donations may be made to Rotary International or to the Ocean View Church of Christ.

Tell a flurry of fun this winter with a variety of in-person options for all ages, plus new virtual programs. View a complete list of winter programs online. Due to potential schedule and capacity adjustments from COVID-19, a printed or online program guide will not be produced for the winter program season. Sports leagues and programs are also being offered by affiliate programs. Please visit Alexandria Soccer Association at alexandriasoccer.org; Alexandria Little League at alexandriabaseball.com; Alexandria Lacrosse Club at alexandrilacrosse.com; Alexandria Rugby club at alexandriarugby.com and Alexandria Football at alexandriataxfootball.com. Visit alexandriava.gov/Recreation to register online or learn more about winter recreation programs offered by the City. For in-person registration, call the Registration and Reservation Office at 703-746-5414 to schedule an appointment.

COVID UPDATES

Quick Facts for Older Adults about COVID-19 Vaccine Appointments

Vaccine eligibility is occurring in phases per the CDC and Virginia Department of Health. More information about vaccine rollout in
News

Hear About the Economic Outlook with Mount Vernon Lee Chamber

With the Presidential election behind us and the Covid-19 vaccine being distributed, what is the outlook for the economy in 2021? What will happen with interest rates, housing, growth and job creation on a regional and local level? Join Economic Outlook 2021 for the most current information on these important topics plus a briefing on Fairfax County’s new Economic Incentive Program.

Thursday, March 18, 8:30 to 10:00 am, Virtual Online Meeting
Early Bird price is $10 for all attendees. After March 12th, price increases to $15.

FEATURED SPEAKERS INCLUDE
- Molly Boesel, Principal & Economist, CoreLogic
- Barbara Byron, Director, Fairfax County Department of Planning and Development
- Terry L. Clover, Ph.D., Director, Center for Regional Analysis, George Mason University
- Elizabeth Hagg, Section Director of the Community Revitalization Section, DPD.

Past issues are available at http://connectionarchives.com/PDF

News and Notes

Alexandria Police Department Investigates After Vehicle Was Briefly Stolen With A Child Inside

The Alexandria Police Department is conducting an investigation into a stolen auto and a firearm brandishing incident. On March 8, 2021 around 8:20 p.m., officers responded to the 3900 block of Executive Avenue and learned an adult male and a child had been in a vehicle that was parked and running. The male then exited the vehicle to briefly run into the building, leaving the child in the backseat. When he returned, he saw a male suspect in the vehicle, driving away with the child still in the backseat. The suspect stopped the vehicle about a block away, jumped out and ran away. The victim chased the suspect for several blocks until the suspect brandished a firearm. The victim then returned to the scene of the incident. The suspect got away.

The child was found safe. There

Employment

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Part Time sales positions available in Alexandria

Goal: Increase print and digital advertising partnerships with local businesses throughout Alexandria.

Skills: Ability to meet and build dialogue with on site decision makers through email, phone and face to face contact as pandemic subsides. Requires desire and ability to develop new friends who will become customers as you build trust, learning how to match their needs with our benefits through email, phone and in person visits as the pandemic subsides.

Profile: Perfect for sales savvy retirees or young parents who wish to develop supplemental income while balancing time with family needs and interests; and, have passion for community involvement.

Benefits: Competitive base and commissions, work from home or Old Town office, free parking, define your hours and income.

Call Jerry: 703.549.0004

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HERMITAGE NORTHERN VIRGINIA, a tree-lined senior living community in the heart of Alexandria, provides our residents with the tools necessary to live life on your own terms. We connect residents, families, and loved ones through a person-centered approach to senior living, ensuring support and services are tailored to your individual needs. Our emphasis on togetherness creates a dynamic and engaging retirement community that lets you thrive!

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Let’s Talk Today to Continue Your Journey!
McLean Family Home

Sunny, free-flowing home created by removing walls and adding windows.

By Marilyn Campbell

After relocating to McLean from the West Coast and purchasing a home, the family knew that major changes were needed to accommodate their family, which includes two children. The couple enlisted the help of McLean based interior designer Tracy Morris Design. “The home had sharp angles that disrupted the flow and wasted space that could be used for storage,” said Morris.

One of the biggest priorities was to create a light-filled, family friendly kitchen. “Our main goal was to have an island to feed small children and a space where the family could eat dinner at the table,” said Morris.

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— Tracy Morris, Tracy Morris Design

An architectural overhaul was needed to accomplish that goal. The new design includes a butler’s pantry and mudroom which allow for additional storage.

“The kitchen was bizarre and had a weird layout,” said architect Sydney Davenport Katz of Barnes Vanze Architects Inc. “There was one large island with two different heights.”

“We regularization the shape of some of the spaces,” she continued. “There were a lot of angled and sloping surfaces that we were able to eliminate.”

Some of the kitchen cabinetry and part of a wall were removed. Floor to ceiling windows flood the room with sunlight. White cabinetry and marble countertops add to the space’s light and airy feel. Morris used a neutral color palette throughout the home, which now includes an island to feed small children and a space where the family could eat dinner at the table,” said Morris.

“We were able to eliminate the flow and wasted space that could be used for storage,” said Morris.

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The original master bathroom had what Morris described as excessive storage space. Some of the closets were eliminated and the drop-in tub was replaced with a free-standing tub.

The home has five full bathrooms, two powder rooms, six bedrooms, including two guest rooms. The laundry room is located on the second floor.

A husband-and-wife pair from right up the street donned the light blue, disposable type even though they were walking alone. “I’ve even seen bikers wear them,” she said. Another couple, Samantha Wenger and Nathaniel Hoffman, had masks stashed in the pockets of their windbreakers as they headed out for a bike on the trail. “We’ve been spacing out from other walkers,” Wenger said.

According to the Friends of the Mount Vernon Trail, the George Washington Memorial Parkway has updated its compendium of incorporate mask wearing rules. The guidance sent to George Washington Memorial Parkway’s philanthropic partners is below:

“The guidance issued by the National Park Service is to be followed by employees, volunteers, partners, contractors including concessioners, and park visitors. ...”

Mask Rules on the Mount Vernon Trail

Many wear masks on the trail regardless.

By Mike Salmon

In the rules about wearing masks to prevent the spread of Covid-19 indicate that if you are outdoors and practicing social distancing, things are relatively safe. This would cover anyone on the Mount Vernon Trail, right? Still, out on the trail, there’s plenty of mask wearing.

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“The guidance issued by the National Park Service is to be followed by employees, volunteers, partners, contractors including concessioners, and park visitors. ...”

Individuals over the age of two years must wear masks, except when actively eating or drinking, in the following locations:

1. All common areas and shared workspaces in buildings owned, rented, or leased by the National Park Service, including, but not limited to, park visitor centers, administrative offices, lodges, gift shops and restaurants.

2. The following outdoor areas, when others are present, and where the superintendent has determined that physical distancing (staying at least six feet apart) cannot reasonably be maintained:

Great Falls:

- Outdoor courtyard area adjacent to the Great Falls Visitor Center.
- The entrance lane to Great Falls, generally described as the travel lane and area adjacent to the fee station where vehicles stop and idle for the purpose of paying and entering the park.
- The (two) designated overlooks at Great Falls.
- Dyke Marsh:
- Boardwalk viewing platform at the end of the boardwalk/trail.

Glen Echo:

- Playground
- Jones Point:
- Playground

Masks must cover the nose and mouth and fit snugly around the nose and chin with no large gaps around the sides of the face. Masks not designed to be protective, masks with ventilation valves, and face shields do not meet the requirement.

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Lynne Cornwell Kennedy

Lynne Cornwell Kennedy was born in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania on October 30, 1941, and passed away in Lauderdale By the Sea, Florida on March 1, 2021 at home with her husband and son by her side.

She is survived by her husband of 57 years, CAPT Joseph T. Kennedy (USN Ret.), and three children, CAPT Christopher Kennedy (USN Ret.) and his wife Stephanie of Virginia Beach, VA, Robert Kennedy and his wife Stephanie of Stanley, NC, and Dr. Carole Ivey and her husband David, of Midlothian, VA, 7 grandchildren, and 2 great-grandchildren. She is also survived by two sisters, Bonny Lyttle of West Creek, NJ, and Susan Kiefner, of Jenkintown, PA.

Raised in Ocean City, NJ, she was a 1963 graduate of Ocean City High School and graduated from Beaver (Arcadia) University in 1963. She was selected as the “Miss Weekly Guide” in 1959 and the 1960 Hydrangea Queen and was well known as a waitress at the Chatterbox. As a devoted Navy wife, she raised her family in 7 duty stations, until settling in Alexandria, VA for 40 years. She was an active member and volunteer at Good Shepherd Catholic Church and member of Mount Vernon Country Club. A memorial service will be scheduled at a later date with burial in Arlington National Cemetery.

The Literacy Council of Northern Virginia (LCNV) is hosting beginning-level adult English language classes from February to May. Due to the continued situation of COVID-19, classes for the spring semester will be held on virtual platforms only, which require students to have a computer, tablet, or smartphone and internet access to participate. Registration runs through February 5, with options to register via text message, phone calls, or in-person at certain locations and times.

Classes offered this spring include:

- Beginning English Class:...
I realize I’m cancer-centric, especially in these columns, but for some reason that centricity didn’t acknowledge my February 27th cancer anniversary. That date sits off from when I was originally diagnosed with stage IV, non small cell lung cancer, the “terminal” kind, I received fake biopsy results. It was a shock. It was the initial Team Lourie meeting with my soon-to-be best friend my oncologist. A week or so prior, I had received the first indication from my primary care physician, that my life was about to change: the results from the previous surgical biopsy confirmed a malignancy. It’s rather an awkward dynamic to meet someone for the first time, who immediately becomes the person who will control, manage and in effect, be responsible for whether you live or die, and how long. From then on, he becomes the most important person in your life; a person who is now entrusted with your most precious asset: your health.

It was not an unfamiliar experience for me meeting someone cold and attempting to build rapport. As a long-time salesman, that was my modus operandi. Whether in person or over the telephone, I have regularly been engaged in this kind of pursuit, trying to create an environment of trust and honesty in order to reach a shared goal. Previously, it was about making a sale; now it was about understanding options and agreeing on a course of treatment. However, the one major difference between these two pursuits, was control, or rather the lack thereof.

Cancer was now in control as compared to my life as a salesman where I chose it because it allowed me to be in control: who I talked to, when I called, scheduling appointments, et cetera. Soon it became apparent, I was no longer in Kansas anymore. I was in the hands — figuratively speaking, of my oncologist — in Maryland: my new boss. If I wanted to live beyond the “13 month” prognosis, I was given, I would have to be as attentive and compliant as possible.

In spite of our shotgun-type of relationship, we have persevered together, which has enabled yours truly to acknowledge, albeit a week or so later, an amazing achievement: 12 years and still living. Not that my circumstances have become de rigueur; hardly, especially since the thyroid cancer diagnosis of late has put into question my original non small cell lung cancer stage IV diagnosis. If I can discern a few things, it appears unlikely that we can litigate the past any more than we can guarantee the future. It seems that there is such a chromosome type, will be a part of my life and likely a part of my death as well.

I’m surprised how it’s my life all turned out and grateful to whomever for what I’m not entirely sure. Nevertheless, somehow it’s worked and here I am, alive and reasonably well. Not cancer free and never to be cured of my stage IV papillary thyroid cancer, still, it’s a living and it sure a dying. Treatment has scarred and all will continue, but so what. Original it appeared my die was cast, but as it has happened, not nearly so fast.

All of which is nothing new, really. A cancer diagnosis is all about change, ceding control, and hanging on for dear life as we are. We will be up and down and all-round, emotionally, physically and spiritually. Expecting a normal kind of pattern to your future life ended the day I was diagnosed, when a biopsy confirms a malignancy. Either you adjust to the vagaries of your cancer life or you will die having failed. I think I have needed beyond my wildest expectations. So much so that I didn’t even acknowledge my “cancerversary” last week. I guess I needed to get off from worrying about it and didn’t even realize it. I have to admit though, it felt good focusing on it for a change. Almost like I was a “normal” person.

Toby Staroff in his attempt to create a visual representation of the document.
64 Alexandria Homes Sold In 2020 & 26 homes sold so far in 2021!

3433 Ramsgate Terr  
JUST LISTED

3117 Little Creek Dr  
JUST LISTED

4408 Tarpon Ln  
JUST LISTED

606 President Ford Ln  
$2,195,000

9406 Old Mt. Vernon Rd  
$998,000

4233 Laurel Dr  
$755,000

4305 Sheridans Point Ct  
$835,000

8906 Old Mount Vernon Rd  
$719,500

9226 Volunteer Dr  
$650,000

8329 Orange Ct  
$728,750

3809 Kings Hill Ct  
$989,250

8525 Bound Brook Pl  
$625,000

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