

Alexandria Gazette Packet

25 CENTS



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MAY 20, 2021

Where to Put Affordable Housing?

City Council candidates disagree about co-locating with schools, accessory dwelling units.

BY BRIDGETTE ADU-WADIER
AND MICHAEL LEE POPE
GAZETTE PACKET

When Alexandria housing officials first considered the idea of putting affordable housing over a new fire station in Potomac Yard, Housing Director Helen McIlvaine joked her office would eventually become known throughout the region for putting “stuff on top of stuff.” That got a laugh, but it also made a splash. The success of the Station at Potomac Yard brought attention to Alexandria as an innovator that was reimagining the kind of places local governments could put affordable housing.

Now, more than a decade later, candidates for the Alexandria City Council are divided about next steps.

Two blocks north of the Station

at Potomac Yard is a block that is slated to include affordable housing and a school site. That could be accomplished with two separate buildings, and no co-location would be needed. But what if the school site is an academy of the high school, and a freestanding building wouldn't be needed? City officials are eyeing this block as a potential for co-locating affordable housing and school property in the near future, although candidates in the Democratic primary are divided about that idea.

“If we believe in diversity and we want to maintain our diversity, then we need to look at all options,” said Campbell, a former School Board member. “If we cannot maintain various housing options, we will not be able to maintain our diversity. So I absolutely support all of the above options.”

Campbell is the most enthusiastic about increasing the availability of affordable housing by using tools



The block to the left will be part of North Potomac Yard, and the plan calls for it to include affordable housing and a school site. The two could be side by side or potentially co-located.

like co-locating it on school property or accessory-dwelling units like basement apartments or converted garages. On the other end of the

spectrum are former Mayor Allison Silberberg, incumbent City Councilwoman Amy Jackson and candidate Bill Rossello. They oppose

co-locating affordable housing on school property and using accessory-dwelling units. During a recent candidates forum, Rossello said if the city needs affordable housing, units should be set aside for existing Alexandria residents.

“I think we need to favor residents and people who have a historical tie to this community,” said Rossello. “That’s what builds fabric.”

ACROSS THE COUNTRY, local governments are increasingly granting preference to local residents and employees for affordable housing set aside. Housing officials at City Hall are currently pursuing a waiver that could allow them to implement a local preference policy in Arlandria without violating the Fair Housing Act, giving preference to neighborhood residents who might be displaced by the Amazon effect. Some have raised

SEE WHERE TO PUT, ON PAGE 8

Undaunted Valor Story of Rocky Versace unveiled on Armed Forces Day.

BY JEANNE THEISMANN
GAZETTE PACKET

With less than two weeks remaining in his second tour of duty, Rocky Versace was looking forward to returning home to Alexandria. The Class of 1959 West Point graduate had made plans to attend seminary

Curtis Versace, right, is joined by Maj. Jerry File (ret) and LTC Jack Bohman (ret) in unveiling signage at the Capt. Rocky Versace Plaza and Vietnam Veterans Memorial May 15 in Del Ray. The widow of Steve Versace, Curtis Versace is Rocky's sister-in-law.

with the intention of returning to Vietnam as a Catholic priest and missionary working with orphans.

But on Oct. 29, 1963, Versace and his unit were ambushed by the Viet Cong in the Mekong Delta. The story of his heroics that day and during his time in captivity as a Prisoner of War resulted in Versace posthumously being awarded the Medal of Honor.

Alexandria's Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Del Ray bears Versace's name and now, through the efforts of the Friends of Rocky Versace and the City of Alexandria, that narrative was unveiled May 15 during an Armed Forces Day ceremony at the local landmark.

“Rocky was an amazing man,” said LTC Jack Bohman (ret), a classmate of Versace at West Point. “For anyone who has not been to the Plaza, please come and learn more about him. There is never enough time to talk about all of the things that Rocky has done.”

The Rocky Versace Plaza and Vietnam Veterans Memorial was dedicated in July of 2002 in front of the Mount Vernon Recreation Center, not far from where Versace grew up. But until now, no public information signage told the story of Alexandria's only Medal of Honor

SEE STORY OF, ON PAGE 8



JANET BARNETT/GAZETTE PACKET

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#WeAreAlexandria



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Kim Peele & Hope Peele 703.244.5852

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Convention Done, Primary Ahead

Republicans get a head start in general election; Democrats still fighting each other.

BY MICHAEL LEE POPE
GAZETTE PACKET

The way Democrats talk about Donald Trump, you'd think he was on the ballot in 2021. And in many ways, he is.

The former president may be out of the White House and kicked off of social media, but he's still eager to see himself as a king-maker. Shortly after wealthy businessman Glenn Youngkin secured the Republican nomination in a multi-location convention, Trump endorsed Youngkin and reinserted himself in the conversation. Democrats did not miss a beat, launching a tour of the commonwealth they call the "Where Trump Leads, Glenn Follows" Tour.

"He is just like Donald Trump," said House Speaker Eileen Filler-Corn this week when the tour arrived in Old Town Alexandria. "He will stand for the same policies and same initiatives that Donald Trump has stood for."

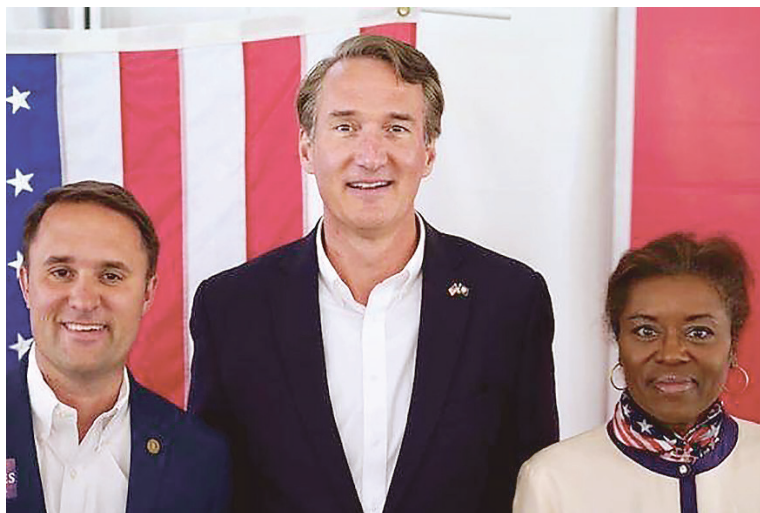
The contours of a fall campaign season are starting to come into focus as Republicans and Democrats stake out positions on everything from criminal-justice reform and abortion rights to voting access and preventing gun violence. Republicans get a one-month head start, giving them the ability to move from a divisive convention into a general election strategy for the fall campaign season. Democrats, meanwhile, are still attacking each other as the June 8 primary approaches.

"We're running in every corner of the commonwealth, in more seats than we've contested in a half century," said House Republican Leader Todd Gilbert. "I'm more confident than ever that voters will return a Republican majority to the House of Delegates in November."

AT THE TOP of the ticket, voters will be choosing between Youngkin and the nominee Democrats pick as their nominee for governor on June 8. Public polling and campaign finance records show former Gov. Terry McAuliffe has a decisive lead heading into the election in an extremely strong position. Other candidates in the race for governor are Lt. Gov. Justin Fairfax, Sen. Jennifer McClellan (D-9), former Del. Jennifer Carroll Foy (D-2) and Del. Lee Carter (D-50). A Wason Center poll last month showed McAuliffe with 47 percent support while all the other candidates were in single digits. Even if all 27 per-



House Speaker Eileen Filler-Corn appears in Old Town Alexandria during a Northern Virginia stop on the 'Where Trump Leads, Glenn Follows' Tour.



The Republican stateside ticket, from left to right: Jason Miyares for attorney general, Glenn Youngkin for governor and Winsome Sears for lieutenant governor.

cent of the undecideds broke for one candidate, McAuliffe would still be in the lead with \$8.5 million cash on hand.

"This gubernatorial field is the most diverse in the history of the commonwealth, and that has drawn a great deal of interest in the race," said Rebecca Bromley-Trujillo, research director for the Judy Ford Wason Center at Christopher Newport University. "So we're seeing that in the field but we're not seeing that in the leaders in these races, at least for governor and attorney general."

Despite the lopsided nature of the polling and the fundraising, the primary has not lacked for drama. During a televised debate, Fairfax said when he was accused of sexual assault, McAuliffe treated him like Emmet Till or George Floyd.

Carroll Foy has been all over

the airwaves, thanks in part to \$600,000 from Clean Virginia Fund. And Carter has moved the field of candidates to the left by talking about issues like using tax revenue from marijuana sales to create a fund for reparations to account for the slave trade. McClellan has repeatedly pointed out that she has more state government experience than anyone else in the race.

"Unlike past recessions, we cannot simply focus on luring other companies here to Virginia," said McClellan. "We have got to stabilize and grow the small businesses, particularly our women and minority owned businesses, who are struggling, and who want to provide the leave to their employees, sick leave, paid family medical leave, and they need our help to do it."

THE JOB OF lieutenant governor is often overlooked, although it plays a key role in breaking ties in the Senate. That responsibility is more important now than it's been in recent memory because Democrats have such a thin majority and the body has a handful of conservative Democrats. Republicans have chosen firebrand conservative former Del. Winsome Sears (R-90), who appears in campaign photos with an assault rifle to show her support for gun rights. She pulled ahead of the pack of other candidates after Sen. Amanda Chase (R-11) and former lieutenant governor candidate E.W. Jackson endorsed her. As an immigrant from Jamaica, she's made opposition to critical race theory a cornerstone of her campaign.

"The Democrats, they're not helping us," said Sears at a candidates forum. "They're pitting the races against each other. You've heard the constant Black, white. Now it's Asian, they're speaking against Thomas Jefferson kids and their successes. They want quotas."

The Democratic primary for lieutenant governor is the most wide open. Polling has Del. Sam Rasoul (D-11) slightly ahead, and he's raised more money than any of the other candidates. But Del. Hala Ayala (D-51) has the endorsement of Gov. Ralph Northam, who is attempting to play the role of kingmaker on his way out the door of the Executive Mansion. The crowded field of candidates also includes Norfolk City Councilwoman Andria McClellan, Fairfax NAACP president Sean Perryman,

NFL player agent Xavier Warren and Del. Mark Levine (D-45). Levine is in the awkward position of trying to defend his House seat from a primary challenger while also competing statewide.

"When a candidate runs for two offices at the same time, they're sending two messages," said Stephen Farnsworth, political science professor at the University of Mary Washington. "One, I want something better than what I have, and two, I'm not sure I'm going to be able to get it."

VOTERS WILL ALSO be choosing between Del. Jason Miyares (R-82) and the winner of the Democratic primary, which features incumbent Attorney General Mark Herring and challenger Del. Jay Jones (D-89). Herring was first elected in 2013, and he's seeking a third term in office. During his time in office, he's created a new Office of Civil Rights as well as a new conviction integrity unit and a new worker protection unit while also reorganizing the consumer protection section. Jones has criticized Herring for waiting until election season before making some of those changes, and he attacked Herring for wearing blackface at a college party in the 1980s.

"I sat in the room two years ago with the Black Caucus when you disclosed that you wore blackface just days after you called on Governor Northam to resign," Jones said during a televised debate. "I was there when you took that paper out of your jacket, smoothed it out on the table and read us a statement with no empathy, no compassion."

Herring hasn't been shy about criticizing Jones either. During a televised debate earlier this month, Herring brought up a bill Jones introduced that could have created a loophole for predatory lenders. The bill would have allowed for loans of 36 percent plus a daily fee that could amount to 320 percent a year. Jones never withdrew the bill, although it was left in committee. Jones ended up voting in favor of a different bill, one that Herring made a rare personal appearance to support in committee.

"When I was working to crack down on dangerous predatory lenders, Delegate Jones was actually supporting the predatory lenders and authored a bill that would have allowed them to charge 350 percent interest," said Herring. "These are hard-working, struggling Virginians just trying to get by."

PHOTO BY MICHAEL LEE POPE/GAZETTE PACKET

REPUBLICAN PARTY OF VIRGINIA

Treat Your Shelf Duncan Library resumes children's book sale as recovery from pandemic begins.

BY JEANNE THEISMANN
GAZETTE PACKET

For the first time in nearly two years, the Friends of Duncan Library held its popular children's books sale May 15 with more than 1,000 books on display as COVID-19 restrictions began to ease.

"Where there is a will, there is a way," said organizer Patti Reilly. "The Friends of Duncan Library have these fundraisers in order to provide the kinds of programs this community wants and expects – reading programs for little kids, new collections, travel books and even furniture if that is needed by the Duncan staff."

The last Duncan Library book sale was held in the Fall of 2019. All fundraisers in 2020 and the Spring sale of 2021 were canceled due to COVID-19 restrictions.

"The Friends of Duncan Library paid for all of the virtual programming that happened as a result of COVID this past year," Reilly said. "We had record numbers of patrons of Duncan and beyond participating and experiencing programs that they otherwise would not have been able to enjoy, so we are hoping to resume our fundraising to support everything this wonderful library does."

The James M. Duncan Branch Library is located opposite the Mount Vernon Community School in Del Ray. For more information on hours and upcoming programs, visit alexlibraryva.org/Duncan



The Duncan Library resumed its Children's Book Sale May 15 as COVID-19 restrictions began to ease.

Cara Crawford holds son Nathaniel after selecting a book during the May 15 Duncan Library children's book sale.



PHOTOS BY
JANET BARNETT
GAZETTE PACKET



Patrons gather around a display of books during the Duncan Library Children's Book Sale May 15 in Del Ray.



A young girl browses for books during the Duncan Library Children's Book Sale May 15 in Del Ray.

"The Friends of Duncan Library have these fundraisers in order to provide the kinds of programs this community wants and expects."

— Book sale organizer Patti Reilly

Senior Services of Alexandria with Alexandria Bar Association to Host 2021 Senior Law Day

BY MARYANNE BEATTY
SENIOR SERVICES OF ALEXANDRIA

The Alexandria Bar Association and Senior Services of Alexandria will host the annual "Senior Law Day" virtually again this year. The theme will be "Estate Planning and Life Choices from a COVID-19 Perspective," which will be explored over the course of three one-hour webinars on Fridays, June 4, 11, and 18, beginning at 10 a.m. The webinars are free and open to the public.

We will talk about the impact of COVID-19 on seniors and the larger

health care community, and the broad lessons learned. We will also discuss the following topics: housing options and how continuing care communities have changed and responded to the pandemic; practical steps to use technology to improve our quality of life and access to care; changes in the law regarding housing, personal finances, and bankruptcies; and the importance of intentionally planning for our future, including the basic estate planning documents.

Each week we will focus on a specific topic from the perspective of lessons learned during this past year and the impact of COVID-19 on seniors and the larger health

care community. Attendees will hear from local attorneys, healthcare professionals, and care managers including representatives from the Alexandria Bar Association, Inova Alexandria Hospital, Goodwin House, and Legal Services of Alexandria.

June 4 Lessons Learned Rachel Baer, Family First Law; Lindsay Hutter, Goodwin House; and Dr. Rina Bansal, Inova Alexandria Hospital

June 11 Housing Options and Technology Tools Natalie Page, Life and Estate Planning Law Center; Vanessa Bishop, Elder Care Consultants, Inc.; and Alice Paxton Paladin Life Care.

Virtual event will focus on "Estate Planning and Life Choices from a COVID-19 Perspective" June 4, 11 and 18. 10 – 11 am

June 18 Legal Updates Mary Horner, Legal Services of Northern Virginia; Xue Connelly, Wade Grimes Friedman Meinken & Leischner PLLC; and Joe Blaszkow.

The webinar will be via zoom and participants will have an opportunity to ask questions of the panelists after each session.

To register for Senior Law Day, go to www.seniorservicesalex.org. You only need to register one time and you will receive a zoom link before each session. If you have any questions, please contact SSA at admin@seniorservicesalex.org or call 703-836-4414, ext. 110.

Knock Your Stalks Off Community gardens grow in popularity.

BY JEANNE THEISMANN
GAZETTE PACKET

With warmer temperatures settling in across the region, gardeners have taken to the outdoors, with community gardens growing in popularity across the city.

"I've never done this before," said Kate Schultz, who joined the Dale Street Community Garden last year. "I am new to the neighborhood and this has been a great way to meet people."

The Dale Street Community Garden is located at 65 Dale St. in the Arlandria neighborhood of Alexandria. It opened in 2018 and offers 42 raised beds for rent along with communal space for demonstration gardens and horticulture education.

"Kids come regularly on the weekends to learn about gardening and tend to some of the community plots," Schultz added.

Three sizes of raised beds are available and membership priority is given to neighborhood residents within a half mile radius of the garden.

The Dale Street Community Garden is one of seven community gardens operated by the city as a way to help increase Alexandria residents' access to locally grown, environmentally sustainable foods as part of the Healthy Food Alexandria initiative.

The gardening season runs March 1 through Nov. 30 each year and a portion of food grown in the gardens is donated to local food banks.

"I am new to this," Schultz added. "But I have discovered that gardening is something that has brought a lot of joy to my life."

For more information, contact Alexandria Community Gardens, Park Operations, RPCA at 703-746-5496 or RPCAgardens@alexandriava.gov.



Kate Schultz tends to her garden May 3 at the Dale Street Community Garden in Arlandria.

"I have discovered that gardening is something that has brought a lot of joy to my life."

— Dale Street Community Garden member Kate Schultz

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Nominate Mark Herring for Re-Election on June 8

BY SCOTT SUROVELL

The June 8 Democratic primary is an opportunity to vote for fairness and justice for everyone by supporting Attorney General Mark Herring. On that day, Virginians will select the Democratic Party's nominees for Governor, Lieutenant Governor, Attorney General and several Delegates.

Republicans controlled the Attorney General's Office for 28 years until Mark won in 2013. While many conservatives promote the Attorney General position as Virginia's "chief prosecutor" and prioritize prosecuting cases, most criminal justice work is done by local Commonwealth's Attorneys. Criminal justice work is a small fraction of the Attorney General office's 400 attorneys and other staff's work. Since taking office, Mark has grown the office and re-focused it to help all Virginians instead of targeting the poor.

Mark has defended legal challenges against our firearm violence prevention laws like our one-gun-a-month law, "red flag" law and universal background checks. He issued an Attorney General's opinion to block recognizing weak out-of-state concealed weapon permits. He also sued to block 3D printed "ghost guns" from hitting

the streets.

He has defended attacks on the Affordable Care Act's pre-existing conditions rules after the Trump Administration refused to defend the law. Mark refused to defend Virginia's constitutional prohibition on gay marriage. He sued to protect Planned Parenthood funding and has consistently defended a woman's right to choose.

Just this past week, Mark came to Northern Virginia to discuss the status of his investigation of the American Horticultural Society's (AHS) attempts to sell River Farm to a private owner. He stressed that he is prepared to use all options to enforce Virginia's laws prohibiting improper use of restricted donations if AHS does the wrong thing.

He has won victories in court for DREAMers. He negotiated the largest environmental settlement in state history, secured \$1.4 million in fines from Dominion for coal ash water dumping, and prioritized protecting the Bay. His Medicaid Fraud Unit has recovered over \$1 billion for Virginia taxpayers.

Mark has been a leader on consumer protection. He created a Predatory Lending Unit to attack the loan sharks who set up shop up



Surovell

and down U.S. 1 until we passed legislation banning them in 2020. The unit also went after internet lenders like Allied Title Lending, Advance Financial, Opportunity Financial, Net Credit, Money Lion and Mr. Amazing who were charging their "customers" between 273%

and 359% interest rates. He won settlements with Future Income Payments, a lender that targeted elderly and federal pensioners by structuring their loans as "pension sales" that charged up to 183% interest rates.

Mark has also negotiated settlements against pawnbrokers, pharmaceutical companies, unlicensed contractors, charity scams and robo-dial companies. Last year, he filed suit against predatory towing companies in Arlington. Last month, he secured \$183 million in refunds for an online ticket seller that refused to refund consumers fees paid for events cancelled due to COVID-19.

Recently, Mark filed a groundbreaking suit against an immigrant bond intermediary that misrepresents its connection to the federal government and preys on desperate poor immigrants who cannot afford immigration bonds

but who instead pay exorbitant fees for GPS ankle monitors that cost thousands of dollars.

Mark partnered with me and other legislators on criminal justice reform. He proactively established a Civil Rights Unit once the General Assembly gave him the authority that he requested in 2020 to authorize civil rights investigations after the Trump Department of Justice abandoned its responsibilities.

I know Mark's opponent and have collaborated with him on legislation. He is a rising star in the House of Delegates. But when I partnered with the Virginia Legislative Black Caucus to pass legislation to end predatory lending in 2020, he carried a troubling bill for the Online Lenders Alliance that would have green-lighted an 0.88% daily interest rate resulting in an APR of over 350%. I dedicated ten years of my legislative service towards ending that practice.

We need Mark Herring to continue the reforms and good work he has done to expand the focus of the Attorney General's Office on more than criminal justice to many problems Virginians face. I hope that all Virginians will join me in re-electing him to a third term on June 8 or by voting early.

Please email me at scott@scottsurovell.org if you have any feedback.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Rebuilding Trust in Our Elected Leaders? Who Didn't Sign?

In the past three years, [some] City of Alexandria residents have experienced a trust deficit with the City's bureaucratic staff, and with its elected City Council members. Many residents feel marginalized and disrespected that their voices are not heard by City leaders. Even after earnest appeals and petitions by City residents on City policy decisions across a broad range of issues, residents frequently feel that their appeals fall on the deaf ears of the City Council and the City Manager.

At issue is the decline in values-based trust between [some] City residents and elected leaders along the lines of integrity, openness, and fairness. At issue is the City residents' trust deficit with its elected leaders where constituents feel that the City failed to properly address the quality of life in our neighborhoods, the appropriate decorum between City leadership and civic associations, and the preservation of the historic dis-

tricts in our City.

A group of concerned Alexandria residents, neighbors, and friends formed For Better Alexandria Government which recently launched their website (<https://www.betteralex.us>) calling on all 2021 Mayoral and City Council candidates to integrate values-based trust into their campaign platforms. Our group desires a City Council that actively engages, listens, and collaborates with their constituents to make the City of Alexandria a better place to live for its residents. For Better Alexandria Government contacted every Mayoral and City Candidate requesting their signature pledging to support the Alexandria Constituents' Bill of Rights.

For Better Alexandria Government posted signed pledges of Mayoral and City Council candidates who agreed to uphold the Bill of Rights. However, the story is not which candidates have signed, but which candidates declined to sign. To improve the governance of

our City, we need Mayoral and City Council candidates who demonstrate the courage, leadership, and empathy to serve as active listeners to City residents, to fully integrate residents into City policy decisions,

and to rebuild the trust between the governors and the governed.

Stafford A. Ward,

Spokesperson,
For Better Alexandria
Government

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BULLETIN

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 20

RiverRenew Listening Session. 6-8 p.m. Virtual. At Alexandria Renew Enterprises in Alexandria. Discover how AlexRenew's wastewater treatment plant will become the hub for our city's largest infrastructure project. Advance registration is required. Register to attend at RiverRenew.com/Listening-Sessions.

SATURDAY/MAY 22

Friendship Firehouse Museum Special Open Hours. 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. at 107 South Alfred Street, Alexandria. Learn about the Friendship Fire Company's firefighting procedures and equipment, as well as the different roles the organization played in serving the community. The museum is open from 11 a.m. – 5 p.m. Families with young children will be given take-home kits, including a fire helmet and activities (while supplies last). Purchase Advanced Timed Arrival tickets at alexandriava.gov/shop

SATURDAY/MAY 22

AlexRenew Public Hearing. 9:30 a.m. Virtual via Zoom. AlexRenew is proposing to implement a sewer rate adjustment over the next two years to help fund its mandated RiverRenew Program. Advance registration is required. Register to attend at: https://zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_CJ0e7HIjQFOkP5YtAYWMSA

SUNDAY/MAY 23

Legacy of the Green Cabinet Walking Tour. 3:30 p.m. In the early 19th Century, William Green started the Green Furniture factory in Alexandria and by 1823 his son, James, would take over. James expanded his father's factory and established himself as a prominent Alexandrian through building and operating Green's Mansion House Hotel. Join this tour to learn about James Green and his family's life here in Alexandria. Reservations are required as space is limited. Having trouble registering? Call 703-549-2997 or email carlyle@nvrpa.org. Tickets https://apm.activecommunities.com/novaparks/Activity_Search/4685

VOLUNTEERS WANTED

STEM Professionals Needed. Help assist K-12 STEM teachers as part of the American Association for the Advancement of Science's STEM Volunteer Program, stemvolunteers.org, during the 2018-19 school year. In the 2017-18 school year, there are 85 volunteers in 6 Northern Virginia school districts. Contact Don Rea at 571-551-2488, or donaldrea@aol.com. Volunteer Adult Mentors Needed. Help assist the Department of Family Services' BeFriendA-Child mentoring program. The mentors provide opportunities for companionship, guidance and support to children who have been abused and neglected, or who are at risk of abuse and neglect. Contact Ibrahim Khalil (Ibrahim.khalil@fairfaxcounty.gov) at 703-324-4547.

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Story of Rocky Versace Unveiled on Armed Forces Day

FROM PAGE 1
awardee.

“Lieutenant Gen. Rick Kelly and his wife were driving around Del Ray last year looking for something to do during the pandemic,” said Friends of Rocky Versace organizer Kevin Rue of the retired Marine Corps general. “They came to visit the plaza and Gen. Kelly recalled that 20 years earlier, as a senior staff officer for the Joint Chiefs, he reviewed the Medal of Honor submission on behalf of Rocky. When he saw that nothing at the plaza really told Rocky’s story, he reached out to the city and suggested the signage.”

Through the efforts of James Spengler, Director Department of Recreation, Parks, and Cultural Activities for the City of Alexandria, and RPCA Division Chief

Jack Browand, the signage was approved and ready in time for the Armed Forces Day ceremony.

Two signs were unveiled, one on each side of the plaza. Curtis Versace, widow of Rocky’s youngest brother Steve Versace and sister-in-law to Rocky, unveiled one plaque along with Bohman. Reba Bayliss, Gold Star widow of USAF Capt. Paul Martin Bayliss, and son Patrick unveiled a second plaque.

The names of the 68 Alexandria residents who were killed or missing in action in Vietnam are inscribed at the plaza. The annual Memorial Day ceremony honoring all service members who have died will be held at the Plaza at 11 a.m., May 31.

“I never miss an opportunity to celebrate and talk about Rocky,” Bohman added. “He is a true hero.”



Signage at the Capt. Rocky Versace Plaza and Vietnam Veterans Memorial tells the story of Humbert Roque “Rocky” Versace, an Alexandria native who was posthumously awarded the Medal of Honor for his heroics as a POW during the Vietnam War. Versace was executed in North Vietnam on Sept. 26, 1965. His remains have never been recovered.



LTC Jack Bohman (ret), left, with Abigail Farley and Brett Pritchett commemorate Armed Forces Day May 15 at the Capt. Rocky Versace Plaza and Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Del Ray.



Reba Bayliss, Gold Star widow of USAF Capt. Paul Martin Bayliss, and son Patrick unveil a sign during the Armed Forces Day ceremony at the Capt. Rocky Versace Plaza and Vietnam Veterans Memorial May 15 in Del Ray.



Members of the Saint Rita American Heritage Girls Troop 1381 led the Pledge of Allegiance during the Armed Forces Day ceremony May 15 at the Capt. Rocky Versace Plaza and Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Del Ray.



Curtis Versace, sister-in-law of Rocky Versace, gets a hug from LTC Jack Bohman (ret) following the unveiling of a plaque at the Capt. Rocky Versace Plaza and Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Del Ray.

PHOTOS BY JANET BARNETT/GAZETTE PACKET

Where to Put Affordable Housing?

FROM PAGE 1

concerns about that approach, arguing that it violates the Fair Housing Act because it might have discriminatory racial impacts.

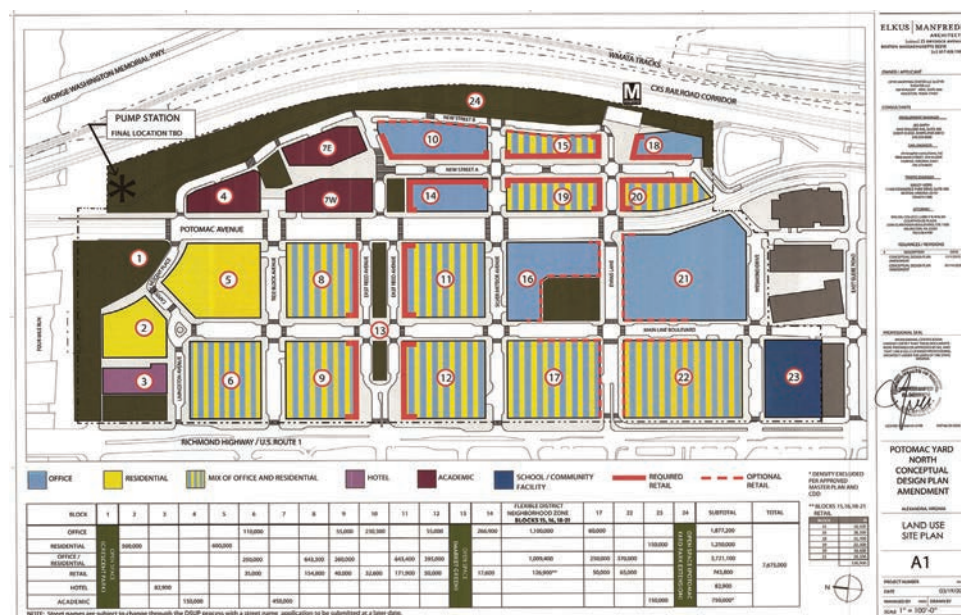
“A local preference policy is a violation of fair housing laws,” said Alyia Gaskins. “But what we can do is creative things like in Fairfax County, where they’re working on a database to connect those landlords who want to rent with to people who need affordable housing.”

Even if Alexandria is able to get a waiver to help residents of Arlandria to benefit from a preference plan, the fact that city officials are required to get a waiver indicates that such a policy would likely run afoul of the law. So a blanket approach giving preference to all affordable housing units to Alexandria residents could run into legal jeopardy. And Rossello’s comment about the “safety issues and concerns” about co-locating affordable housing struck some as intolerant.

“It bothers me when the security issue gets brought up because we’re not saying the school is going to be on top of the hous-

“If we cannot maintain various housing options, we will not be able to maintain our diversity.”

— Bill Campbell



Block 23 of the North Potomac Yard design plan includes affordable housing and a school site. Some city officials are eyeing this as a potential co-location of a high school academy with affordable housing units, although candidates in the Democratic primary are divided on that strategy.

ing or the housing on top of the school,” said Councilman Canek Aguirre. “These security issues, that’s just a dog whistle.”

MOST CANDIDATES in the Democratic primary are trying to strike a middle ground, not quite embracing co-location of affordable housing on school property while also not ruling it out. Mayor Justin Wilson says he would be opposed to co-location on any existing school property, but he would be

open to configuring the space in North Potomac Yard to co-locate a high school academy in the same building as affordable housing units. Councilman John Taylor Chapman pointed out that private schools have been co-locating housing on school grounds for many years, and Patrick Moran said other communities have successfully co-located affordable housing and schools. Meronne Teklu and she was not opposed to the idea, Sarah Bagley said she was open to it. Aguirre

“I think we need to favor residents and people who have a historical tie to this community. That’s what builds fabric.”

— Bill Rossello

said it would be irresponsible to rule it out.

“I don’t see a problem with co-locating on school grounds, as long as you think about who lives there,” said Kevin Harris. “We have teachers who are looking for somewhere to live who are traveling from Prince William County and further out.”

Opponents of co-locating affordable housing on school property worry about increasing strain on capacity. Because several schools already have overcrowding issues, they said, adding affordable housing would create unnecessary strain on the school property and resources. Candidates who oppose co-locating affordable housing on school property are Alyia Gaskins, Amy Jackson, James Lewis, Kirk McPike, Bill Rossello and Mark Shiffer.

“We need that land for our students,” said James Lewis. “We need to be focused on addressing that capacity issue, not on whether or not we’ll put housing at the schools when we still have kids 30 deep in a classroom.”

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THE OTHER ALEXANDRIA

The Other History of Fishtown – Dogan Family

BY CHAR MCCARGO BAH

The weather in May of 1861 was cooler than usual and that affected many of the outside businesses in Alexandria; this was especially true with the Fish Wharf. Lower May temperatures also caused fewer fishing activities. The Civil War also had begun and many Union Army troops were in Alexandria, and their large presence in the City curtailed outside activities for the residents.

Robert Henry Dogan and his mother, Elizabeth 'Betsey' Duvall Dogan owned two Eating House buildings that Robert built with white pine wood at the Fish Wharf. On May 23, 1861, the day before Colonel Ellsworth was killed, the military took possession of Robert and Betsey's business enterprises and the homes at the Fish Wharf. Robert and his mother moved out of their properties at the Fish Wharf. Luckily, they owned houses on Union Street, between King and Prince Streets, and they resided there. One year before the War ended in 1865, Betsey Dogan died.

Robert had some hope that he would be compensated for his losses during the Civil War when Congress created "The Southern Claims Commission," on March 3, 1871. The Commission was formed solely for compensating loss of properties during the Civil War. Robert submitted a claim to be compensated for his losses and



Brewer Dogan, left, and William S. Dogan Sr.

his mom's.

In his claims' folder, he described the destruction of their enterprise by the Union. The Union used the lumber from his business for fuel. He said he ran his business during the fishing season, and once the fishing season was over, he stored the oaks and hay in the buildings. In the claim's folder, he also said that he shared one-third of his mother's property with his siblings, Governor Dogan and Sussannah Dogan Carter. After listing all the losses, he came up with an amount of \$500.

As he was awaiting payment from the government in 1874, Robert became a barkeeper on Union Street near Oronoco Street. In 1878, the Federal government

THE OTHER, PAGE 10

CALENDAR

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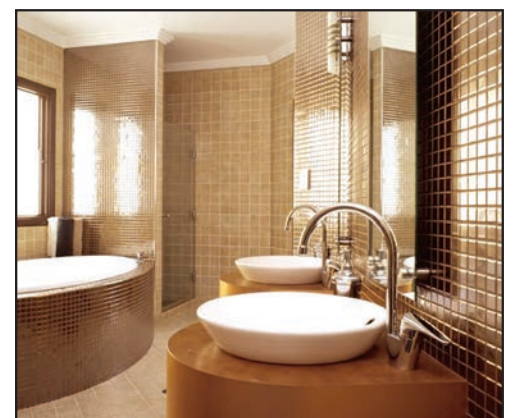
To help fund the largest infrastructure project in Alexandria's history, AlexRenew is implementing a sewer rate adjustment over the next two years.

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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Betty Dogan with her father, William S. Dogan II on her wedding day.

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The Other History

FROM PAGE 9

only awarded him \$90 for all his losses.

The Dogans in Alexandria were free people of color. They had been free as far back as the 1700s. They were skilled laborers, entrepreneurs, firemen and politicians. They lived in Alexandria duri

ng the time when Alexandria was part of Washington, DC. They witnessed the Civil War, Reconstruction and Jim Crow eras.

The early Dogans were members of Christ Church in Alexandria and later held memberships in Roberts Chapel, St. Joseph's Catholic Church and Alfred Street Baptist Church.

Robert H. Dogan has relatives still living in and around the Washington Metropolitan area. These relatives are his father's third great-nieces and nephews. They are Betty Dogan Roberts Nicholas, John Leonard Dogan, William S. 'Billy Boy' Dogan III, Herbert Gray Dogan, Thelma Dogan Lucas, Margo Dogan Farrar, Hope Do-

gan Kane, Elaine Dogan Augustus and Fredrick Dogan. They are all the children of William S. 'Bill' Dogan II and Blanchie Jackson.

Unknown to this generation of Dogans, their family had a front row seat at historical events going back to the 1700s. The history of Alexandria is their history. The Dogans should be proud to know that the new waterfront in Alexandria (the section of Old Fish-town), was the area their family settled when it was a thriving fish wharf. It is now a tourist attraction with restaurants and hotels.

Mrs. Betty Dogan Roberts Nicholas and her nephew, Christian Bentley shared their family pictures and stories for this article.

Char McCargo Bah is a published author, freelance writer, independent historian, genealogist and a Living Legend of Alexandria. She maintains two blogs, <http://www.theotheralexandria.com> and <http://www.findingthingsforu.com>.

OBITUARY

Nicholas (Nick) M. Horrock, 84

Nicholas M. Horrock, a distinguished journalist for many of the nation's great newspapers, died of heart failure on Sunday, April 18 at his home in Alexandria, Va. He was 84 years old.

Born in New York City, the only child of a Polish immigrant and a women's rights activist from Montana, he covered seven Presidents and six wars, travelled the world, won prizes, and exposed corruption and malfeasance. Oddly, his journalism path all started as a scholarship kid at a prestigious preparatory school when he was tossed out for abysmal grades and smoking behind the gym. The teenager found work as a clerk for the advertising department in the old New York Times tower in Times square and he fell in love with life in the newspaper business. He earned a GED at night and later earned a degree from the school of Foreign Service at American University by taking classes at night.

Eventually Horrock became a reporter and editor for The New York Times, working in both New York and the Washington bureau. For 10 years he was the Washington Bureau chief for the Chicago Tribune. He worked for Newsweek Magazine, the Baltimore Sun, the now defunct Washington Daily News, United Press International, and before he retired, he signed on as the Managing Editor for the Washington Examiner.

As an investigative reporter for the New York Times he wrote dozens of front page stories about Water-gate. He delved into government burglaries, assassination plots, illegal drug experiments on humans and domestic spying. He investigated the Central Intelligence Agency, the Federal Bureau of Investigation and the Internal Revenue Service, all tension-filled assignments. Yet he was not a fearless man, but he was brave and did things that scared him because they were the right thing to do, recalled one of his colleagues. He learned much of his courage as a private in the Marine Corps. He always gave credit to the Corps that taught him to fight and persevere even in the face of difficulty or danger. To his final days, he listened to the Marine Corps hymn to give him strength and guidance, especially when times were tough.

Perhaps the best example of his courage came in 1968 when he was trying to expose problems in the prison system. His head shaved, he went undercover as an inmate at the Maryland State Penitentiary. With only the warden and the governor aware of why he was truly there, there was no special protection from either the inmates or the guards. He survived unscathed, he wrote, he won accolades and prizes but he was awash in fear when he was doing it. The American Bar Association honored his work by giving him a Gavel Award.

Horrock also won a Sigma Delta Chi award for exposing waste and fraud in the Pentagon's \$100-billion-a year weapons procurement program after many months investigating General Dynamics with James O'Shea. In 1981, as Investigations Editor at the New York Times, he led a team that won a Pulitzer Prize for a series on the immigration system in the U.S.

During the Iraq War, he smuggled himself across the Turkish border to get a story by hitching a ride with aid workers.

When he was covering the war in Vietnam, he spent Christmas away from his family to eat roast dog around a campfire with South Vietnamese soldiers which was particularly difficult not just because of the bullets, but because he loved dogs. He was gruff, famously difficult at times, and fiercely competitive. In between, he loved to laugh, and tell stories of his harried moments in the business, like the time he investigated wrongdoing at the IRS.

At a time when he was raising small children and feared financial ruin or worse from the IRS, but for many months he skirted all around Washington late



Nicholas (Nick) M. Horrock.

at night, in secrecy, using phone boxes to talk to "Mr. Paul," a source he never met, but who always gave him accurate information, leading to accurate reporting.

A voracious reader with a steel trap mind, he had no difficulty recalling the head of the Likud party in 1952 or the details of an obscure 14th century battle in Serbia. His colleagues teased him for saving small mountains of documents and reports that crowded his work area. Amazingly, if needed, he could quickly tweeze out exactly the right piece of paper so important to a story.

Horrock always invited cats and dogs to live with him, two at a time, sometimes more. Friends, colleagues and even a Senator or two, would find it necessary on occasion to pull cat hairs off his coat jacket during interviews or meetings.

Ill suited for retirement after his reporting career, he volunteered for nine missions in Bosnia, Belarus and Serbia as an election supervisor.

Horrock joined the Alexandria Gazette Packet and its sister Connection Newspapers, winning awards for investigative reporting and more in 2012 and 2013.

Horrock was the son of Erwin Horrock, a translator who spoke eight languages and worked on a Cunard ship. Docked in New York one night, Nick Horrock's father found a great party and he literally missed the boat, becoming an illegal immigrant in the United States. Nick's mother, Berta Crone, a strong, resourceful woman, helped him straighten out the problem so they could get married. Both were intellectuals who worked hard, she as an editor and he as an art dealer, but they never made money. For most of his young life, Horrock lived with his family in a one bedroom apartment on the upper west side with a window that opened to an air shaft. Horrock's mother, like her mother, Ella Morton Dean, were suffragettes. Berta Crone once chained herself to the White House gates to protest for a woman's right to vote and on another occasion she was jailed for speaking about suffrage to a group in New London, Ct.

Horrock co-wrote three books. With Evert Clark, a Newsweek correspondent, he wrote "Contrabandista", a nonfiction account of heroin smuggling into the United States. Under the pen name, Henry Horrock, he wrote two murder mysteries, "Blood Red, Snow White" and "Potomac Fever" with his wife, Diane Henry.

Nicholas Horrock loved women and married three: Mae Seward who preceded him in death; Mary Ann Kuhn of Little Washington, Virginia; and Diane Henry in Alexandria, Va. He had three children, Christopher Horrock, a philosophy professor in Ventura, California; Timothy Horrock, a chef in Las Vegas, Nevada; and Victoria Horrock, a legal aid lawyer in Richmond, Virginia. He leaves four grandchildren, Andrew Horrock, Thomas Horrock, Sally Mata and Zoe Mata.

A service will be held once the pandemic is under control.



A pet cat receives vaccinations for rabies, distemper and parvovirus.



An AWLA volunteer greets an attendee and her pet.

Animal Welfare League of Alexandria Assists Dozens Of Families at First Community Wellness Event

On Sat., May 15, the Animal Welfare League of Alexandria (AWLA) hosted its first, physically distant Pets & People Community Wellness Event at the Ruby Tucker Family Center. Following the One Health approach of community care, this event was created to assist not only animals but also people across the City of Alexandria. The event, which ran from 10 a.m. to noon, provided goods and services to dozens of area families.

A majority of the attendees came to the event for assistance with pets, and nearly 90 vaccinations were given to combat rabies, parvovirus and distemper, dangerous viruses that could cause discomfort and even death in animals.

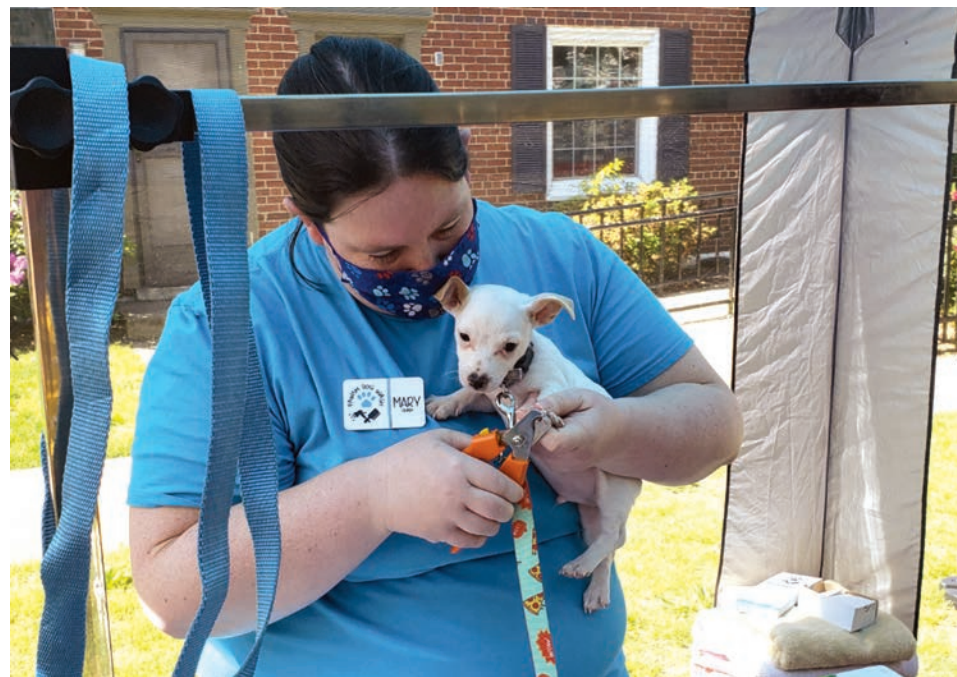
Twenty-four dogs and cats also received basic grooming and nail trimming by local business Pawsh Dog Wash. Behavioral advice, pet food and other supplies were available for all attendees.

But many of those in attendance also received goods and services for the humans in their household. ALIVE! provided 125 grocery bags of shelf-stable pantry items, and the Alexandria Health Department scheduled COVID vaccination appointments with those who have not yet received their vaccinations.

Representatives of the Department of Community and Housing Services; Senior Services; Buddie Ford Nature Center; InspireLit; the Domestic Violence Intervention Program and more were also on hand to provide support and information to those assembled.

“Alexandria has a strong support network for our residents,” said Director of Community Programs Joanna Fortin. “When we were looking for ways to provide assistance to pet owners, we knew we wanted to work with these human support organizations to have the biggest impact.”

Pre-registration was not required, and while the AWLA worked to make sure the



A young pup receives his first nail trim courtesy of Pawsh Dog Wash.



One event attendee and her cat pose for the camera.

PHOTOS COURTESY OF THE ANIMAL WELFARE LEAGUE OF ALEXANDRIA

event observed best health practices, including requiring masks and physical distancing, they welcomed a record number of families, greater than any of the previous Pet Care Fairs they had offered at the Ruby Tucker Family Center. While many attendees were there for animal-related services, some came solely for the human services, which was part of the goal for this event.

“Some people may not have come out just to get supplies just for themselves,” said Jairo Tobar, AWLA One Health Coordinator. “By offering the opportunity to get assistance for their pets as well as themselves, we hope we reached — and helped — even more members of our community.”

The AWLA plans to host another Community Wellness Event later this year in the Chirilagua area of Alexandria and additional events throughout the community in the coming years.

“By helping pet owners with a variety of health-related services, we hope we were able to offer some type of assistance to everyone who attended,” said AWLA Executive Director Stella Hanly. “This weekend’s event showed that we can do more when we work together.”

Support for this event was partially provided by a grant from PetSmart Charities.

About the Animal Welfare League of Alexandria

The Animal Welfare League of Alexandria is dedicated to helping animals not only at the Vola Lawson Animal Shelter (Alexandria’s only open-access animal shelter) but also across the community.

In 2020, they expanded their outreach programs to offer more than 40,000 pounds of donated pet supplies across the region, as well as finding more ways to reach and assist pet owners through drive-up vaccination and microchip clinics, spay and neuter assistance, grooming and veterinary aid and more. [AlexandriaAnimals.org/Community-Services](https://alexandrianimals.org/Community-Services).



PHOTO VIA FACEBOOK

Old Ice House Gets New Life With Goodies Frozen Custard and Treats

By HOPE NELSON
GAZETTE PACKET

Summertime is about to get a lot sweeter. Goodies Frozen Custard and Treats is breathing new life into an old bit of Alexandria history – and giving neighbors a chance to cool off with a custardy treat in the process.

The former outpost of the Mutual Ice Co., located at 200 Commerce St., has been a mainstay in Alexandria for decades.

Until Goodies came along, the property remained mostly dormant for years. But Goodies owner Brandon Byrd purchased the property in 2019 and, amid a global pandemic, transformed the ice house into an icy custard house, month by painstaking month.

The final result, Byrd says, is worth it.

“To be honest, my vision for the ice house was a communal space” that was very inviting to guests, Byrd said. “When people see [the shop] it’s going to make them say wow, this is really a trip down Memory Lane.”

But Goodies’ brick-and-mor-

tar location isn’t the start of its origin story. Far from it. No, the custard purveyor actually began its journey nearly a decade ago in 2012 with a vintage International Harvester truck named Gigi.

“I just built [the business] from the ground up,” Byrd said. “I had this idea -- I wanted something that is pure, wholesome, and in the event that I had my own kids and/or great-nieces and nephews, I want something that I would feel good about.”

And with that, Goodies was born, shuttling custard and other treats around the DC metro region on board Gigi, who, Byrd says, does require some TLC from time to time to keep her in good shape.

But will Gigi play second fiddle now that the Commerce Street location is opening up? Not a chance, he says.

“That’s my No. 1 girl! She’s not going anywhere,” he laughed.

Byrd aims for the ice house location to be up and running by Memorial Day. Partly due to space constraints and partly due to the old-fashioned custard-stand feel of the business, the shop will be a walk-up experience that, Byrd hopes, will make customers feel welcome from the first moment.

“You walk up, you’ll definitely

hear the Motown sounds and Chuck Berry,” he said. “I really wanted to replicate the truck experience with the brick-and-mortar [shop].”

And then there’s the custard menu itself.

“The thing is, I intentionally kept the menu simple because it allows for me to allow the product to shine. The focus is on the product and not a bunch of trendy flavors and trendy additions,” Byrd said.

But “simple” doesn’t mean “limited.” Nor boring.

“When you look at my menu, everything on the menu is based on my childhood, what I grew up with,” he said. Alongside the vanilla custard, customers will find peanut butter, banana pudding and strawberry shakes, as well as root beer floats.

So get ready for Memorial Day weekend. Life is about to get sweeter.

<https://www.facebook.com/mmmgoodies/>

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.



Bob & Edith’s Family-Run Diner to Open in Old Town, Their 6th Location

Bob & Edith’s Diner today announced the coming of a sixth location of the family-run diner in Old Town Alexandria.

The new 24/7 restaurant will open at 1743 King Street in the heart of Old Town Alexandria, just minutes from Alexandria Union Station and the King Street Metro station, this fall. It’s the former site of Ernie’s Original Crab House.

The family-run business has been around since 1969, when husband and wife Robert (Bob) and Edith Bolton purchased “Gray’s Donut Dinette” and changed the name to Bob & Edith’s before opening their doors in Arlington, Virginia. Today Bob & Edith’s son, Greg Bolton, owns and operates the business along with his two children Tammy Bolton and Chris Bolton; together, they have expanded Bob

and Edith’s vision to four additional locations offering quality food at reasonable prices.

“My dad became an integral part of the Arlington community when he opened our original location, and my family has continued that tradition as we’ve continued to expand the Bob & Edith’s Diner brand,” said Greg Bolton, owner of Bob & Edith’s Diner.

The new location will serve all-day breakfast options, as well as a lunch and dinner menu of sandwiches, salads and hearty meals. The new location will offer freshly baked pies and hand spun milkshakes.

Current locations include Arlington, Huntington, Crystal City, Alexandria, and Springfield, Virginia. Web, BobandEdithsDiner.com Instagram @Bob_Ediths_Diner or Facebook @BobandEdithsDiner.

CALENDAR

THURSDAY/MAY 20

The Epidemics of the Past. 9:30-10:30 a.m. At Historic Huntley, 6918 Harrison Lane, Alexandria. Disease has always had an impact on history. Enjoy a healthy stroll up to a lovely view from Historic Huntley and learn why the Masons built their summer home upon a hill. Discover how epidemics of the past have shaped the society we live in today. Cost is \$8. Call 703-768-2525.

THURSDAY/MAY 20

Meditations and Fantasies. 5:30 p.m. and 7 p.m. At The Secret Garden of the Rectory, 711 Princess Street, Alexandria. Concertmaster of the Philadelphia Orchestra since 1999, David Kim comes to the Secret Garden for a brilliant program demonstrating the range of his artistry, from the personal to the virtuosic. Highlights include Jules Massenet’s “Meditation” from Thais and Pablo de Sarasate’s Carmen Fantasy, alongside lesser known works such as Maria Theresia von Paradis’s Sicilienne and Igor Stravinsky’s Suite Italienne – in honor of the 50th anniversary of the composer’s death. Visit the website: www.classicalmovements.com/secretgardenconcerts/

www.classicalmovements.com/secretgardenconcerts/

MAY 20-JUNE 27

Timeless Tradition. 12-4 p.m. At The Athenaeum, 201 Prince Street, Alexandria. The copyist program at the National Gallery of Art offers a unique opportunity for artists to study the techniques of old masters through intimate study in the galleries. This exhibit presents the work of members of this program alongside a color photo of the original and an artist’s statement explaining why the work was chosen and what was learned through copying. Visit the website: www.nvfaa.org

SATURDAY/MAY 22

Jane Franklin Dance Presents Live from a Parking Lot, It’s JFD! 7:30 p.m. Virtual presentation from 3700 S Four Mile Run Dr., Arlington. Featuring: Jane Franklin Dance, Forty+ Project and Poetry by Christopher Thomas. Tickets: \$10 Admission with additional donations encouraged. Visit <https://www.janefranklin.com/parking-lot-live>

www.connectionnewspapers.com

Legals

LEGAL NOTICE

Notice is hereby given to members of the American Society of Clinical Oncology, Inc. and the Association for Clinical Oncology that their Annual Business Meeting will be held online on Tuesday, June 8 at 1:00 PM U.S. Eastern Time. Members will be emailed a link to use to access the online Annual Business Meeting in advance of the event. Members with questions can email nicole.medrano@asco.org or call 571-483-1317. This notice is issued at the direction of the Boards of Directors of the American Society of Clinical Oncology and the Association for Clinical Oncology.

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Obituary



Joy Gray Collins widow of the late Colonel Sidney H Collins died on October 1, 2020 in Fort Lauderdale, Florida. Mrs. Collins served in the Women's Auxiliary Air Force of Great Britain during World War II with the rank of Flight Officer. One of her overseas assignments was in Washington (1943 to 1945) as the personal aide to Air Marshal Sir William Welsh, the Royal Air Force representative of the British Joint Chiefs of Staff. For 32 years Mrs. Collins owned and managed Old Dominion Travel Service Alexandria Virginia retiring in 1992. She spent the last 20 years of her life in Ft. Lauderdale. In lieu of flowers memorials may be made to the Hospice of Fort Lauderdale or a charity of your choice. Burial will be in Arlington National Cemetery on May 25, 2020 at 2 PM

Obituary

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A True Sense of Insecurity

By KENNETH B. LOURIE



From the moment you hear the word cancer spoken in your direction - from your new best friend, an oncologist with whom you've had zero previous interaction, you are transported to a new reality. A reality that a few of those moments before, was nowhere on your radar. Whatever innocence, expectation of normalcy and/or predictability you anticipated experiencing in your life, is now completely gone. Not only are you not in Kansas anymore, you are nowhere to be found, emotionally. All your hopes, dreams and presumptions about your life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness are backburnered by your life-changing diagnosis. A diagnosis which will require some kind of treatment, side effects notwithstanding, which will likely dampen your enthusiasm for living and affect all your decisions. Figuratively speaking, there's a new sheriff in town and if you're not compliant and attentive to your doctor's orders, you'll become a prisoner to your disease.

Even if you are compliant, a cancer diagnosis, however curable, is the kind of news that sticks with you no matter how long into your remission you are or how encouraging your diagnostic scans appear to be. Since I've not experienced being cancer free - after having received an initial diagnosis/prognosis, I can't imagine the relief and rebirth one might feel after learning their cancer has been beaten into submission. It's really too much to even contemplate when you've been given a sort of death sentence. Practically speaking, how does one go from being constantly under threat of a worsening outcome to one which is completely free from the emotional and physical tentacles of a cancer diagnosis?

You can't really unwring the bill, to coin a phrase. Moreover, hearing "You have cancer" sticks with you like Gorilla Glue. It's hard to even imagine ever hearing anything worse. Then one day, hearing your oncologist say "no sign of cancer" to you. To quote my late mother: "It's too much for anybody's nerves." And it's almost too much to ever consider. Your reality is that you have a very serious medical condition/disease, and once again, to quote my late mother "No one gets out of this life alive." Thinking, even contemplating a miracle cure is a tease most unhelpful, to invoke the syntax of Hercule Poirot. Somehow one must learn to live with their disease or else you'll die having been unable to lock it away in your vault, so to speak. Somehow having cancer can't be the predominant consideration in your life. Yet, when every waking moment is nearly consumed by your less-than-ideal circumstances, it's an emotional battle, most royal. If you win your share of skirmishes, you'll likely be rewarded with more life to live. However, nothing is guaranteed, except you know what: death and taxes."

"Any way you slice it, it's still ham," as my father used to say. Meaning that cancer is a serious business and no amount of joking or obfuscation is going to change that fact. Nevertheless, if one doesn't try and gives in to the disease psychologically, the internal damage may be compounded. Not that I've denied my diagnosis or ever taken it lightly, but I have tried to embrace it and become friends with it; not wanting to be controlled by it anymore than I already am. Given that I'll likely never be free of my cancer, either I learn to live with it or die trying. And I'd rather go down fighting than go down quietly. My situation has not changed or gotten worse. Still my disease is a major part of me and integrating into my program is the best way I know to try and make a molehill out of a mountain. I have been there and have done that. Hopefully, I'm not done being there.

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

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Celebrating Asian-American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month

Importance emphasized in context of recent discrimination and hate crimes.

By MARILYN CAMPBELL
THE CONNECTION

Educational videos and on-line trivia questions, organized by the school's Asian-Pacific Islander Heritage Committee, are giving Montgomery College students an opportunity for reflection, while food, music and film offer students at Marymount University in Arlington a glimpse of a different culture. These experiences are in observance of Asian/Pacific Islander American Heritage Month, celebrated each May.

"It's a time to reflect and celebrate the contributions of the Asian Pacific American community who shaped and influenced the history and culture of the United States," said Tait Brooks, Associate Director of Diversity, Equity & Inclusion and Deputy Title IX Coordinator at Marymount University.



Dae Young Kim

The importance of this year's observances, in emphasized by growing evidence of discrimination and hate crimes targeting Asian Americans. Educators are using the month to address and work toward solutions to some of these current issues.

"The recent violent actions are steeped in xenophobia. Education and learning their history and its significance to American history is the solution," said Brooks. "Once we know more Asian history, we will understand their plight."

"Schools and universities can pursue inclusive curriculum that fully integrates the experiences and contributions of Asian Americans," added Dae Young Kim, Ph.D., associate professor of Sociology and Anthropology at George Mason University. His message: "Educate on Asian American history and experience and show support to the Asian American community by standing against racism."

For Kim O'Connell, author of "Echoes of Little Saigon," a booklet on the Vietnamese immigration to Arlington, May is a month-long opportunity to use education as a vehicle for reconciling some of the wounds incurred through recent racial turmoil.

"I hope that people will realize that Asian Americans are as diverse as any other group," she said. "They can't be characterized in one simple way and they definitely should not be subject to the racism that we've seen in



COURTESY OF MARYMOUNT UNIVERSITY

Marymount University's first Cultural Graduation Reception acknowledges the accomplishments of first-generation college graduates from underrepresented groups in an intimate and inclusive environment. Graduate Anna Moon, center, receives her Cultural Graduation certificate alongside Dean Brooke Berry, right, and Associate Director Tait Brooks.

"Educate on Asian American history and experience and show support to the Asian American community by standing against racism."

— Dae Young Kim, Ph.D.,
George Mason University

recent months."

For some in the Asian-American and Pacific Islander community, celebrations this year's observances are accompanied with fear.

"It is clear that many Asian Americans are feeling that they are not immune to acts of violence and bias and social media is helping to increase awareness of such incidents, which is prompting more conversation and action," said Kim. "We are feeling fearful of violence directed against us. This is what makes this month different from previous years."

In recent weeks, Kim has engaged in dialogue and outreach aimed at helping others understand the experience of Asian Americans now. "I've participated in a roundtable conversation with Governor [Ralph] Northam and Asian American community leaders about hate crimes against Asian Americans," he said. "I was on a panel organized by Inova ... to talk about the Asian American experience."

"Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders have contributed to American culture, society and history in immeasurable ways and I encourage everyone to learn more about these contributions," said O'Connell.

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