

Gutter Politics

City Council candidates campaign on fixing Alexandria's flooding problem.

BY MICHAEL LEE POPE
GAZETTE PACKET

One of the candidates for Alexandria City Council are for flooding, which has swamped the city's aging infrastructure in recent years as a series of major storm events have repeatedly submerged parts of Alexandria. Many Alexandria voters want answers, and candidates are offering a variety of approaches — everything from high-tech water monitoring and pervious streets to marking storm drains and addressing the mental health burden of living in a city where a 100-year flood seems to happen more than once a year.

"Norfolk has led with some technology they put in their pipes that they can tell which ones are full and which ones aren't, and they can shift demand in real time," said James Lewis, one of the 13 Democrats running in the June 8 primary. "That's something we're already doing with traffic in this city, and it's a small short-term investment that's relatively cheap."

When asking about flooding during a recent forum hosted by

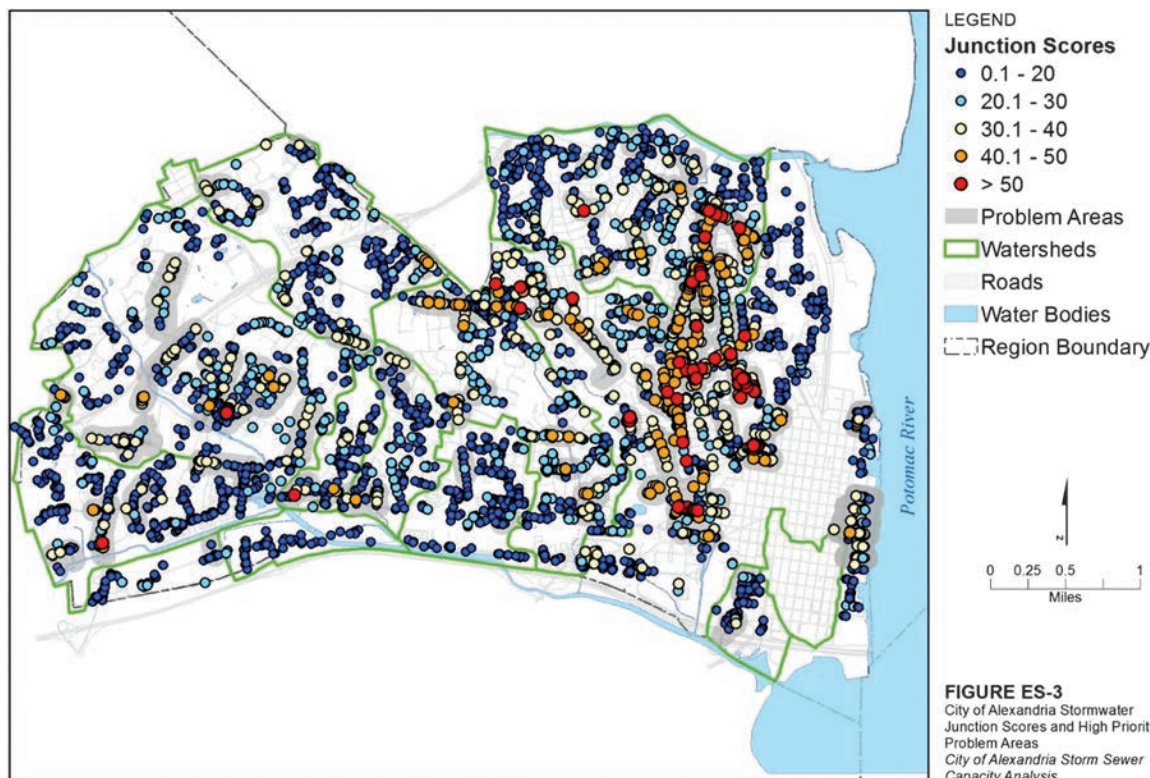


FIGURE ES-3
City of Alexandria Stormwater Junction Scores and High Priority Problem Areas
City of Alexandria Storm Sewer Capacity Analysis

The City of Alexandria Storm Sewer Capacity Analysis identified 90 problem areas in the city and outlined a \$61 million plan to fix them.

the Alexandria Democratic Committee, several candidates pointed to a 2016 storm sewer capacity analysis that identified problems

and prioritized solutions. The City of Alexandria Storm Sewer Capacity Analysis, which the candidates often refer to as the "CASSCA"

study, identified 90 problem areas and outlined a \$61 million plan to fix them. Alyia Gaskins said the city should combine data from the

Agenda Alexandria: Sea Change for Alexandria? Climate Change Prompts a Food of Problems

On Monday, May 24, Agenda Alexandria will host a panel discussion to talk about the problem of flooding in the city. Panelists include:

- ❖ Andrew Macdonald, former vice mayor and global environmental change specialist
- ❖ Katie Waynick, founder of DrainALX

- ❖ Yon Lambert, director of the Department of Transportation and Environmental Services
- ❖ Charlotte Hall, director of the Old Town Business Association

The panel will be streamed live on Facebook and YouTube. For more information, visit agendaalexandria.org

study with pictures from residents and real-time data to form a plan that combines long-term solutions with short-term fixes.

"I've been on walks with residents where they say we know these are long-term projects, but we also need help today in terms of helping mark our storm drains so when we're going out in the middle of the night it's safer for us

SEE GUTTER, ON PAGE 4

Women's Clinic Opens in West End

Inova expands women's health, sexual assault and trafficking services.

BY JEANNE THEISMANN
GAZETTE PACKET

Elected officials from throughout the region gathered in Alexandria's West End May 8 to celebrate the opening of two new Inova Health System community health clinics that will focus on women's health and medical evaluations for sexual assault and human trafficking survivors.

"We are honored to be able to expand into the Alexandria community," said Inova Health System CEO Dr. J. Stephen Jones. "Our presence here will allow us to serve the greater population of the entire region regardless of anyone's need or ability to pay for their health care."

The new Inova Cares Clinic for Women will provide obstetrics and gynecological services for uninsured women. Additionally, a new Inova Ewing Foren-



Alexandria and Northern Virginia elected officials help Inova President and CEO Dr. J. Stephen Jones, fifth from right, cut the ribbon to officially open the Inova Cares Clinic for Women May 8 in Alexandria.

sic Assessment and Consultation Teams department (FACT) will provide expert medical evaluations and forensic evidence collection for survivors of human trafficking, sexual assault, child abuse and domestic violence. Both clinics are located next to the current Inova Cares Clinic for Families and Inova Transitional Services at 4700 King Street.

"I am proud of the services Inova is providing because they are so comprehensive," said state Sen. Barbara Favola (D-31). "A patient who comes here will get a complete evaluation and comprehensive array of services, which is just what we need for the most vulnerable in our community."

Clinical technician Dana Ismail, who was born and raised in Libya, became a patient of the Inova Cares Clinic for Women when she was diagnosed with

SEE WOMEN'S CLINIC, ON PAGE 3

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Women's Clinic Opens in West End



Inova President and CEO Dr. J. Stephen Jones speaks at the opening of the Inova Cares Clinic for Women May 8 in Alexandria.

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endometriosis and subsequently needed surgery.

"The doctors went above and beyond to manage my health and to ensure I had a strong support system to help with the recovery process," said Ismail, who was a guest speaker at the event. "The experience changed my life, leading me to a career in healthcare and now as a volunteer at the clinic in Falls Church. I gained a unique perspective into the field of women's health and the need for services for our underserved populations."

Other Inova Cares Clinics for Women are located in Falls Church, Herndon and the Mount Vernon area of Fairfax County.

"We are lucky to have Inova in this region," said Virginia State Senate Majority Leader Dick Saslaw (D-35). "These clinics will provide a lot more facilities than we already have in this area."

PHOTOS BY
JANET BARNETT
GAZETTE PACKET



Dr. Rolél Mbaidjol with former Inova clinic patient Dana Ismail and Ismail's mother Nejia Kamaraki at the May 8 opening of the Inova Cares Clinic for Women in Alexandria.

"These clinics will provide a lot more facilities than we already have in this area."

— Virginia State Senate Majority Leader ,
Dick Saslaw (D-35)



Police Chief Michael Brown, center, prepares for the wreath laying ceremony to honor Alexandria's fallen officers May 10 at the Fallen Officers Memorial at APD Headquarters.



Police Chief Michael Brown, right, makes remarks as part of the ceremony honoring Alexandria's fallen officers May 10 at the Fallen Officers Memorial outside APD Headquarters.

Remembering the Fallen

BY JEANNE THEISMANN
GAZETTE PACKET

As a somber crowd gathered at Alexandria Police Headquarters May 10 for a wreath laying ceremony

to remember the fallen officers who have lost their lives in the line of duty.

Held at the city's Fallen Officers Memorial, the ceremony was sponsored by the Alexandria Police Foundation as part of National Police Week, which runs May 9-15.

Law enforcement honored as part of National Police Week.

"The men and women of this police department are incredibly dedicated to what they do as a profession that they've chosen," said Police Chief Michael Brown. "They are here for this city. They are here for the residents, just like their predecessors."

The ceremony featured a presentation of colors by the Alexandria Police Honor Guard, the placing of the wreath and the end of watch roll call of the 18 officers whose names are inscribed at

SEE REMEMBERING, PAGE 5



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News

Flooding in the City of Alexandria on June 1, 2015
City of Alexandria Storm Sewer Capacity Analysis



Gutter Politics

FROM PAGE 1

because we know exactly where we're headed," said Gaskins. "We need help blocking off streets so when there's a major rain when a car comes through it's not pushing more water in."

THE FLOODING PROBLEMS may end up being a wedge issue in the campaign, and incumbents are going to need to defend their time in office. Mark Shiffer suggested that the city should create policies for new development, and Kirk McPike said the city could ask more from developers to remediate flooding and stormwater runoff. Perhaps the sharpest attack on the incumbent council members came from Bill Rossello.

"The commitment wasn't there until the flooding started," said Rossello.

"These are issues that have been around a long time, and the folks who have been around a long time have been part of the inaction on this."

Earlier this year, the Alexandria City Council voted 6-to-1 to double the stormwater utility fee in an effort to raise an additional \$15 million a year to help finance the infrastructure investments. John Chapman and Canek Aguirre voted in favor of the increased fee; Amy Jackson voted against it. Council members also created an advisory group to help oversee how that money is spent, and effort to increase transparency and oversight.

"I think the city needs to do a better job of explaining our policies, and when we're doing development that these infrastructure improvements are actually happening," said Aguirre in response to Rossello. "When you see a building go up, you're like, 'Oh it's going to make everything worse.' But there's actually infrastructure underneath it that makes it better."

SEVERAL CANDIDATES emphasized the new funding that may soon be available

"Our roads shouldn't be getting repaved to be asphalt. They should be permeable."

from the federal government through the American Rescue Plan. Kevin Harris talked about his experience hearing about flooding problems from public housing residents, and Bill Campbell talked about his experience working on the School Board to expand the capital improvement program. Patrick Moran pointed out the city's hiring freeze has left stormwater management positions unfilled, and he suggested new best management practices should be implemented along city streets.

"Our roads shouldn't be getting repaved to be asphalt," said Moran, adding that flooding was a catalyzing issue that got him involved in the race. "They should be permeable."

Councilman John Chapman praised the city's new grant program to help residents make property improvements, and Councilwoman Amy Jackson praised the citizen groups advocating on this issue. Meronne Teklu said the city should use data-driven decision-making to predict when parts of the city will be flooded, and Sarah Bagley talked about the strain on mental health this issue causes for many residents who live in a perpetual state of fear.

"One thing that shouldn't get lost in this is short term relief for people who are worried about losing their insurance due to the number of claims," said Bagley, "who are having to make choices about whether they file a claim or not, who are having to dip into savings to decide to install things they need preventatively."

Remembering the Fallen

FROM PAGE 3

the memorial. Several family members and descendants of the fallen officers were in attendance.

Retired APD Capt. Ken Howard spoke on behalf of the Alexandria Retired Police, Fire and Sheriff Association, noting that there have been more than 100 line-of-duty law enforcement deaths across the country in 2021. He urged today's officers to "ignore the negative nonsense out there in the media" regarding police.

"Be proud, be careful, and know you are supported," Howard said.

A similar ceremony was held at the Law Enforcement Memorial at Waterfront Park, with Brown being joined by Sheriff Dana Lawhorne and Assistant Chief Don Hayes as a wreath was placed at the memorial in-

scribed with 16 names dating back to the death of Constable Elijah Chenault in 1823.

The law enforcement officers remembered at APD headquarters include: Constable Elijah Chenault (1823), Watchman Gerrard Arnold (1827), Officer Julian F. Arnold (1887), Officer George W. Crump (1893), Officer Walker W. Campbell (1919), Sergeant Elton B. Hummer (1928), Sergeant Charles R. McClary (1929), Private Whitfield Lipscombe (1930), Private August Perault Pierce (1930), Corporal Clarence J. McClary (1935), Private Robert B. Harris (1948), Private Bobby G. Padgett (1959), Deputy Inspector James Baber (1962), Private Eugene Yoakum (1964), Detective Conrad L. Birney (1972), Corporal Charles W. Hill (1989), Officer Andrew Chelchowski (1993), and Sergeant Morton M. Ford (2011).

Jeremy Lenzer, President of the Alexandria Retired Police, Fire and Sheriff Association, left, makes remarks at the wreath laying ceremony at the Law Enforcement Memorial at Waterfront Park May 10 as Police Chief Michael Brown and Sheriff Dana Lawhorne look on.



PHOTOS COURTESY APD

Members of the Alexandria Police Department salute during the wreath laying ceremony May 10 at the Fallen Officers Memorial at APD Headquarters.



The Alexandria Police Honor Guard at the wreath laying ceremony May 10 at the Fallen Officers Memorial at APD Headquarters.

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Respecting the Feelings of ‘Other’

BY FARAH AHMAD

When I was in elementary school back in the '80s, I came to school after celebrating Eid and closed my sweaty hands into fists. I was trying to hide the henna designs on my hand.

But a girl noticed, scrunched up her nose in disgust, and asked me. “What is that orange stuff on your hand?” “Is that a disease or something?” I shook my head and muttered under my breath, “not unless a disease forms pretty flower and teardrop designs.”

Back then, knowledge of Islam was minimal. Teachers were unaware of Ramadan or Eid. It got tiring explaining to kids why I was fasting and that, no, I could not even drink water.

Then September 11th happened. Islam became the new headline. People swarmed bookstores looking for Qur’anic sources about terrorism or jihad. They pointed to the oppression of women in hijabs. They misquoted and misled. Anyone brown or “Middle-Eastern” looking became a suspicious person who might be carrying a bomb inside their jacket.

I bought into the negative hype

myself, becoming defensive, and internalizing the responsibility of being the sole representative of my faith everywhere I went. As an American-born and raised girl, I was suddenly being treated like an “other.”

I began learning my civil rights and advocating for myself. I trained FBI agents and police officers on Islam. I spoke up at schools, to educate teachers about the Islamic faith and make teachers and coaches aware of students who were fasting during classes, exams, track meets, and games. Some educators listened and others shook their heads meaning, “this is not my problem.”

I hoped my children would have it better than I did. But as students at Fairfax County Public Schools, they still feel like they have to hide who they are or choose between spiritually significant days and tests and schoolwork. Standardized tests, like the SOLs are still scheduled during the month of Ramadan and the celebration of Eid. Children are still receiving the message that their religious needs are, “not my problem” by school leaders.

In an effort to advocate for my son and other Muslim kids, I

joined the board-appointed Fairfax County Public School’s religious task force committee. I hoped that FCPS administrators and board members would find just and equitable solutions for the many Muslims across our county.

But my experience trying to represent a minority community within the school system left me feeling appalled and heartbroken. I felt I was again the “other” in our public school community.

I was disheartened watching the FCPS board debate and decision against closing school on four days coinciding with major faith groups in our community. Seemingly educated people displayed a complete lack of understanding about the people of diverse faiths in our community.

Muslims shouldn’t be measured by our absences during Ramadan or Eid. We should be recognized as people who give back in charity during this time and ask our children to do the same. On these days, we reflect, rejuvenate and model for our children the importance of gratitude, forgiveness, and a connection with something greater than ourselves—lessons that are as valuable as the ones

they learn inside the classroom. We aren’t statistics in a database: We are Muslim families, who like our Christian friends would like to spend time with our loved ones on our most holy days, especially after a tumultuous year of losses.

Honoring the holy days of diverse faith communities provides an opportunity to create awareness and cultural sensitivity. Maybe teachers or students who have never met a Muslim, or who don’t know about Islam, will pause and ask, why are all these friends gone today? Perhaps students will learn to respect a classmate who is fasting, or not to pull off a hijab. Maybe it will teach someone that Islam is more than just a headline or a stereotype.

FCPS prides itself on being diverse, but diversity is more than a bullet point on letterhead. In Islam, Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) says that our words and actions should be the same. FCPS needs to heed these words and truly listen to the soul and the needs of their faith-based communities.

Farah Ahmad is a Fairfax County parent and a member of leadership at the McLean Islamic Center.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Endorsing for Mayor

Dear Alexandria Voters in the Democratic Primary,

We have all been active participants and very engaged observers in the governing of this city. So, it is not hyperbole when we say that Alexandria has never faced the confluence of multiple crises as it has over the past 18 months: Covid-19 testing and vaccine distribution; positive cases and demands on our health care system; economic impact at every level – both government, business and individual; closed schools; racial equity and inequity; and all of the “normal” contentious issues that arise in an engaged community. It is also not hyperbole to say that the leadership provided by our current mayor during these very challenging times has been exemplary.

The mayor, as the public face of the city and its nominal leader, does not single handedly fix any of these crises. But mayoral leadership, especially of the City Council and regionally, is at the core of addressing them. Leadership can’t succeed as the “1” in 6-1 Council votes. Rather, leadership requires forging coalitions from the many

viewpoints on Council and guiding them toward a consensus that ensures critical decisions are made. And successful leadership must also include the painstaking work to forge alignment with regional partners. It is a plain fact that Mayor Wilson has led on both the local and regional front, and done it incredibly well.

It would be a mistake to think that the primary election for mayor is some sort of binary choice between “good versus bad” (it’s not).

While it is fair to say that Justin’s style of running meetings leans toward brusque efficiency, it is also important to point out that this mayor bends over backwards to serve the residents of this city, give them time, track down information for them, and troubleshoot the problems – big and small – of any person that asks. He is relentless in his efforts to not just listen to everyone, but to transparently explain his views. He does this out of a genuine effort to find common ground and with a larger recognition that we are all neighbors, after all.

SEE ENDORSING, PAGE 13

For Added Road Fat

Even if I don’t agree, I can at least respect candidates who defend the Seminary Road “diet.” Two decades ago, on the country’s Left Coast, the Alliance for a Paving Moratorium advocated reversing “induced demand” (the tendency for newly constructed automobile travel lanes to fill up as soon as they’re built) by “depaving” (removing travel lanes). This idea went out of fashion, perhaps because it forgot that people still have to get places public transportation and bicycles won’t take them expeditiously and taking away travel lanes people have gotten used to using induces them to cut-through neighborhood streets instead.

What totally nonplusses me is how candidates who admit the Seminary Road “diet” may well have been a mistake don’t want to spend the money to correct it. This attitude shows why our hit-or-miss city government lacks accountability because shrugging off

mistakes creates little incentive against making more mistakes. These candidates insist that funds which would be spent undoing the Seminary Road “diet” should be redirected to more pressing needs,

SEE FOR ADDED, PAGE 14

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Off the Menu: Restaurant News and Notes

BY HOPE NELSON
GAZETTE PACKET

Closures and openings – sometimes with one restaurant over the course of several days! – is the theme of the moment in the Alexandria food scene. Let's dig in.

Ernie's Original Crab House closes

After four decades, the venerable crab shack on King Street in Old Town closed its doors for good at the end of April. Representatives from the business wrote on social media: "It's been one long crazy ride, but the time has come for a new chapter.

APPETITE We want to thank everyone that's come thru and especially our regulars! We'll miss you! Thank you for giving us the opportunity to serve you. It's been our most sincere pleasure! Please stay safe in this crazy world that we live in."

Days later, a Bob and Edith's Diner T-shirt appeared in the window of the former Ernie's, portending new life for the old space in the coming months.

Goodies Frozen Custard and Treats to open in old ice house

The summer heat is about to cool off a few notches when Goodies opens its doors at 200 Commerce St., in the well-known "ice house" building on the corner. Already owner Brandon Byrd is doling out plenty of custardy goodness from his vintage Goodies truck in front of the former Mutual Ice Company building, but within a few weeks the indoor shop will be up and running. Looking for your next custard fix? Keep an eye on Goodies' social media for the latest truck hours in the meantime.

Blue and White Closes, Reopens

The Blue and White Carryout, a mainstay for to-go breakfast and lunch at 1024 Wythe Street, on the corner of Route 1, has had an eventful few weeks. At the end of April, customers got word that the deli, which has been open since 1942, was closing. But lo!



GAZETTE FILE PHOTO

Ernie's Crab House from a March 2018 photo. Read on for possible future plans for the space on King Street.

The story didn't end there. After much public outcry from faithful customers, the Blue and White reopened shortly thereafter and has once again begun serving breakfast and lunch to the community. Customers posted this week on Facebook from the carryout spot to prove it was open. "Blue & white is open, I repeat blue & white is still open ... bean soup, bologna n egg," posted one customer.

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 JUNE 21

Taste of Old Town North. At various locations throughout Old Town North, Alexandria. Enjoy a stroll through the neighborhood with this year's reimagined Taste of Old Town North. Passport holders will be able to use their Passport to receive discounts at small businesses throughout Old Town North: The Arts and Cultural District, Parker-Gray and Braddock Road West. Passports may only be used once at each participating business; if 75% of a Passport has been used by June 21, the Passport holder will be entered into a drawing to receive prizes. Passports may be purchased online at oldtownnorth.org or at the Community Table at the Old Town North Thursday Farmer's Market. Proceeds will support the work of the Old Town North Community Partnership and ALIVE-inc.org. Visit www.oldtownnorth.org.

NOW THRU MAY 23

Those Spaces Between Us. At Target Gallery, Studio 2 of the

Art Center, 105 N. Union Street, in Alexandria. The show is a hybrid digital and in-person exhibition that explores transition, ambiguity, and being on the threshold of change. Those Spaces Between Us considers the distances between people and their surroundings and how that divide becomes its own character in art, history, memories, and the stories people tell about themselves. Virtual Reception: Friday, May 14, 2021 at 7 p.m. Visit facebook.com/torpedofactory

NOW THRU MAY 16

Trees/Humans: Life in the Balance. By Patricia Underwood. At the Athenaeum. In this exhibition Patricia Underwood employs photo images of ancient trees taken on her travels.

MAY 2 TO MAY 31

The Woodlawn & Pope-Leighey House announces the 58th Annual Needlework Show, Café, & Sale - a month-long event 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. where needlework pieces are submitted and displayed throughout the mansion at the Woodlawn & Pope-Leighey House historic site. This year, the theme "Hindsight

2020: Needlework Expressions of a Historic Year" reflects the flow of emotions, observations, and reactions of this unprecedented time. The Show will run from May 2nd to May 31st, 2021 (except Tuesdays). This year the Show will culminate with a Needlework Tent Sale on May 31st, with a bounty of high-quality needlework pieces available for purchase!

THURSDAY/MAY 13

"Esperanza y Armonía." 5:30 p.m. and 7 p.m. At The Rectory, 711 Princess Street, Alexandria. The Choir of Hope & Harmony | Dr. Diana Sáez. Classical Movements' Choir of Hope & Harmony returns for a dynamic showcase of songs from Latin America about romance, nostalgia and reminiscence. Conducted by leading specialist Dr. Diana Sáez, the program features repertoire from Argentina, Chile, Cuba, Puerto Rico and Venezuela, by composers Astor Piazzolla, Rafael Hernández, Inocente Carreño and others. Visit the website: <https://www.classicalmovements.org>. SEE CALENDAR, PAGE 14

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Muslims Mark the End of Ramadan

Fasting, prayers and charity observed.

BY JEANNE THEISMANN
GAZETTE PACKET

Muslims around the world began marking the end of Ramadan this week with the arrival of the festival of Eid al-Fitr, a tradition that dates back more than 1,400 years.

“Eid al-Fitr is a special holiday and important part of the month of Ramadan,” said Nadir Eliji, an employee at Alexandria’s Del Ray Café. “It is a time to share food and happiness with family and neighbors.”

Ramadan, celebrated this year from April 12 through May 12, is the most sacred month of the year in Islamic culture. Muslims observe the month of Ramadan to mark that Allah, or God, gave the first chapters of the Quran to the Prophet Muhammad. During Ramadan, Muslims fast, abstain from pleasures and pray to become closer to God.

“More than 1.8 billion Muslims around the world wait all year to observe this holy month,” Eliji added. “We fast from sunrise to sunset with no eating or drinking or saying of profanities. This is a time to reach out to God, reach out to the needy and reach out to each other. It is a challenge to us as Muslims to set an example to the whole world.”

Fasting during Ramadan is one of the five pillars of Islam, along with the Muslim declaration of faith, daily prayer, charity, and performing the hajj pilgrimage in Mecca. The fast is intended to bring one closer to



JANET BARNETT/GAZETTE PACKET

Del Ray Café manager Abdel Laassili, left, and employee Nadir Eliji get emotional May 7 as they talk about the significance of the month of Ramadan.

God and to focus on the suffering of those less fortunate.

“When the month of Ramadan comes you try to teach your kids the right things,” said Del Ray Café manager Abdel Laassili, who is the father of young children. “You try to teach them from a young age what Ramadan looks like and what it means. You teach them about discipline, patience, and to always help the poor and donate to charities.”

Muslims traditionally break their fast with a sip of water and some dates at sunset. After sunset prayers, a large feast, iftar, is shared with family and friends.

“This is a chance to worship God, ask for forgiveness, and seek to have our prayers answered” said Eliji. “Ramadan is a month of peace, a month of celebration, a month of getting close to God. A lot of families around the world are suffering. It is my prayer and wish for everyone to be safe and healthy.”

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- ★ **Invest in infrastructure** and stop the flooding.
- ★ **Build a Covid-19 economic recovery** that supports small businesses.
- ★ **Save the forested environment** at Taylor Run, Strawberry Run, and Lucky Run. Protect our tree canopy.
- ★ **Restore transparency** and adopt meaningful ethics reform.

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Building for the Future of Alexandria's Waterways

RiverRenew
Virtual Community Listening Session

Thursday, May 20
6:00-8:00 p.m.

Discover how AlexRenew's wastewater treatment plant will soon become the main hub to build Alexandria's largest infrastructure project.

Register in advance at
RiverRenew.com/Listening-Sessions






Investing in Alexandria's Clean Water Future

To help fund the largest infrastructure project in Alexandria's history, AlexRenew is implementing a sewer rate adjustment over the next two years.

Learn more here: bit.ly/know-your-rates. A virtual hearing to receive public comments is scheduled for May 22, 2021.



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NEWS

Small Business Flourishes Despite Pandemic

BY SHIRLEY RUHE
THE GAZETTE

Everyone loves a good success story, especially during the pandemic. Lori Alexander's grand opening of her expanded Physical Therapy Zone on Saturday, May 8 offered an opportunity for just such a celebration. "We just knocked a hole in the wall and expanded into the suite next door."

PEOPLE AT WORK

This allowed her to socially distance her patients and to create more space for the one-on-one therapy offered.

Alexander and her two therapists routinely saw 60 patients a week at the beginning of 2020 until the first week of March when patients started cancelling due to the pandemic.

"We went from 60 a week down to 39, to 19 the last week in March. In April it stayed at about 14-16 a week. "The lowest I went was 5. I can't believe it was so slow."

But she said some patients really had to continue therapy. They had hip replacements and needed rehabilitation. She was never completely down to zero. However, Alexander wasn't able to continue paying her therapists and finally she had to let her technician go as well. "It was just me. I was doing everything."

Alexander found all of a sudden she had a lot of time on her hands. "Instead of 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. six days a week, she moved her few clients to the same day to save electricity and heat bills. Then in June the numbers started going back up and in July climbed even higher. People started feeling comfortable. The last week in August the patient numbers were up to 50.

She thinks the client numbers grew because she spent her spare time hiring a company to help her redo her "really basic website. All this time I had this limited website and when I built the really beautiful new website, all of a sudden BOOM." She thinks it also helped that with a small office and individual treatment the patients felt safe enough to come. It also added to the safety factor that she got vaccinated back in December in the first wave of 1(a) eligible and would only hire vaccinated therapists.

Alexander says, "We do strive very hard to give quality one-on-one care which is difficult for people who are juggling patients." Alexander has been in business for over 20 years and says she learned "to do it the old-fashioned way



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

Lori Alexander, owner of newly-expanded Physical Therapy Zone on S. Washington Street.

— working with one patient at a time." She worked for five years at the Mayo Clinic in Rochester, Minnesota, and "the first thing I learned was the need to put patient care first."

Alexander says the PPE loan really helped her with her rent. And, in addition, if you were a Medicare provider, Medicare gave businesses like hers financial assistance to stay open until their patients came back. At the time, she says, Medicare was saving money because patients weren't going to the doctor or having surgeries.

But there were unanticipated challenges along the way like when the toilet wouldn't work and she finally had to hire a plumber to take a video to diagnose the problem. They discovered the sewer pipe had completely burst under her building and all "the stuff" was leaking out.

"It was a hazard. I had to get the City involved." Alexander had to move down the street for a couple of months as they dug up the entire floor. Her phone got disconnected and she lost some patients.

Still the former electrical engineering major had come a long way from her textile town of Lowell, Mass., where everyone, including her grandmother, worked in the mills. "I was the first in my family to go to college." But she switched majors when Raytheon laid off workers and Alexander was advised that she wouldn't be able to get a job when she got out. So she headed to Boston University where she graduated in physical therapy.

Now she has hired back physical therapists and her business expanded to 119 patients just last week. "I've never had this many patients since I opened the business in 2011."

"I grew up in severe poverty so having my own business is something I could never have imagined."

Ramadan Warms a Chilly May In McLean and Arlington

A Ramadan Primer: different traditions, but a unifying month.

BY EDEN BROWN
THE GAZETTE

According to what country you are from, Ramadan traditions vary, and sometimes, it's just family preference. In one house, breaking the fast with a glass of milk to "line the stomach" is militantly adhered to. In another, it's just water and the ubiquitous date. In some families, getting up at 4 a.m. to pray and have the morning Suhoor meal is the way it's done; in other homes, the morning meal is skipped because "it just makes you hungrier."

But some things never change: Ramadan is a time of kindness and charity. It is important to give "Zakat" (alms) to organizations in need of support, especially for the poor and sick. Some families decide to perform an act of kindness for every day in the month-long fasting period. It takes their minds off the hunger and allows more people to share in the spirit of Ramadan.

The idea of Ramadan is to go without eating or drinking all day so the person who rarely goes hungry can understand the person who often goes hungry. In addition, Ramadan is a time of self-reflection and focus on correcting one's outlook. The very practice of blocking out food for 13 or more hours encourages a spiritual take on the day and many use the time to keep a journal or read the Koran in its entirety. Muslims rarely complain about going without food and water all day; it's part of the challenge of Ramadan to do the fast without getting "hangry" or vocalizing to others how hard it is.

Until a person has fasted for Ramadan and joined others in Iftar, the meal which breaks the fast, it is hard to understand how unifying and powerful the month is. The community of "brothers and sisters" who sacrifice together and then seek each other out to end that day-long ache in the stomach is somewhat like Easter after Lent, or Yom Kippur, but neither is as intense as Ramadan.

In Morocco, the entire country fasts and at sundown, everyone rushes out the door to get home



McLean residents Ahmed and Fayhaa prepare to eat an elaborate Iftar dinner with their host's tagines on the special "Night of Destiny."



Another Ramadan spread on the first night of Ramadan, with traditional Arab dishes like Kibbeh, and eggplant.

for Iftar, ignoring the stop signs so they won't be late. In Sri Lanka, sunset prayers are held on a vast "maidan" near the sea, and thousands of men are seen gathering there to pray every evening as the sun sets in the Indian Ocean.

Since 2001, imams in most mosques have gone out of their way to welcome non-Muslims in the mosque during Ramadan, and to interpret Islam for non-Muslims so misconceptions that circulate in the U.S. can be addressed.

The atmosphere of a mosque serving Iftar is joyous and warm; the diversity of the muslim population in Northern Virginia is immense and many wear traditional dress during events at the mosque. But don't expect to get a place in the mosque during the Eid al Fitr, the day when the fast ends. Like Easter, it's a time when the mosques are more full than usual. Many congregants have to use the sidewalk and street to pray, and

SEE RAMADAN, PAGE 12



The intrepid Alice C. Myers—surgical nurse, Red Cross volunteer, blood donor, and disaster relief ERV driver (just call me Al the truckdriver); consummate volunteer in all of her children and grandchildren's schools; long time member of Democrats Abroad London; feisty feminist; London hot pants safety jogger; insatiable reader and article clipper; queen of yarn fixes and makeshift photo frames; gourmet chef Julia Child-follower; handy haiku writer; tea with lemon in a pre-heated teacup drinker—died on February 1, 2021.

Alice C. Myers was a resident of Alexandria, Virginia, for some 60 years. She had a home on Jefferson Street in Old Town, four blocks from the Potomac River. Born in Bradford, NH, she started her career as a surgical nurse, working 16-hour shifts in Brooklyn, New York before marrying her college sweetheart who became Commander C.E. Myers (USN Ret.).

They spent many years living and travelling abroad in Europe and North Africa. Each of her four children was born in a different state or country, until finally the family was stationed at Navy CINCUSNAVEUR HQ in London, England. All her four children grew up in London and attended the American School in London.

Alice was a consummate volunteer all her life. As a teenager during World War II, she served as an airplane spotter. In London, she got out the vote with Democrats Abroad. Back in the US in the 1980s, she volunteered for the American Red Cross for over 30 years, spending months at a time doing disaster relief, working on blood drives, and celebrated her 70th birthday by driving an Emergency Rescue Vehicle (an ERV) to West Virginia to help flood victims. One of few women to drive an ERV, she was also one of the oldest drivers, male or female. Natural disasters took her from Washington, DC to South Carolina. Hurricane Hugo took her to Puerto Rico. She gave blood at every opportunity and manned Red Cross blood mobiles.

She also volunteered in every one of her children's and grandchildren's schools in London and Alexandria, as an assistant librarian volunteer, teaching kids the Dewey Decimal system. She was an exuberant backstage mom and enthusiastic frontstage grandmother.

She was a voracious reader and prolific writer, and an ardent feminist. She wrote hundreds of haikus and dozens of journals, and loved music, especially Glenn Miller.

She was always on call to her children and grandchildren, any time of day or night. As if travel around the world and growing up in London weren't enough, she always wanted her children to experience the unusual—like waking all four of them up in the middle of the night one night and taking them outside to see snow, a rare sight in London.

Alice was unstoppable. Active in political and civic life in Alexandria, for decades she was a well known sight on the streets of Old Town, riding her tricycle that she called "The Tank" with granddaughter Mimi in the basket until Mimi was too big to fit, flying banners protesting, among other things, the Wilson Bridge construction that would have taken away the Jones Point waterfront park.

She was a regular in the coffee clatch at Old Town Coffee Tea and Spice on Union Street and at La Madeleine on Pitt.

She celebrated her 95th birthday on January 22 by Zoom with all four of her children and both of her granddaughters. The family will have a celebration of her vibrant life and honor her wishes with a sprinkling of her ashes on World Blood Donor Day, June 14, 2021.

Alice is survived by her children Elisabeth Rose Myers-Kerbal, Mary Cordelia Myers, Coleman Edward Myers II, and William Jason Ames Myers, and her granddaughters Latiffa Kerbal and Myriam Kerbal-Chandler.

Myriam, affectionately nicknamed "TLC" as a baby because of her prolific curly hair, wrote a haiku for her grandmother one month after her death:

FOR ACM

Almost one month out.

I will miss you forever.

Yours, The Little Cloud.

For details on her memorial, send an email to: AliceMyersMemorialZoom@gmail.com.


Donations can be made (and volunteers can serve) in Alice C. Myers' name with the American Red Cross.

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Public Hearing will be held by the City Council of the City of Alexandria, Virginia, virtually on Zoom webinar on Saturday, May 15, 2021 at 9:30 a.m., or as soon as may be heard on the hereinafter described items.

PUBLIC HEARING on the City's Draft FY 2022 to FY 2026 Five-Year Consolidated Plan for Housing and Community Development and Draft One Year Action Plan to Enable HUD FY 2022 Funding.

PUBLIC HEARING and Consideration of a License Amendment between the City of Alexandria and Hornblower Cruises & Events (Potomac Riverboat Co.) for a License Fee Repayment Plan in response to the COVID-19 Pandemic.

PUBLIC HEARING and Consideration of a License Amendment with ARP Water-front, LLC for the Use of a Portion of the City Marina Plaza for Outdoor Dining to Allow for the Removal of Three Light Poles Consistent with the Terms in the Current License Agreement.

PUBLIC HEARING and Consideration of an Amendment to the Lease between the City and Seminary Road Owner, LLC for Rooftop Space at 4900 Seminary Road for a Public Safety Radio Antenna Site.

AN ORDINANCE to amend Chapter 2, Section 2-2-10 (F) and (J) to Rename the Maury School Election District and Voting Location to the Naomi L. Brooks School Election District and Voting Location and to Rename the Cora Kelly Center Election District and Voting Location to the Cora Kelly- "Chick" Armstrong Center Election District and Voting Location.

AN ORDINANCE to increase the Ambulance Service Charges by amending Article J (SERVICE CHARGES FOR CITY AMBULANCE AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS INCIDENT RESPONSE SERVICES) to Chapter 2 (TAXATION) of Title 3 (FINANCE, TAXATION AND PROCUREMENT).

The proposed ordinance amends Ambulance service changes as follows: (1) Basic Life Support (BLS) Transport from \$500 to \$600; (2) Advance Life Support (ALS-1) Transport \$650 to \$780; (3) Advanced Life Support (ALS-2) Transport from \$800 to \$900; and (4) Ground Transport Mileage (GTM) from \$10 per mile to \$12 per mile.

AN ORDINANCE to amend and reordain Article D (CONTRACT FORMATION AND METHODS OF SOURCE SELECTION): Section 3-3-69 (CONTRACTING FOR PROFESSIONAL SERVICES BY COMPETITIVE NEGOTIATION); and Division 1 (COMPETITIVE SEALED BIDDING), Section 3-3-53 (ACTIONS ON PERFORMANCE BOND), all of Chapter 3 (PURCHASES AND CONTRACTURAL SERVICES) of Title 3 (FINANCE, TAXATION, AND PROCUREMENT), of the Code of the City of Alexandria, Virginia, 1981, as amended.

The proposed ordinance amends the Code of the Virginia of the City of Alexandria, 1981, as amended, in order to make the procurement provisions comply with the Code of Virginia to the extent required under the law.

AN ORDINANCE to prevent the spread of the Novel Coronavirus, SARS, CoV-2, and the disease it causes, commonly referred to as COVID-19 by requiring face coverings in certain indoor and outdoor locations.

AN ORDINANCE to amend Article A (GENERAL PROVISIONS) of Chapter 4 (COMMITTEES, BOARDS, AND COMMISSIONS) of Title 2 (GENERAL GOVERNMENT) of the Code of the City of Alexandria, Virginia, 1981, as amended.

The ordinance amends Sections 2-4-4, 2-4-5, and 2-4-7 of the City Code to change the following provisions governing the City committees, boards, and commissions: (1) removing the wavier for member term limits of ten years and providing that members are ineligible for reappointment for one calendar year; (2) stipulating that members that fail to return the mandated oath of office within 60 days of appointment as required by the City Code may be subject to removal; and (3) mandating that all standing committees, boards, and commissions enact bylaws.


AN ORDINANCE to amend Title 11 Chapter 5: Noise Ordinance.

The proposed ordinance amends the Noise Ordinance. This is the first phase of the update to the Noise Ordinance that primarily addresses administrative changes and one policy change. The policy revision is to add a new "Institutional" property use category to cover specific property uses which are not presently covered in the existing ordinance.

THE PUBLIC IS ADVISED THAT AMENDMENTS OR ADDITIONS MAY BE MADE TO PROPOSED ORDINANCES WITHOUT FURTHER PUBLICATION. IT IS RECOMMENDED THAT PERSONS INTERESTED IN ANY OF THESE ORDINANCES OBTAIN FREE FULL-TEXT COPIES FROM THE CITY CLERK AT CITY HALL. If the mayor finds and declares that weather or other conditions are such that it is hazardous for members to attend the meeting, this meeting will be continued to the following Saturday May 22, 2021. GLORIA SITTON, CMC, CITY CLERK

Legals

Legals



Notice is hereby given that the Alexandria City Council will introduce for first reading on May 11, 2021, with second reading, public hearing and adoption to be set for May 15, 2021, for an ordinance to amend and reordain Title 2 (GENERAL GOVERNMENT), Chapter 2 (ELECTIONS), Section 2-2-10 (ESTABLISHMENT OF ELECTION DISTRICTS AND VOTING PLACES) of the Code of the City of Alexandria, Virginia, 1981, as amended by renaming the Maury District Election District and Voting Location to the Naomi L. Brooks Election District and Voting Location; and renaming the Cora Kelly Election District and Voting Location to the Cora Kelly – "Chick" Armstrong Election District and Voting Location for the elections in 2021 and thereafter.

Gloria A. Sitton, CMC
City Clerk and Clerk of Council

Legals

Legals

Public Notice – Environmental Permit

Purpose of notice: To seek public comment on a draft permit from the Department of Environmental Quality that will allow (1) the release of treated wastewater into a waterbody; (2) the reuse of reclaimed wastewater; and (3) combined sewer system overflows during wet weather events into a three water bodies in Alexandria, Virginia.

Public comment period: May 7, 2021 to June 11, 2021

Permit name: Virginia Pollutant Discharge Elimination System Permit – Wastewater issued by DEQ, under the authority of the State Water Control Board.

applicant Name, address and permit number: City of Alexandria, Virginia Sanitation Authority d/b/a Alexandria Renew Enterprise; 1800 Limerick Street, Alexandria, VA 22314; VA0025160.

This facility is an Extraordinary Environmental Enterprise participant in Virginia's Environmental Excellence Program.

Project description: City of Alexandria, Virginia Sanitation Authority d/b/a Alexandria Renew Enterprise has applied for reissuance of a permit for the public AlexRenew Water Resource Reclamation Facility. The applicant proposes to release treated sewage wastewaters from residential areas at a rate of 54 million gallons per day into a water body and reuse reclaimed wastewater for landscape water features, indoor toilet flushing and non-bulk irrigation. Sludge from the wastewater treatment process will be land applied and/or blended in the production of a soil amendment. The combined sewer system has historically been authorized by the VPDES Permit No. VA0087068. The conditions and requirements found in VA0087068 will be consolidated into the reissuance of VPDES Permit No. VA0025160. This permit reissuance requires continuation of the nine minimum controls and commencement of the construction project known as RiverRenew as set forth in the approved long term control plan update for the City of Alexandria combined sewer system. The permit authorizes the release of combined sewer system overflows during wet weather events from the City of Alexandria combined sewer system at an estimated, system wide annual average volume of 127 million gallons into three water bodies prior to the completion of RiverRenew. The facility proposes to release the treated sewage and combined sewer overflows in the Hunting Creek, Hoeff Run and the Potomac River (Oronoco Bay) in Alexandria in the Potomac River watershed. A watershed is the land area drained by a river and its incoming streams. The permit will limit the following pollutants to amounts that protect water quality: physical and chemical properties, nutrients, organic matter, solids and bacteria. The permit also requires monitoring and reporting of flow and whole effluent toxicity.

This facility is subject to the requirements of 9VAC25-820 and has registered for coverage under the General VPDES Watershed Permit Regulation for Total Nitrogen and Total Phosphorus Discharges and Nutrient Trading in the Chesapeake Bay Watershed in Virginia.

HOW TO COMMENT AND/OR REQUEST A PUBLIC HEARING: DEQ accepts comments and requests for public hearing by hand-delivery, email, fax or postal mail. All comments and requests must be in writing and be received by DEQ during the comment period. DEQ must receive hand-delivery and postal mail by close of business and email and fax comments by 11:59 p.m. on the last day of the comment period. Submittals must include the names, mailing addresses and telephone numbers of the commenter/requester and of all persons represented by the commenter/requester. A request for public hearing must also include: 1) The reason why a public hearing is requested. 2) A brief, informal statement regarding the nature and extent of the interest of the requester or of those represented by the requester, including how and to what extent such interest would be directly and adversely affected by the permit. 3) Specific references, where possible, to terms and conditions of the permit with suggested revisions. A public hearing may be held, including another comment period, if public response is significant, based on individual requests for a public hearing, and there are substantial, disputed issues relevant to the permit.

Contact for public comments, document requests and additional information: Douglas Frasier; DEQ-Northern Regional Office, 13901 Crown Court, Woodbridge, VA 22193; Phone: 703-583-3873; Email: Douglas.Frasier@deq.virginia.gov; Fax: 804-698-4178. The public may review the draft permit and application at the DEQ office named above by appointment or may request copies of the documents from the contact person listed above.

News

Ramadan

FROM PAGE II

come prepared with mats.

Even Ramadan is prone to extreme interpretation. One on-line thread asked if it was okay to have a COVID-19 vaccine during Ramadan.

“Of course it is,” said Fayhaa. “God gives us the means to maintain our health and we have to take those gifts of medicine.” And cooking during Ramadan is tough because some believe you can’t taste while you are cooking. Others say the Koran allows for food to touch the tongue as long as it is not swallowed. Most muslims start fasting at the age of 10 or 11, anxious to join the family in their tradition. Some fast for only half a day to enable them to manage the first years. Most muslims find the first three days of Ramadan difficult, but quickly acclimate to the new pattern of not eating or drinking water. Some even welcome it as “intermittent fasting” and hope to slim down. Ramadan traditions of special cookies, nutty sweets like “Sfouf” and gifts make it festive and fun, make slimming down harder.

Most importantly, families come together as they do for Thanksgiving, and those without families nearby are invited for Iftar so they won’t be alone. The Eid celebration is an important one, and it is entirely appropriate to wish a muslim “Eid Mubarak” on that evening, which this year will fall on May 12 if the new moon is sighted... “in-shallah.”

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.

THURSDAY/MAY 13
Carlyle House Architecture Tour.
5:30 p.m. Carlyle House is one of the finest examples of Georgian Architecture on the East Coast. Join them for an one hour tour of Carlyle House solely focused on the architecture and restoration of Carlyle House. Reservations are required as space is limited. Call 703-549-2997 or email carlyle@nvrpa.org. Tickets:https://apm.activecommunities.com/novaparks/Activity_Search/4690

VOLUNTEERS WANTED
Assistance League of Northern Virginia is an all-volunteer non-profit organization that feeds, clothes and provides reading assistance and books to children in need. Assistance League’s programs touch the lives of hundreds of children in Fairfax and Prince William Counties and the City of Alexandria. There are many volunteer opportunities for community members to contribute to helping those in need. To learn more, email info@alnv.org, or visit www.alnv.org.

12 ❖ ALEXANDRIA GAZETTE PACKET ❖ MAY 12-1 MAY 13-19, 2021

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Endorsing

FROM PAGE 6

These traits have enabled him to serve our city remarkably well. The city has amassed a staggering list of accomplishments over his two and a half year tenure, each of these items certain to be critical to the city's recovery and long-term resiliency: Landmark Mall and Victory Center are finally moving forward; ground was broken on a Potomac Yard Metro station that even now rises above the tracks; Virginia Tech's billion dollar new graduate school campus; a plan for a new community hospital; generational infrastructure investments; bold new environmental plans; significant new affordable housing; a new police review board; being the first jurisdiction in the state to establish collective bargaining for city staff; and so much more.

None of this happened simply by wishing it so. Justin worked tirelessly, along with many other regional officials, private industry, city staff and economic development offices worked equally hard to make these projects a reality. It was the work of a lot of people working cooperatively and creatively, but anyone who follows these accomplishments knows that Justin brought critical leadership throughout.

In the end, amidst one of the most critical times in this city's history we can think of no one more willing and more capable to lead us into better times than Justin Wilson.

We urge you to vote for Justin Wilson for Mayor on June 8th or when you vote early in-person or by mail.

Thank you.

Bill Euille, Former mayor and member of the Alexandria City Council
Kerry Donley, Former mayor and member of the Alexandria City Council
Redella "Del" Pepper, Alexandria City Councilwoman
Veronica Nolan, Alexandria School Board Vice Chair
Paul Smedberg, Chair, WMATA and Former member of the Alexandria City Council
Willie Bailey, Former Member of the Alexandria City Council
Stephanie Kapsis, Former Alexandria School Board Member
Ludwig Gaines, Former member of the Alexandria City Council
Lonnie Rich, Former member of the Alexandria City Council
David G. Speck, Former member of the Alexandria City Council and Virginia House of Delegates.
Rob Krupicka, Former member of the Alexandria City Council and Virginia House of Delegates

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Obituary

Obituary

Sharon L. Humber



With heartfelt sadness we announce the passing of Sharon, a devoted wife, loving mother, adoring grandmother, and thoughtful friend, on May 4, 2021.

She was born in the coal-mining community of Connellsville, Pennsylvania on April 24, 1950, and at a young age she moved to Alexandria, Virginia where she later worked as a Human Resources Specialist at Alexandria Hospital for 36 years. When she was raising her son Troy and daughter Kim, she enjoyed encouraging them from the sidelines as they played sports. Friends introduced her to the love of her life Chucky on a double date in 1981. They resided in Alexandria until 2000, when they started to build their lives together in Berkeley Springs, West Virginia. Sharon loved to attend Flyball tournaments in the U.S. and Canada with Kim, she supported the local community of Berkeley Springs as a member of the War Memorial Hospital Auxiliary, and volunteered at Starting Points.

Sharon Humber is survived by her Husband Charles Humber, her son Troy Stephens (Trudy), her daughter Kimberly Shepherd (Marty) and three grandsons Aaron Stephens, II, Richard Stephens, and Eric Stephens (and 6 adorable grand-doggies). She was preceded in death by her parents James "Bud" Hall and Ruth May (Hall).

Services will be conducted at noon on Thursday, May 13, 2021 at Helsley-Johnson Funeral Home & Cremation Center, 95 Union Street, Berkeley Springs, WV, where the family will receive friends from 11:00 a.m. till service time. Rev. Jack W. Hiles, Jr. will officiate. Burial will be private.

In lieu of flowers, contributions in Sharon's memory may be made to Starting Point of Morgan County, 106 Sand Mine Road, Suite 6, Berkeley Springs, WV 25411.

Online condolences may be expressed at www.helsleyjohnsonfh.com.



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A False Sense of Security

By KENNETH B. LOURIE



As previously referred to in a recent column, even though I am hardly cancer-free; nonetheless, I am cancer interruptus for the next four weeks. That means I have no cancer-related activities: no lab work, no scans, no infusions, no injections, no appointments, no video visits, no interaction whatsoever. Other than taking my daily thyroid cancer pill (the side effects of which are marginal at worst), with which I ingest another 50-plus pills (supplements and so forth), I am, too quote my late father, "unencumbered" by my less-than-ideal circumstances. I wouldn't say I'm actually on vacation, but I'm certainly willing to say, there's a definite break in the action. It's not exactly a "staycation," nevertheless, it is a positive occasion, and one with which I can live.

Not that being diagnosed with "terminal" (originally) cancer and/or still undergoing active treatment is ever fun; tolerable is as grandiose a description as I'll accept. However, four weeks without any involvement with my oncologist and endocrinologist or with any health care-related staff, puts a real bounce in my step; my neuropathy notwithstanding. Though I have difficulty walking and especially running, I am, for the next four weeks anyway, on easy street, figuratively speaking. The psychological wear and tear us cancer patients (especially the ones characterized as "terminal") endure is ever present and any excuse/opportunity to let one's mind wander to a place other than your presumptive demise, is a mental trip very much worth taking.

Oddly enough, a month of not having anything to do with my cancer team/healthcare facility is hardly the norm. Usually, there's more than enough cancer-related activities to keep me preoccupied. In its own unique way, the nothingness is kind of challenging. I keep looking over my shoulder, almost literally, as the Satchel Page once said ("to see if anybody's gaining on me"), and flipping the pages on my appointment book to see if I've whiffed somehow on some of my usual and customary obligations. I mean: it is so rare to be so disconnected when you've been diagnosed with a "terminal" disease. As you might imagine, cancer treatment is very hands-on. Not much is left to chance. Moreover, cancer is very unpredictable and insidious. Often it is in control, despite the oncologist's best effort. To be thrown into this cancer-centric world after mostly standing still, healthwise, for 54 and a half years, is a fate not worse than death, but one, depending on the type of cancer you have, which could very well lead to a premature death.

After decades of neglect, the last 15 or so years has seen a huge increase in funding for lung cancer research which in turn has led to more than a dozen new drugs - and an entire new class of drugs: immunotherapy, for the treatment of lung cancer. The result has been increased survivability and quality of life for those of us so diagnosed. And very directly, I have been the beneficiary of some of these drugs: avastin, alimta and tarceva having been my life extenders. Where despair once dominated the initial prognosis, now there is hope. It's not so much a cure as it is a way to make cancer a chronic disease, one which requires a lifetime of monitoring, like diabetes, as an example; but it's potentially for a lifetime, not for a life with very little time.

At this immediate juncture, I am being treated, but still living my life - outside, and rarely ever in a medical facility. Not having to endure the ongoing exposure and reminder that I have cancer and a shortened life expectancy to boot, enables me not only to breathe easier, but also allows me to take an occasional deep breath as well. A deep breath which doesn't lead to a coughing fit, a fit which, for us lung cancer patients is never a good sign.

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

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ENTERTAINMENT



Alexandria Old Town Spring Time Art Festival May 15-16

10 a.m. to 5 p.m. At 300 John Carlyle Street, Alexandria. Visitors to the free, outdoor event in John Carlyle Square will see thousands of handmade, exquisite pieces of art from every medium. Masks are mandatory, social distancing will be enforced to maintain the comfort and safety of art-

CALENDAR

FROM PAGE 8

sicalmovements.com/secretgardenconcerts/

FRIDAY, MAY 14

Gadsby's Trivia Night. 7 p.m. Grab your favorite beverage and settle down for some trivia fun (with prizes) that will test your knowledge of history, Alexandria, and American war heroes in honor of Memorial Day. Whether you're a single, a couple, or a couple of friends, this is a perfect way to spend a Friday evening. The questions are targeted for adults, but family teams are welcome. Tickets are \$20 per household, with all proceeds benefitting Gadsby's Tavern Museum. To register, visit www.gadsbystavernmuseum.us/. Cost: \$20 per household.

FRIDAY/MAY 14

Watercolor Painting Leaves workshop. 6 p.m. Learn to use watercolor techniques such as wet in wet, salt texture, lifting, and scratching to paint beautiful leaves. After painting leaves you will add realistic dew drops. Cost: \$50 Del Ray Artisans member / \$55 Non-member; plus supplies. Demonstration and hands-on activity, suitable for high school age and adults. For details and to register, see: <https://delrayartisans.org/event/dewy->

leaves/

SATURDAY/MAY 15

Write Like a Woman Networking Workshop. 10 a.m. - 12 p.m. At The Athenaeum, 201 Prince Street, Alexandria. Facilitated by poet, author, and Poet Laureate of Alexandria, KaNikki Jakarta, this workshop welcomes amateur to professional women writers ages 18-100. Each workshop centers on uplifting and inspiring through writing and allows participants to enhance their writing styles. Visit nvfaa.org.

SATURDAY, MAY 15

Ballston Quarterfest Crawl. The Ballston Business Improvement District's will host its second annual Quarterfest Crawl on Saturday, May 15 from noon to 7 p.m. Attendees of the Quarterfest Crawl are invited to explore the Ballston neighborhood while enjoying live outdoor entertainment, giant-sized games and food/drink specials from participating restaurants. Additionally, visitors will have the opportunity to participate in a neighborhood-wide Scavenger Hunt sponsored by Homeward Trails Animal Rescue. More than 12 music and dance performances will perform in various locations throughout the day-long event.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

FROM PAGE 6

such as pandemic relief, which shows that they (i) do not understand city budgeting, (ii) are overly indulgent of the city's poor public administration, and (iii) are not thinking "outside the box" about ways to cure and prevent such errors.

City hall has a budget for repaving streets. The streets scheduled for repaving are determined a few years in advance such that, if funding was diverted from this budget to undo the Seminary Road "diet", it would simply mean that some other repaving projects would be bumped down the list to the following year. Very few streets are in such bad shape that they can't wait another year to be repaved. The deterrent effect of docking a city budget line to correct its mistakes (recall that it was staff which appealed the

Traffic and Parking Board's rejection of the Seminary Road "diet") will change bureaucratic incentives so that, in the long run, fewer mistakes will be made.

Because road "diets" have been so controversial, a truly accountable repaving budget would have separate budget lines for standard repavings versus "road diet" repavings. If a "road diet" had to be undone or subsequently modified, the funding to do so would come from the road diet budget line, meaning some future planned road diet(s) would have to wait an additional year. In no event would funding come from pandemic relief or anything else that isn't part of the city's transportation and environmental services department's road paving budget line(s).

Dino Drudi
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Jen Walker 703.675.1566
www.JenWalker.com



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Mason Montague Bavin 703.338.6007
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Olde Belhaven Towne | \$747,000

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Robin Arnold 703.966.5457
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Rochelle Gray 703.328.1686
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Valley View | \$650,000

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