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Alexandria Gazette Packet

WELLBEING

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DECEMBER 2, 2021

Texas Official Appointed To Lead Alexandria

City Council hires James Parajon as city manager.

BY MICHAEL LEE POPE
GAZETTE PACKET

The Alexandria City Council is tapping Texas government official James Parajon to be the city's 19th city manager, overseeing an operating budget of \$770 million in a city with a population of 160,000. Council members formally voted to hire Parajon Wednesday night.

"We look forward to working with Jim, City staff and Alexandrians to accomplish great things together," said Alexandria Mayor Justin Wilson. "With input through surveys, town halls and review panels, City Council sought to find a candidate who would reflect our values and we found that in Jim Parajon."

Parajon, 58, comes to Alexandria from the other Arlington, the one in Texas, where he has worked for more than a decade.

His most recent role has been serving as deputy city manager overseeing a large portfolio including asset management, communications, legislative affairs, economic development, libraries, strategic Initiatives, municipal airport operations and the fire department. Under his economic development role, he oversaw the Esports Stadium Arlington, which seats 2,500 people and is 100,000 square feet, and opened in 2018.

"I believe very strongly in community engagement. As a professional planner, that's my background. That's my DNA," said Parajon in a meeting with reporters. "As a professional planner, you don't develop a plan or a neighborhood effort or initiatives without robust community engagement."

In the 100 years that Alexandria has been led by a professional city manager, 16 of the 18 people who have held the job have been white males. Parajon's appointment to the chief executive's po-



James Parajon

sition will be viewed by many as a missed opportunity to have some diversity in the role. Asked about his commitment to inclusion at City Hall, Parajon says he led two reorganizations in Arlington to inject more diversity into local government.

"Yes I'm a white guy. What I would ask is that people give me a chance and engage with me and understand my perspectives," he said. "I really feel strongly that the organization should reflect what the community looks and feels like."

Before his current role, he served as community development and planning director, where he was responsible for the housing authority, building inspections, federal grant programs, development services and civil engineering. Before working in Texas, he worked in the North Carolina cities of Raleigh and Cary.

"I've had a pretty good and long career in other places, and I really wasn't looking necessarily to become a city manager, but Alexandria spoke to me," he said. "This is a community that seems to be highly engaged and very involved, and that's different. A lot of cities don't have that these days. It's more sterile."

Raised in Poughkeepsie, New York, Parajon is a graduate of Dickinson College in Pennsylvania. He completed his master's degree in regional planning at the University of Massachusetts at Amherst. In 2014, he was elected to the College of Fellows for the American Institute of Certified Planners. He served as an adjunct professor for the University of Texas at Arlington.

He plans on relocating to Alexandria with his wife of 31 years, Elizabeth, who is an educator with experience in both public and private schools. His children, Eric and Stephanie, are currently attending university.

He will take office when current City Manager Mark Jinks retires in January.



PHOTOS BY JANET BARNETT/GAZETTE PACKET

Mayor Justin Wilson lights the shamash or service candle of the Grand Menorah to begin the celebration of Hanukkah Nov. 28 at the Lyceum as Rabbi Mordechai Newman looks on.

Festival of Lights

Menorah lighting celebrates
beginning of Hanukkah.

BY JEANNE THEISMANN
GAZETTE PACKET

Led by Mayor Justin Wilson, Alexandria celebrated the beginning of Hanukkah with the lighting of the city's largest menorah Nov. 28 at the Lyceum.

Wilson was joined by Rabbi Mordechai Newman to mark the beginning of the eight-day Festival of Lights.

"The lighting of the menorah serves as a symbol and a message of a triumph of freedom over op-

SEE MENORAH, ON PAGE 6



Yehudas Newman serves latkes and applesauce at the lighting of the Grand Hanukkah Menorah Nov. 28 at the Lyceum.

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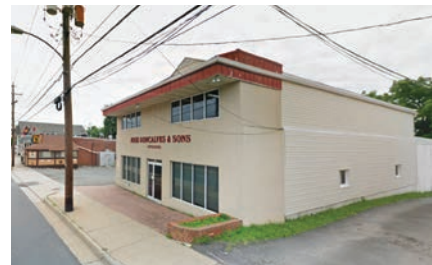
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Senate Committees to Take Spotlight

Democrats plan to block Republican bills from reaching Senate floor.

BY MICHAEL LEE POPE
GAZETTE PACKET

Now that Republicans are about to take control of the Executive Mansion and the House of Delegates, many are hopeful that they'll be able to accomplish some of the things they talked about on the campaign trail — rolling back environmental regulations, undoing gun-violence prevention efforts and allowing the attorney general to take over prosecutions in cases where local commonwealth's attorneys haven't acted with enough force.

But in order to accomplish any of that, they'll have to get those bills through a series of Senate committees. And Senate Democrats are already mapping out a strategy to keep many of the top Republican priorities from reaching the Senate floor.

"Any initiatives considered leaning right or right initiatives are going to be stopped in the Senate, and they're going to be stopped mostly in committees rather than on the full floor," said David Ramadan, a former Republican delegate now at George Mason Uni-



Senate Majority Leader Dick Saslaw chats with reporters in the Senate chamber.

versity Schar School of Government. "The Senate caucus has more room to play in committees than they do on the Senate floor."

Democrats hold a one-vote majority in the Senate, and they'll no longer have the tie-breaking vote of the lieutenant governor. Because a handful of conservative Senate Democrats often break with their caucus, that could theoretically result in some Republican legislative victories next year. But that's only in theory. In reality, they'll only be able to win victories on the Senate floor if they are able to get bills through committees that are lopsided in favor of Democrats.

"Getting rid of the grocery tax, for

ROLLING BACK ENVIRONMENTAL regulations in the Virginia Clean Economy Act is a topic that has animated many Republican voters, especially now that the Virginia Clean Economy Act has put Virginia on track to ban fossil fuels by 2050. Many Republicans have criticized the mandates for investments into wind power and solar power. Now that Republicans will be in control of the House of Delegates, many are expecting action to undermine the Clean Economy Act.

"The Clean Economy Act is definitely something that people want to revisit and amend. Whether they want to repeal it outright, that's another question," said Stephen Haner, senior fellow at the Thomas Jefferson Institute. "But amend-

ments for sure, and I think the amendments can get through the House."

Passing a bill out of the Republican-controlled House is only half the story in the General Assembly. Assuming that the new Repub-

lican majority sends legislation rolling back the Clean Economy Act to the Senate, its

first stop will be the Senate Commerce and Labor Committee. That's a panel that's stacked in favor of the Senate majority with 12 Democrats and only three Republicans.

"If the bill, a bill, does come over backing down on some of the climate change types of things from the House, and it's certainly possible it will, I think we have the ability to deal with it in the Senate and box it up and it'll probably never get to the floor and have the bill basically defeated in the committee," Sen. George Barker (D-39) told members of the Alexandria City Council last month.

GUN RIGHTS ADVOCATES are interested in rolling back some of the gun-violence prevention measures Democrats were able to pass since they took control of the General

I was going to meet somebody in the park. Oh, can I carry a gun there?' That's only a recipe to get someone like me, who doesn't commit any crime, inadvertently into trouble," said Philip Van Cleve, president of the Virginia Citizens Defense League. "You're disarming me. So that if something did happen in the park that day, I would be helpless when I didn't need to be helpless."

Advocates for preventing gun violence say local governments should be able to determine what's in the best interest of their local communities. If the House passes a bill to roll back local authority to ban guns, they'll be making their case before the Senate Judiciary Committee, which has nine Democrats and six Republicans. That's the same committee that approved local authority to ban guns last year, so the odds of it getting to the Senate floor seem slim.

"Gun owners, for the most part, are law-abiding citizens," said Lori Haas, senior director of advocacy at the Coalition to Stop Gun Violence. "And I believe they are more than capable of learning the laws of whatever jurisdictions they're planning to visit."

DURING THE CAMPAIGN, Republican candidate for attorney general Jason Miyares said one of the things he wanted to do if elected was take over local prosecutions in cases where local police chiefs or sheriffs didn't believe local prosecutors were serving the community. Now that

he's been elected to the office, Miyares has already started talking to lawmakers about getting a bill through the General Assembly to the governor's desk.

"In all of this discussion about criminal justice reform the media talks about, you know the person they never talk about? Victims. They don't talk about the vic-

tims. And that has been a central plank of why I ran and a central plank of what got me elected. So I am going to end the criminal-first, victims-last mindset and have a victims-first, criminals-last

mindset."

In order to make that happen, though, the bill will have to get through the Senate Judiciary Committee.

"There's no chance at all that's going to pass," said Sen. John Edwards (D-21), chairman of the Judiciary Committee. "He has no authority under the Constitution, and the likelihood of the General Assembly granting him that authority is zero."

"It'll probably never get to the floor."

— Sen. George Barker (D-39) on Republican efforts to roll back the Clean Economy Act

on the governor in the Senate."

"You're disarming me. ... I would be helpless when I didn't need to be helpless."

— Philip Van Cleve, Virginia Citizens Defense League

"I am going to end the criminal-first, victims-last mindset and have a victims-first, criminals-last mindset."

— Attorney General-elect Jason Miyares (R)

"I do expect Democrats to exert their ability to serve as a check on the governor in the Senate."

— Stephen Farnsworth, Center for Leadership and Media Studies, University of Mary Washington

example, will have some bipartisan support. And so I don't expect the



Alexandria Fire Chief Corey Smedley, left, stands with firefighters at the new Station 203 on Cameron Mills Road. The station opened earlier this year, replacing the original station built in 1947.



Firefighter Blake Jones demonstrates coming down the station pole to respond to a 911 call at Station 203.

“This was my station when I was a rookie 21 years ago and the new station is night and day compared to the old facility.”

— AFD Capt. Patrick Evans

‘Night and Day’ Station 203 project completed.

PHOTOS BY JANET BARNETT/GAZETTE PACKET

BY JEANNE THEISMANN
GAZETTE PACKET

The building stood for over 70 years, serving as the home of Fire Station 203 on Cameron Mills Road and providing the Alexandria community with fire prevention and emergency lifesaving services.

But earlier this year, the city officially completed the replacement project for Station 203, celebrating a new two-story structure of over 15,000 square feet.

“What a difference the new building makes,” said Capt. Patrick Evans as Fire Prevention Month began in October. “This was my station when I was a rookie 21 years ago and the new station is night and day compared to the old facility. Everything is completely different, from the bedrooms to the kitchen, and office and watch tower, which before was like a closet.”

What was originally known as Station #3 opened in 1947 and the previous building completed in 1948. Construction on the new building began in 2019 and first responders returned to the facility in March of 2021.

The new facility, located at 2801 Cameron Mills Road, features two-and-a-half operational bays to house an engine, a medic, administrative units and all required personnel and has the capacity for special service units.

“The old facility was no longer able to



Lt. Ricky Muse, Firefighter Will Augustine and Firefighter Blake Jones at Station 203 Sept. 29.

support modern fire and EMS apparatus, equipment and operations,” said Fire Chief Corey Smedley. “This new facility provides

better support for modern firefighting and emergency medical apparatus and technology and allows us to continue to improve our



The Sept. 9, 1947, Alexandria Gazette features the newest fire station #3 opening on Cameron Mills Road.

service to the Beverly Hills and Rosemont community.”

Due to safety precautions to limit the spread of COVID-19, city stations remain closed to the public but a virtual tour of the new Station 203 is available on YouTube to view the equipment bays and amenities for fire staff who live on-site during their 24-hour shifts.

Evans noted in particular the changes in technology over the years.

“The communications system is completely different,” Evens said. “When I was first here we actually had a pay phone in the lobby. Our phone system is now automated and everything about the station is new and up to date. It is definitely a breath of fresh air and helps us improve how we serve the community.”

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Menorah Lighting Celebrates Beginning of Hanukkah

FROM PAGE 1

pression and the power of light over darkness,” said Newman, who presided over the ceremony.

Hosted by Chabad Lubavitch of Alexandria-Arlington with assistance from the City of Alexandria, the Festival of Lights celebration included a public kindling of a 6-foot menorah followed by the singing of traditional songs. Hot potato pancakes and doughnuts, the traditional foods of Hanukkah, were served to the crowd which was limited in size due to ongoing

pandemic concerns.

Newman shared the history and tradition of Hanukkah and the Festival of Lights, which is celebrated with a nightly menorah lighting, special prayers and fried foods.

The Hebrew word Hanukkah means “dedication” and the observance is named because it celebrates the rededication of the Holy Temple in Jerusalem following the defeat of the Greek army by a small and outnumbered group of Jews in the second century BCE.

“The flame of the Hanukkah me-

norah flickering in the darkness of a cold night has a special and timely message this year as we are still dealing with the COVID-19 pandemic,” Newman said. “The Hanukkah lights remind us to never give up.

The world around us may be dark, we may be experiencing challenges from within, but in the end light is stronger than darkness and having a positive and optimistic attitude will prevail over negativity.”

www.chabadAA.org.



PHOTOS BY JANET BARNETT/GAZETTE PACKET

Bessie, Miriam and Riva Newman at the lighting of the Grand Hanukkah Menorah Nov. 28 at the Lyceum.



Fran Edwards and son Rhys and Lochlan observe the lighting of the Grand Hanukkah Menorah Nov. 28 at the Lyceum.



Rabbi Mordechai Newman, left, is joined by Mayor Justin Wilson, Officer Yadiel Nunez and Officer Leah Harlow at the lighting of the Grand Hanukkah Menorah Nov. 28 at the Lyceum.

BULLETIN BOARD

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

NOW THRU DEC. 10

Jingle Bell Kids Toy Drive Collection. At Quander Road School, 6400 Quander Road, Alexandria. Personal Development Class Service-Learning Project Holiday Toy Drive for Kids in Nearby Shelters; “Gifting Community Kids for the Holidays. Ages: Toddlers -14 years old. Types of Items to Donate: Board/Card Games, Puzzles, Art supplies, Coloring/Activity books, Various Books, Stuffed animals, Dolls and Toy Cars/Trucks.

SATURDAY/DEC. 18

Wreaths Across America. 9:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. At Alexandria National Cemetery, 1450 Wilkes Street, Alexandria. Join the VFW, scouts, and cadets in posting holiday wreaths on 4,300 Veterans’ graves. Help populate all graves, donate wreaths \$15 at <https://wreathsacrossamerica.org/VAANCA>

CITY OF ALEXANDRIA

HOLIDAY SHARING

TO BENEFIT THOSE IN NEED

The City of Alexandria invites the public to help make the 2021 holiday season brighter for some of the most vulnerable members of our community, including low-income families, foster children, older adults and residents with disabilities. Through the Fund for Alexandria’s Child annual Holiday Sharing Program, sponsors purchase gift cards for eligible families and individuals, then the Department of Community and Human Services staff and volunteers distribute the cards. The community’s generosity helps ensure that no Alexandrians are left in need during the holidays. This year, 450 families, 100 older adults and adults with disabilities and 120 children in foster care have registered and qualified for assistance. Residents or groups can sponsor an individual or family by registering online by November 29. Monetary donations can be made online via credit card (American Express, VISA, MasterCard, Discover or e-check). Donation checks can be made payable to The Fund for Alexandria’s Child or to the DCHS Senior Fund and mailed to Holiday Sharing Program, 2525 Mount Vernon Ave., Alexandria, VA 22301. For more information about Holiday Sharing, email holidaysharing@alexandriava.gov or visit alexandriava.gov/HolidaySharing.

VOLUNTEERS WANTED

ACPS- Help Provide Meals to Children Alexandria City Public School (ACPS) will provide

two days worth of breakfast and lunch meals with a snack pack free for any enrolled ACPS student on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays. Friday distribution will include a meal(s) for Saturday. Volunteers will meet at various schools to assist with packing boxes and loading buses with boxed meals. Then, volunteers will ride the bus along to distribute the meals while on site at a few ACPS mobile pop-up locations. Click on each location to sign up: Francis C. Hammond Middle School, TC Williams High School, or Jefferson Houston School. www.volunteeralexandria.org

Alexandria Dept. of Community and Human Services- Volunteer Guardian

Looking for individuals who can assure the well-being of an incapacitated Alexandrian living in an Assisted Living Facility or Nursing Facility. Volunteer Guardians are appointed by the Court to make decisions for older Alexandria residents who have lost the capacity to understand the consequences of their decisions. The volunteer will visit the resident monthly and follow the person’s wishes as much as possible. www.volunteeralexandria.org

Alexandria Families for Safer Streets - Executive Assistant to AFSS Board of Directors

The agency is seeking an executive assistant to help coordinate a diverse group of tasks necessary to keep us on track and moving forward. Someone with office manager skills would be the ideal candidate. www.volunteeralexandria.org

ALIVE! Volunteers are needed to assist with multiple programs relating to their Food Program, ALIVE! House, and Alexandria Eviction Prevention Partnership Program will distribute food at Mobile Pop-ups and Truck to Trunk events, etc. <https://www.volunteeralexandria.org/ALIVE>

Alzheimer’s Association – Walk to End Alzheimer’s

Saturday, Sept. 25 (National Harbor) & Saturday, Oct. 9, 2021 The National Mall, Washington, DC. Volunteers are needed on the day of the events to help with set up, sign placement, information services, promise flower distribution, cheerleaders, and route monitors. <https://www.volunteeralexandria.org/>

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.

SEE BULLETIN, PAGE 19

Commitment to a Cure

Golubin honored for work with Arthritis Foundation and veterans.

BY JEANNE THEISMANN
GAZETTE PACKET

Alexandria native Garrett Golubin was honored Oct. 28 at the Arthritis Foundation's annual Commitment to a Cure Gala for his efforts in establishing a partnership between the foundation and the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs.

Held at DC's District Winery, the third annual event was emceed by Shawn Perry of The Senior Zone radio program. In addition to Golubin, who was named the Arthritis Warrior honoree, the organization recognized President and Chief Medical Officer of MyMD Pharmaceuticals Dr. Chris Chapman as the medical honoree, and DTM Fitness founder and owner Dan Hill as the veteran honoree.

"Arthritis is the number-one cause of disability in this country," said Golubin, who was diagnosed with ankylosing spondylitis, a form of arthritis in the spine, in 2014. "And most people are not aware that one in three veterans is diagnosed with the condition, making it the leading disability among veterans."

After receiving his diagnosis, Golubin, an account executive with software intelligence provider Dynatrace, began fundraising for foundation events. He eventually became the fundraising chair of the local leadership board, a position he continues to hold.

In 2020, Golubin forged a relationship with the Veterans Affairs at a national level, leading to a partnership that provides specialized support for veterans through the VA.

"It is important that we work not only to help our



Garrett Golubin, left, is presented with the Arthritis Warrior award by emcee Shawn Perry at the Arthritis Foundation's Commitment to a Cure Gala Oct. 28 at the District Winery.

veterans but to improve the health of our current service members," Golubin. "It is a real honor to be here tonight but there is still a lot of work to be done to raise awareness and fund a cure for this disease."

www.arthritis.org

PHOTOS CONTRIBUTED



Garrett Golubin, left, celebrates with family and friends after being honored with the Arthritis Warrior award at the Arthritis Foundation's Commitment to a Cure gala Oct. 28 at the District Winery.

WWW.CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM

I-395/Seminary Road HOV Ramp City of Alexandria

Virtual Public Information Meeting

Monday, December 6, 2021, 6:30-8:30 p.m.
<https://www.virginiadot.org/395ExpressLanes>

Find out about plans to convert the 395 Express Lanes and Seminary Road ramp from a High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV)-only ramp to a High Occupancy Toll (HOT) ramp. This south-facing reversible ramp at Seminary Road falls within the limits of and provides access to the 395 Express Lanes and currently operates as an HOV- and transit-only ramp. Transurban, VDOT's private operator of the 395 Express Lanes, has proposed converting this ramp from HOV to a HOT lanes ramp. The ramp would continue to provide access to the 395 Express Lanes, but would be available to vehicles with fewer than three occupants who pay a toll, and for free to vehicles with three or more occupants.

The meeting will be held as a **virtual/online meeting**. Information for accessing and participating in the virtual meeting is available at **<https://www.virginiadot.org/395ExpressLanes>**. The project team will make a presentation beginning at 6:30 p.m. followed by a question and answer period.

Review project information and meeting details on the webpage above or during business hours at VDOT's Northern Virginia District Office, 4975 Alliance Drive, Fairfax, VA 22030. Please call ahead at 703-691-6715 or TTY/TDD 711 to make an appointment with appropriate personnel.

In compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and 23 CFR 771, VDOT has received guidance from the Federal Highway Administration that if the modification was to proceed, no additional environmental documentation would be required for converting the 395 Express Lanes/Seminary Road ramp from an HOV-only ramp to a HOT ramp. The findings documented in past Environmental Assessments and subsequent Findings of No Significant Impacts from the Federal Highway Administration remain valid.

Give your comments during the meeting, or by **December 16, 2021** via the comment form on the project website, by mail to Mr. Abi Lerner, P.E., Virginia Department of Transportation, 4975 Alliance Drive, Fairfax, VA 22030 or by email to meetingcomments@VDOT.virginia.gov. Please reference "I-395/Seminary Road HOV Ramp" in the subject line.

VDOT ensures nondiscrimination and equal employment in all programs and activities in accordance with Title VI and Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. If you need more information or special assistance for persons with disabilities or limited English proficiency, contact VDOT Civil Rights at 703-259-1775.

State Project: 0395-96A-206, P101
UPC: 108361

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THE CONNECTION
NEWSPAPERS

back to 2008
are available at

<http://connectionarchives.com/PDF>

Budget Surplus in a Time of Need

DEL. KENNETH R. "KEN" PLUM



A combination of an economy producing much more strongly than expected during the pandemic and a frugal state budget in anticipation of a revenue shortfall combined with several federal programs sending enormous amounts of cash to the states has resulted in Virginia having a strong cash position—possibly the greatest ever. Some choose to call the available cash a surplus, but I think a much more accurate term to describe it is an unappropriated balance. The amount involved is more than \$4 billion!

Using the term surplus implies to me that the needs of the state have been met and that there is money left over. As I indicated above, the existing state budget was put together with a very conservative estimate of tax revenue based on a contraction in the economy. Programs were minimally funded or needs were not addressed in order to ensure that the budget would be

balanced at the end of the year as constitutionally mandated. Likewise, the availability of cash flowing from the federal government has been much greater than ever before with an expectation that even more dollars will be coming to the states.

With the numerous challenges facing government in general it is reassuring that the availability of funding will not be as great an issue as it has been in recent years. The list of unmet needs for those who view government's role broadly can be reduced by the available cash. For others, the availability of cash in government coffers raises the prospect of tax cuts. The incoming governor has indicated that he favors tax cuts. Virginia's tax rates are among the lowest in the country and should a policy of tax reductions be pursued it should be targeted to those with the lowest income.

Certainly tax revenues should never be allowed to exceed the wants and needs of citizens for government services. When there are dollars available the question becomes one of

giving monies back to citizens in the form of tax reductions or rebates or using it to provide needed services. Cutting taxes is an approach that is appealing to most politicians and is one that I think should be pursued when it can be done responsibly. In Virginia at this time I believe there are too many unmet needs to be doing anything in the budget other than providing funding for programs and services that have been needed but unfunded for years.

There is a waiting list estimated at over 12,000 individuals who qualify for assistance because of a developmental disability, but that list is reduced by only a few thousand persons per year with the need growing faster than programs or services to meet them.

There is a wide disparity of funding across jurisdictional lines for public education even though there is a composite index that is supposed to smooth out the differences. The lack of equity in funding among counties and cities is unjustifiable as are the differences across colleges and universities.

In coming columns I will be discussing other unmet needs. It is not possible to have a budget surplus when there is so much left to be done.

Children's & Teens' Connection 2021

Deadline extended, please send all submissions via email by Friday, Dec. 10, but earlier is better.

During December of each year, this newspaper devotes its pages to the creativity of local students and children. The results are always remarkable. It is a keepsake edition for many families.

We welcome contributions from public and private schools, art classes, families, individuals and homeschoolers. We publish every kind of artwork that can be submitted to us as a jpeg, poetry, essays, creative writing, opinion pieces, short stories, photography, photos of sculpture or gardens or other creative efforts.

Pandemic planning has made

for a short deadline, and, like everything else, the 2021 Children's Connections will be different than in the past.

For 2021, please send a curated collection of art from your class. We will do our best, but we are unlikely to be able to print every item submitted. Please include the first and last name of the student with each submission.

We ask that all submissions be digital so they can be sent through email. Writing should be submitted in .docx format or in google doc. If you are sharing a google doc with us, please turn on link sharing so that anyone with the link can

edit the document and share with kimm.mary@gmail.com. Artwork should be photographed or scanned and provided in jpeg format.

Some suggestions, but different ideas are welcome:

To be published, we must have the full first and last name of the student artist or writer.

Identify each piece of writing or art, including the student's full name, age, grade and town of residence, plus the name of the school, name of teacher and town of school location.

Home schoolers' contributions are welcomed.

Please send all submissions via

email by Friday, Dec. 10, 2021. The Children's & Teens' editions will publish on Dec. 15, 2021.

You can see the 2019 editions (pre-pandemic) by visiting www.connectionnewspapers.com/PDFs/ and scrolling down to Children's

Email submissions for the Children's Editions to kimm.mary@gmail.com.

For advertising information, email Debbie Funk at debfunc@connectionnewspapers.com.

For more, see <http://www.connectionnewspapers.com/news/2021/nov/17/childrens-teens-connection-2021/>

MARY KIMM
EDITOR AND PUBLISHER

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

More Places To Give for Local Impact

Dear Editor:

I'd like to suggest more places to give for local impact

Please consider publishing a second list with these options
Thanks

Sara H.
Oakton

Fairfax County Park Foundation
<https://fairfaxparkfoundation.org/>

Earth Sangha
native plant nursery
<https://www.earthsangha.org/>

Volunteer Fairfax
<https://www.volunteerfairfax.org/>

Lutheran Social Services
Afghan refugee resettlement
https://lssnca.org/take_action/afghan-allies.html

Afghanistan Youth Relief Foundation
Afghan refugee resettlement
<https://ayrf.org/>

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Connection Newspapers welcomes views on any public issue.

Letters must be signed. Include home address and home and business numbers; we will only print your name and town name. Letters are routinely edited for length, libel, grammar, good taste, civility and factual errors.

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By email: editors@connectionnewspapers.com

By mail to: Letters to the Editor The Connection
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Goodwin House resident Dr. Robert Wallace, Ahn Phan of the office of Senator Mark Warner, and Goodwin House Inc. CEO Rob Leibreich following the Stronger Memory presentation on Sept. 17.

Improving Brain Health

Goodwin House hosts Stronger Memory program.

BY JEANNE THEISMANN
GAZETTE PACKET

Goodwin House was the site of a Stronger Memory presentation Sept. 17 as part of Alzheimer's Awareness Month and its brain health programs.

Goodwin House Inc. has partnered with George Mason University to study the impact of the Stronger Memory program on memory, cognition and life satisfaction of participants.

"We are partnered with Mason to research the effectiveness of the Stronger Memory program," said Jessica Frederickson, the Brain Health program manager for Goodwin House Inc. "I've seen it change lives and improve the cognitive memory of patients."

Sen. Mark Warner made a virtual appearance at the event in support of the Stronger Memory program.

"I want to say a special thank you to all my friends at Goodwin House and their involvement in their Stronger Memory program," Warner said in a prerecorded video. "We all know someone who has to deal with either dementia or Alzheimer's. My mom had Alzheimer's 11 years, so anything we can do to improve cognitive facilities as we age is something I strongly support."

The Stronger Memory program consists of three basic activities: writing, reading aloud and simple math exercises. The program was started in 2011 by Goodwin House CEO Rob Leibreich, a featured speaker at the event, to help his mother address cognitive decline. Since that time, Stronger Memory has gained a loyal following and yielded positive results.

"I entered the program skeptically but thought I would try it and so far I am impressed," said Dr. Robert Wallace, a Goodwin House resident and former chairman of Cardiothoracic Surgery at the Mayo Clinic and Georgetown University School of Medicine. www.ConnectionNewspapers.com



Goodwin House president and CEO Rob Leibreich discusses his experience in coping with his mother's cognitive issues during a Stronger Memory presentation Sept. 17.

"I entered the program skeptically but thought I would try it and so far I am impressed."

— Dr. Robert Wallace,
Goodwin House resident and
Stronger Memory program participant

cine. "It is difficult to objectively determine if you have improved but subjectively I think it is working and I am going to stick with it."

Residents of all three Goodwin House affiliates — Goodwin House Alexandria, Goodwin House Bailey's Crossroads and Goodwin House At Home — in addition to members of the Village to Village Network, local nonprofit organizations, local faith organizations, and friends and family members have participated in Stronger Memory since its initial pilot in the fall of 2020.

"I never felt that I had a strong memory," Wallace said. "So when the program became available here, I thought that it would be worth trying. It definitely has its merits."

Stronger Memory is available at no cost and the entire curriculum can be downloaded on Goodwin House's website at <https://www.goodwinhouse.org/stronger-memory/>.

Supporting Healthy Youth and Healthy Families: Celebrating Safely

As the holiday season approaches, SAPCA encourages parents and teens to celebrate safely and substance-free and to know the legal consequences related to underage drinking.



Parents and Caregivers: It is against the law to provide alcohol to any persons under the age of 21. Don't be a party to teenage drinking.

Support our youth to be happy, healthy, and substance-free by making your values clear about substance use -- particularly underage use of substances -- with your children and other parents, and pledge to keep celebrations for youth substance-free.

SUBSTANCE ABUSE PREVENTION COALITION OF ALEXANDRIA



Learn more at
PreventItAlexandria.org

This program is made possible through a grant funded by the Virginia Alcoholic Beverage Control Authority. The opinions expressed do not necessarily represent the views of Virginia ABC.



The 50TH Anniversary Scottish Christmas Walk Weekend & Parade

Friday, December 3rd, & Saturday, December 4th, 2021



Join us in kicking off the holiday season and celebrating the rich history of the Alexandria community with our 50th anniversary events. Funds raised support our educational programs for children and families from cradle to career!



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campagnacenter.org/event/the-scottish-christmas-walk-weekend

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PHOTOS BY JANET BARNETT/GAZETTE PACKET



Volunteer Krista DeAngelis, ALIVE! Executive Director Jennifer Ayers, ALIVE! Program Operations Director John Shockley and volunteer James Bussey hold turkey meal baskets as part of ALIVE's Thanksgiving turkey distribution Nov. 23 at the organization's food warehouse on South Payne Street. The organization distributed more than 1,000 holiday meals to families in need across the city.

Giving Thanks

ALIVE! distributes over 1,000 turkey meals.

More than 1,000 families across the city were able to celebrate Thanksgiving as ALIVE!'s legion of volunteers distributed turkeys to families in need Nov. 23.

"Today we are handing out 160 Thanksgiving baskets for families in need in the city of Alexandria," said ALIVE! Executive Director Jennifer Ayers at the organization's food warehouse on South Payne Street. "That is on top of another 850 that are going out in other distributions this weekend."

Volunteers spread out across the city to distribute the pre-packaged meals.

"Volunteers packed the baskets and are loading them into vehicles," Ayers added. "Because of them, these families can celebrate Thanksgiving."

www.alive-inc.org

-JEANNE THEISMANN



A volunteer loads turkey baskets into a vehicle as part of ALIVE's Thanksgiving food distribution Nov. 23 on South Payne Street. More than 1,000 turkey meals were distributed to families in need.



Volunteers sort through food baskets as part of ALIVE's Thanksgiving turkey distribution Nov. 23 at the organization's food warehouse on South Payne Street. More than 1,000 turkey meals were distributed to families in need.

LA Musician Got Her Start in Mount Vernon

Fort Hunt alumni Julie Gigante started playing the violin at age 5 and now is featured on an 11,000-square-foot mural in Los Angeles.

BY MIKE SALMON
THE CONNECTION

It's a long way from the hallways of Fort Hunt High School to a huge mural on the 110 freeway near downtown Los Angeles, but that's where Fort Hunt alumni Julie Gigante's picture is, representing the Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra. The 8-story-tall "Harbor Freeway Overture," is a mural painted by Kent Twitchell that pays tribute to the orchestra.

"It is a little embarrassing for me, I didn't know it was going to be so big," Gigante said. Thousands of drivers see it on the way to work every day, and some let her know they saw her on the building. "I get that a lot," she said, but it's all part of the professional musician's life in LA.

It all started in Alexandria when she was a 5-year-old, taking lessons and getting encouragement from her mother who is also a musician. It took years of practicing and climbing the musical success ladder from the Mount Vernon Chamber Orchestra to the Fairfax Symphony, and the Arlington Symphony. "My mother was a founder of the Mount Vernon Symphony," she said.

Gigante went to the Eastman School of Music at the University



Julie Gigante warms up on the violin prior to a Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra concert at the Alex Theatre in Glendale, California.

of Rochester in New York where she met her husband Tom Rizzo, a jazz musician. She moved with Rizzo out to the west coast in 1985, landed a spot on the orchestra and grew from there. They have two children, James, 28, and Annmarie, 25. The musical side of the family didn't transpire to the children, although Annmarie was into opera at first, but both are now employed in the tech world.

They live in a mountainous part near Los Angeles, and she loves to hike and engage in other outdoor

activities when she's not playing music. "There's a lot of cultural activities out here," she said.

Westward Expansion

Being in LA, it isn't unusual for people to come from all over the country to make it in the entertainment world. Gigante landed the position on the orchestra shortly after moving and has excelled since then.

"On top of her natural musical ability and stellar technique, Julie

SEE LA MUSICIAN, PAGE 16

PHOTO COURTESY OF LOS ANGELES CHAMBER ORCHESTRA



Julie Gigante speaks to the audience before a show in California.

WWW.CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM

PHOTO COURTESY OF ROSA VAZQUEZ

Northern Virginia Joint Transportation Meeting

Wednesday, December 15, 2021, 7 p.m.

<https://www.virginiadot.org/novatransportationmeeting>

You are invited to participate in a virtual joint public meeting held by the Commonwealth Transportation Board (CTB), Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT), Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation (DRPT), the Office of Intermodal Planning and Investment (OIPI), Northern Virginia Transportation Authority (NVTA), Northern Virginia Transportation Commission (NVTC) and Virginia Railway Express (VRE). According to Virginia Code, these organizations shall conduct a joint public meeting annually for the purposes of presenting to the public, and receiving public comments on, the transportation projects proposed and conducted by each entity in Planning District 8 (Northern Virginia).

The virtual meeting will begin with a brief presentation followed by a public comment period. During the presentation you can learn about various transportation initiatives, including:

- Virginia's Multimodal Project Pipeline Program
- NVTA's updates to TransAction and the FY2022-2027 Six Year Program; the NVTA Transportation Technology Strategic Plan; and the Regional Multi-Modal Mobility Program (RM3P) in partnership with the Commonwealth of Virginia
- NVTC's Commuter Choice program
- DRPT's funding opportunities, Six-Year Improvement Program and the Virginia Passenger Rail Authority (VPRRA)
- VRE project updates

The meeting will be held as a **virtual/online meeting**. Information for accessing and participating in the meeting will be posted at <https://www.virginiadot.org/novatransportationmeeting>. The team of VDOT, DRPT, OIPI, NVTA, NVTC and VRE representatives will make a presentation beginning at 7 p.m. highlighting their transportation programs, regional collaboration and receive public comments about Virginia's transportation network.

Give your comments during the joint meeting after the presentation concludes or submit your written comments by **January 7, 2022** by mail to Ms. Maria Sinner, Virginia Department of Transportation, 4975 Alliance Drive, Fairfax, VA 22030 or email meetingcomments@VDOT.virginia.gov. Please reference "Northern Virginia Joint Transportation Meeting" in the subject line.

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Some of the Best-Loved Pets Have ‘Hospice’ Status

Just Ask Smokey and Sadie

By BARBARA S. MOFFET
ANIMAL WELFARE LEAGUE
OF ALEXANDRIA

It took only one photo of a little Chihuahua named Smokey for Megan Hess to make her choice. Yes, the dog had chronic kidney disease, heart problems and arthritis. And, yes, Hess’s family already included three children and two senior dogs.

“The Animal Welfare League of Alexandria (AWLA) posting on Instagram said his kidney failure might mean a prognosis of six months to a year,” Hess recalled. “I just thought ‘he needs to do his hospice time in this house.’ I dropped everything and went to the shelter with my son to meet Smokey.”

Smokey didn’t look quite like your average Chihuahua. Long, sticklike legs. Beady eyes. Only two teeth and a tongue perpetually hanging out of his mouth. Once at Hess’s Alexandria home, his personality was equally quirky. Some days, she says, he mostly snoozes, but other days his feisty side takes over. Despite being dwarfed by the two other puppies the family adopted after bringing Smokey into their home, Smokey chases after the dogs, leaping on their heads and necks. Fortunately, the young dogs seem to sense Smokey’s delicacy and put up with the attention.

Smokey’s conditions require several medications daily. “At first it was a pain to keep up with, because all of them have to be crushed and mixed into his food,” Hess said. “We just weren’t used to that.” Now, the medical regimen has become routine for the household, and they’ve installed a baby gate to make sure one of the puppies doesn’t swoop in and gobble up Smokey’s chow.

Smokey has forged a special bond with Hess’s 13-year-old daughter, Lynn, and scampers down the hall with Lynn when it’s bedtime. He then dives into a nest of stuffed animals on the bed, spending the night there. “You have to really search to find him in there,” Hess said.

Animals with terminal or chronic illnesses can make wonderful pets, said AWLA Director of Marketing and Communications Gina Hardter. Animals who come to the shelter with serious conditions are evaluated by the shelter veterinary staff and treated as necessary. Potential adopters are informed about their prognosis and told about any medications they will need, temporarily or perhaps for the rest of their lives. Fortunately, the AWLA’s community includes many people who are happy to seize the opportunity to help such animals.

When Joyce Acton adopted a 17-year-old cat with several medical conditions from the AWLA, she didn’t know she’d end up spending time daily dragging a “fishing pole” toy across the bed for the cat to play with. “Sadie’s very alert about chasing it,” Acton says. “She always follows it, and when I hold it over the floor, she jumps on her hind legs to catch it.”

Acton, who also has a Himalayan cat and a rescue dog, had heard about the 17-year-old tortoiseshell cat who needed a home



Smokey (left) with his new pack: puppies Biscuit and Stella and senior dog Peanut. Smokey’s on a special diet that helps him cope with kidney disease.



Smokey the Chihuahua has some health challenges, but that doesn’t stop him from enjoying his siblings, including a puppy named Biscuit. Their “parent,” Megan Hess of Alexandria, says Smokey grudgingly shared his spot on the chair with the larger dog.



Seventeen-year-old Sadie acts younger than her age, despite her hospice status.

Sadie, with her dramatic tortoiseshell markings, as she awaited adoption at the Animal Welfare League of Alexandria.



COURTESY OF ANIMAL WELFARE LEAGUE OF ALEXANDRIA

after her owner died and was sent to the AWLA. “I just couldn’t lose the thought of her being at a shelter at that age,” Acton recalled. “When I got in touch about Sadie, the shelter was definite that even though she was older, she would have some time left. I thought, ‘What’s one more kitty in the mix?’”

Acton says that when Sadie walks, she’s a little wobbly, and her arthritis causes her to modify her movements — instead of jumping off the bed, she slides down. She’s on a special kidney diet for stage 2 renal disease, and the veterinarian detected high blood pressure, which may need treatment.

But Sadie’s very distinctive looking, Acton says, almost regal, her fur shining with black and gold tones. And very sweet, sometimes crawling into bed with Acton and the other cat, Marmo, 13, at night. “Sadie likes to get close to your face and then makes a little snort, sort of like breathing you in,” she said.

“Being a senior myself and having all senior pets,” said Acton, “I wanted to give Sadie a chance.”

Celebrating its 75th year, the Animal Welfare League of Alexandria is a local 501(c)(3) organization that operates the Vola Lawson Animal Shelter, Alexandria’s only open-access animal shelter. In response to the global pandemic, the AWLA has established a virtual adoption process and is operating a Pet Pantry that provides pet food and supplies to community members in need. The AWLA also offers assistance to Alexandrians with questions about wildlife and animals in the community. More information can be found at AlexandriaAnimals.org.

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The Market Square Concert will take place on Saturday/Dec. 11 at Market Square in Alexandria.

NOW THROUGH-DEC. 12

Fall Salon. At Torpedo Factory Art Center, 105 N. Union Street, Alexandria. Torpedo Factory Art Center is encouraging people to bring home original work from local artists this fall with major offerings dedicated to making art buying simple and affordable. Target Gallery's next group exhibition, Fall Salon, features 70 works by artists from the greater metropolitan region, all priced at \$1,000 or less.

NOW THRU DEC. 17

MVUC Holiday Shop. Virtual. At 1909 Windmill Lane, Alexandria. Mount Vernon Unitarian Church's 56th Holiday Shop is virtual due to Covid. Vendors include Papazian Design, Late Bloomers, Bead Therapy, Deerhawk Art, The Bathing Raven Candle Company, Recycled bag Lady, Jane's Crafts, Nina Tisara Mosaics. Information: mvuc.org. Visit us at bit.ly/MVUCHoliday.

THE HOLIDAYS IN DEL RAY

Dec. 5 at 6 p.m. Del Ray Tree and Menorah Lighting.
Dec. 6 from 6 p.m.-9 p.m. Shops of Del Ray's Holiday Sip & Shop – shop local and enjoy special promotions and complimentary wine and refreshments.
Dec. 8-19 Twelve Days of Wellness – Twelve days of tips and special promotions focused on self-care during the busy holiday season.
Dec. 11 from 1 p.m. to 6 p.m. 6th Annual Candy Cane Bar Crawl – proceeds benefiting Neighborhood Health.
Dec. 11 from 2 p.m. to 6 p.m. Del Ray Holiday Pop-Up Market at Pat Miller Neighborhood Square.
Dec. 13 from Noon to 1 p.m. DRBA Annual Holiday Luncheon & Star Awards at Lena's.

DEC. 3-19

Holiday Market. At Del Ray Artisans gallery in the Colasanto Center, 2704 Mount Vernon Avenue, Alexandria. Different artists each weekend. Choose from wall art, pottery, photography, jewelry, glass, and much more! Plus, FUNdraising 2022 wall calendars and upcycled tote bags to support Del Ray Artisans. Free admission. First three weekends in December. Fridays 6-9 p.m., Saturdays and Sundays 11 a.m.-6 p.m. Visit the website: <https://delrayartisans.org/event/holiday-market-2021/>

TUESDAY/DEC. 7

Author Henry Gee. 7-8 p.m. Virtual event. At Kate Waller Barrett Branch Library, 717 Queen Street, Alexandria. Join in a discussion with author and "Nature"

senior editor, Henry Gee, on his new book, "A (Very) Short History of Life on Earth," which takes readers on an entertaining 4.6 billion year trip through the history of earth. Visit the website: <https://alexlibraryva.org/event/5750346>

WEDNESDAY/DEC. 8

Alexandria Symphony Orchestra Winter Recital. 7:30 p.m. At The Lyceum, 201 South Washington Street, Alexandria. Join Alexandria Symphony Orchestra musicians Meredith Riley (violin), Daniel Frazelle (clarinet) and Sophia Kim Cook (piano) for an evening of music and conversation. Enjoy a variety of chamber music followed by a post-concert reception with light refreshments. This recital is presented as part of the Adopt a Chair program. Cost: \$40 Adult • \$5 Youth • \$5 Student. Visit the website: <https://alexsym.org/performance/winter-recital/>

SATURDAY/DEC. 11

Market Square Concert. 3 p.m. At Market Square, 300 King Street, Alexandria. Featuring the Alexandria Harmonizers Men's Chorus as it brings fun and good cheer to the holiday season. Enjoy some of the best a cappella singing in the region by a group that never fails to surprise and entertain. A wide variety of seasonal music will be performed and the men promise a spirited and moving experience. Visit the website: www.harmonizers.org.

SATURDAY/DEC. 11

Storytime with Young Historians. 10-10:30 a.m. Virtual Only. Pick up an activity kit at Beatley Central Library before the event. Geared for ages 4-8, but all are welcome. December's theme is Kwanzaa.

SATURDAY/DEC. 11

Christmas in Camp. 12-4 p.m. at Fort Ward Museum, Alexandria. Get in the holiday spirit and learn how Christmas was observed during the Civil War at Fort Ward Museum's annual Civil War Christmas in Camp program. This popular family-oriented event features a patriotic Civil War Santa Claus, reenactors in winter camp settings, period decorations, fort tours, and kids activities. The suggested donation is \$2 per person and \$5 for families.

SUNDAY/DEC. 12

Beethoven's 251st Birthday Celebration. 4 p.m. At Rachel M. Schlesinger Concert Hall, 4915 East Campus Drive, Alexandria. New Dominion Chorale's Artistic

Director Thomas Beveridge will conduct the Chorale and orchestra in Beethoven's "Ode to Joy," from the Finale of Symphony No. 9, the "Kyrie" and "Gloria" from his Mass in C major, and "Creation's Song." Renowned concert pianist Thomas Pandolfi, will perform Beethoven's "Choral Fantasy," composed when Beethoven was 38 years old for solo voices, mixed chorus, orchestra, and piano soloist. Tickets are \$25 for general admission, open seating. Visit www.newdominion.org or president@newdominion.org or call 202- 244-7191.

SUNDAY/DEC. 12

"Simple Gifts" with the Colonial Handbell Ringers. 2 p.m. and 4 p.m. At Alexandria History Museum at The Lyceum, Alexandria. The Colonial English Handbell Ringers are excited to return to ring in the holiday season with you with the holiday concert, "Simple Gifts." The program will include several traditional carols, kids' classics like "Frosty the Snowman," the "Song of Gladness" and "Bell Talk!" The performance is appropriate for all ages and is free.

JAN. 7-29

The "Little Monsters" Exhibit. At Del Ray Artisans Gallery, 2704 Mount Vernon Ave., Alexandria. Features artists' interpretation of their own little monsters—from fantasy to reality, from cute to terrifying. Take a peek at some fun workshops available to you during the exhibit. Open Thursdays 12-6 p.m., Fridays 12-9 p.m., Saturdays and Sundays 12-6 p.m. (Closed January 30). Details at DelRayArtisans.org/event/little-monsters

THE BIRCHMERE

At 3701 Mount Vernon Ave., Alexandria. All shows are at 7:30 p.m., unless otherwise noted. Tickets available at Ticketmaster.com. Contact The Birchmere at 703-549-7500 or www.Birchmere.com.

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SEE CALENDAR, PAGE 19

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HOLIDAY CALENDAR

NOW THRU JAN. 2

Ice & Lights: The Winter Village at Cameron Run, 4001 Eisenhower Ave., Alexandria. Open nightly 5 to 10 p.m.; January 8 to February 27, 2022 (ice skating only), open Saturdays, Sundays and holidays, 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. Featuring an ice rink, multiple new holiday light displays perfect for Instagramming, a retail area, food, music and more. Admission: \$9 for general admission to Village; \$22 for village admission and skating; beginning January 8, \$14 for ice skating; free ages 2 and under. Visit novaparks.com/events/ice-lights

SATURDAYS AND SUNDAYS

Waterfront Art Market. 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. At Torpedo Factory Art Center's waterfront entrance, 1 Cameron St., Alexandria. Visit the Waterfront entrance at Torpedo Factory Art Center to discover new artwork from a rotating lineup of the Art Center's studio artists. Find paintings and photographs to jewelry and wearables, then step inside to browse the three floors of the Art Center for even more original art for purchase. Visit torpedofactory.org

NOW THRU DEC. 31

Jingle Journey. At various locations in the Del Ray neighborhood, Mount Vernon Avenue, Alexandria. With your little ones, go a magical scavenger hunt through Del Ray and piece together the Jingle Journey story. This event is free but requires online registration. Visit <https://www.artsonthehorizon.org/jingle-journey.html>.

BREAKFAST WITH SANTA

Saturdays and Sundays in December. 8-10 a.m. Invite friends and family to celebrate the holidays with Alexandria Restaurant Partners' Breakfast with Santa. Enjoy a festive breakfast menu, Prosecco Bellinis (for adults), takeaway treats for the kids, and a family photo with Santa Claus. (Saturday, 12/4; Sunday, 12/5; Saturday 12/11; Sunday 12/12; Saturday, 12/18; Sunday, 12/19; and Friday, 12/14) and Christmas Eve, Friday, December 24th at the locations below:
Ada's on the River (\$55 adults/\$35 children)
Phone: 703-638-1400
Mia's Italian Kitchen (\$49 adults/\$29 children)
Phone: 703-997-5300
Theismann's Restaurant (\$45 adults/\$25 children)
Phone: 703-739-0777

DEC. 2, 3, 9, 21

Museum Shopping Evenings at Carlyle House. 5 to 8 p.m. At Carlyle House Museum Shop, 121 N. Fairfax St., Alexandria. Enjoy shopping small and local. Stop by the Carlyle House Museum Shop for wonderful holiday gifts. An assortment of Virginia made items, ornaments, soaps, and more are available for purchase. Visit novaparks.com.



The Scottish Christmas Walk Weekend and Parade will be held Dec. 3-4 in Alexandria.



The Alexandria Holiday Boat Parade of Lights will be held Saturday, Dec. 4 in Alexandria.

DEC. 3-4

Scottish Christmas Walk Weekend and Parade. Taste of Scotland: Friday, December 3 at 6:30 p.m. Parade: Saturday, December 4, at 11 a.m. Campagna Center is thrilled to celebrate the 50th Anniversary Scottish Walk Weekend in Alexandria. In 1749, the City of Alexandria was established by Scottish merchants. Dozens of Scottish clans dressed in colorful tartans parade through the streets of Old Town, joined by pipe and drum bands from around the region, as well as terriers and hounds. The weekend kicks off with the Taste of Scotland Scotch Tasting on Friday evening in the Atrium Building. The parade will depart from St. Asaph St. heading north, head east from Queen St., head south from Fairfax St., and head west from King Street, ending right in front of City Hall. Admission: Free to view; \$75 registration fee to march in parade; \$200 and above for Taste of Scotland Scotch Tasting. Visit the website: campagnacenter.org

[Campagnacenter.org](https://campagnacenter.org)

DEC. 3, 4, 10, 11, 19

Mount Vernon by Candlelight. At George Washington's Mount Vernon, 3200 Mount Vernon Memorial Hwy., Mount Vernon. Take a candlelit guided tour and learn about holiday traditions in 18th-century Virginia. Visit with Mrs. Washington and other 18th-century residents of Mount Vernon in a 45-minute candlelit tour of the Mount Vernon estate, followed by a reception. Hear stories of Christmases past from costumed character actors portraying Washington's family, friends, and enslaved or hired staff. Admission: \$36 for adults (ages 12 and up); \$28 for youth (ages 6-11); for members, \$26 for adults; \$18 for youth. Visit the website: mountvernon.org/candlelight

DEC. 3-18

"A Christmas Carol." At The Little Theatre of Alexandria, 600 Wolfe

St., Alexandria. The Little Theatre of Alexandria rings in the holiday season with a return of the classic by Charles Dickens. Ebenezer Scrooge, a miserable, bitter old miser, travels with ghostly guides through Christmas past, present and future to find the true meaning of the holidays. Visit the website: thelittletheatre.com

DEC. 3 TO 5, 10 TO 12, 17 TO 19

Del Ray Artisans' Fine Art & Fine Craft Holiday Market. At 2704 Mount Vernon Ave., Alexandria. Fridays, 6 to 9 p.m.; Saturdays and Sundays, 11 a.m. to 9 p.m. Featuring unique handmade fine arts and crafts from local artists. Choose from wall art, pottery, photography, jewelry, glass and much more from different artisans each weekend. Plus, purchase 2022 wall calendars, cookbooks and tote bags to support Del Ray Artisans. Visit the website: delray-artisans.org

SATURDAY/DEC. 4

Holiday Festival at Torpedo Factory Art Center. 2 to 8 p.m. At Torpedo Factory Art Center, 105 N. Union St., Alexandria. Torpedo Factory Art Center joins the fun on Alexandria's most festive weekend of the year. Santa and Mrs. Claus arrive by fire boat around 3:30 p.m. on the Waterfront. Music fills the halls and the waterfront, beckoning people to browse three floors of open artists' studios. Visit the website: torpedofactory.org

SATURDAY/DEC. 4

Scottish Walk Open House at Carlyle House. 12 to 4 p.m. At Carlyle House, 121 N. Fairfax St., Alexandria. After the Scottish Walk Parade, enter the museum gates and step back in time for a free open house in the spirit of the holiday season. Please note that Carlyle House will letting smaller groups in at a time to allow for social distancing inside the museum. Visit the website: novaparks.com

SATURDAY/DEC. 4

Alexandria Holiday Boat Parade of Lights. Old Town's historic waterfront will shine for the 21st annual Alexandria Holiday Boat Parade of Lights sponsored by Amazon. Parade begins at 5:30 p.m.; Dockside festivities 2 to 8 p.m. at Waterfront Park (1A Prince St.). Parade viewing areas along one mile of the Old Town Alexandria waterfront stretching from Founders Park (351 N. Union St.) to Ford's Landing Park (99 Franklin St.) Boat parade dockside festivities will entertain parade-goers from 2 to 8 p.m. in Waterfront Park at the foot of King Street. Festivities include a pop-up beer garden from Port City Brewing Company. At 3:30 p.m., Santa and Mrs. Claus will arrive by fireboat at the Alexandria City Marina before attending the annual Torpedo Factory Art Center Holiday Festival. Admission: Free; \$ for food/drink and some activities Visit Alexandria-VA.com/boatparade.

DEC. 4-5

"The Nutcracker." 12 p.m. and 5 p.m. At The Rachel M. Schlesinger Center for Performing Arts NOVA Alexandria Campus, 4915 East Campus Drive, Alexandria. Enjoy this exciting Metropolitan School of the Arts production as Clara fights the evil Mouse Queen and her army of fierce mice to save the handsome and kind Nutcracker doll. On this great adventure, Clara will be transported to a fantastical land where she will meet the dazzling Snow Queen, dancing snowflakes, the Sugar Plum Fairy and many more wonderful characters. Visit the website: metropolitanarts.org

DEC. 4, 11, 18

Candlelight Tours at Lee-Fendall House. On the half hour from 5:30 p.m. through 7:30 p.m. At Lee-Fendall House, 614 Oronoco St., Alexandria. Celebrate the holiday season with evening candlelight tours of the Lee-Fendall House decked out in Victorian splendor.

SEE HOLIDAY CALENDAR, PAGE 15

[WWW.CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM](https://www.connectionnewspapers.com)

CALENDAR

FROM PAGE 14

The antique toy exhibit will also be on view. Space is limited to 10 people at a time, and advance reservations are required. Visit the website: leefendallhouse.org

BEGINNING DEC. 5

Old Town Boutique District's Holiday Week. At various boutiques throughout Old Town Alexandria. Head into December with the first-ever OTBD holiday week, kicking off Sunday, December 5. Look out for a kick-off event at Hummingbird, tastings, trunk shows and doorbuster deals, and spend the holidays in the most magical place on earth. Visit oldtownboutiquedistrict.com

SUNDAY/DEC. 5

Town of Herndon's Holiday Arts & Craft Show. 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. At the Herndon Community Center, 814 Ferndale Ave., Herndon. Over 70 artisans and crafts people will exhibit and sell their handmade work at this annual arts and crafts show sponsored by the Herndon Parks and Recreation Department. A variety of handcrafted items and fine art will be on sale at the show including jewelry, Christmas ornaments, decorations, original artwork, baked goods, stained glass, wooden crafts, doll clothes, and much more. Visit herndon-va.gov/recreation.

SUNDAY/DEC. 5

Del Ray Holiday Tree & Menorah Lighting. 6 p.m. Pat Miller Neighborhood Square at Mount Vernon Ave. and E. Oxford Ave., Alexandria. Kick off the holidays with a visit to Del Ray for the annual holiday tree and menorah lighting. Continue the celebration and start your holiday shopping with a stroll down Mount Vernon Avenue, which will be illuminated by thousands of luminarias and feature storefront windows hand-painted for the holidays. Visit visitdelray.com

DEC. 5 AND 12

Holiday Kissing Ball Workshops. 2 p.m. At Lee-Fendall House, 614 Oronoco St., Alexandria. Learn the history behind using greenery to decorate homes for the holidays, then craft your own boxwood kissing ball using fresh cuttings from the Lee-Fendall garden. Note that these workshops will be held outdoors, so please dress appropriately. Admission: \$25 per person (advance registration required). Visit the website: leefendallhouse.org


DEC. 5, 12, 19

Old Town North Holiday Markets. 1 to 3:30 p.m. At Montgomery Park, 901 N. Royal St., Alexandria. In addition to Old Town North's weekly Thursday Farmers Market, the Old Town North Community Partnership will be hosting three holiday markets at Montgomery Park. Explore the festive, European-style markets for hand-crafted gift items and specialty food items. Visit the website: www.oldtownnorth.org

WEDNESDAY/DEC. 8

Winter Recital. 7:30 p.m. at The Lyceum, 201 South Washington Street, Alexandria. Join Alexandria Symphony Orchestra musicians Meredith Riley (violin), Daniel

SEE HOLIDAY CALENDAR, PAGE 16
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HOLIDAY CALENDAR

FROM PAGE 15

Frazelle (clarinet) and Sophia Kim Cook (piano) for an evening of music and conversation. Enjoy a variety of chamber music followed by a post-concert reception with light refreshments. Cost: \$40 Adult • \$5 Youth • \$5 Student. Visit: <https://alexsym.org/performance/winter-recital/>

FRIDAY/DEC. 10

Alexandria's Holiday Concert. 7:30-8:30 p.m. at Del Ray United Methodist Church, 100 E. Windsor Ave., Alexandria. Celebrate the season together again at the always popular – and free – Alexandria Holiday Concert. Conductor Mike Evans and the hometown Alexandria Citizens Band will play your holiday favorites, and ask you to sing along for a few of the pieces. Dress in your holiday sweaters and Santa hats. Free tickets available at: <https://alexandriaholidayconcert.eventbrite.com>

DEC. 10-11

Colonial Holiday Nights at Carlyle House. 5 to 8 p.m. At Carlyle House, 121 N. Fairfax St., Alexandria. Experience the holiday season with Carlyle House focusing on how the Carlyles and their enslaved workers observed the holidays during the 18th century. Stay tuned for updates about live music. Tours offered of the first floor with timed entry on the hour and half hour. Space is limited and reservations are required. All participants including those under the age of 5 must be registered. Visit novaparks.com

SATURDAY/DEC. 11

Del Ray Vintage & Flea Market. 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. At the Parking lot of 1900 Mount Vernon Ave., Alexandria. Don't miss the holiday edition of this monthly outdoor vintage and flea market in the heart of Alexandria's bustling Del Ray neighborhood. Find 50+ vendors offering vintage, antique, thrift and artisan goods at two open-air lots, with free appraisals plus bakery and coffee booths. Visit the website: delrayvintageflea.com

SATURDAY/DEC. 11

A Victorian Christmas. 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. At Lee-Fendall House, 614 Oronoco St., Alexandria. Experience the wonder of the season by visiting the Lee-Fendall House for a family-friendly Victorian Christmas. Enjoy traditional décor, music, seasonal crafts, a visit with Santa, a toy exhibit and more. Visit the website: leefendallhouse.org

SATURDAY/DEC. 11

Christmas Market and Holiday Craft Show. 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. At John Carlyle Square Park, 300 John Carlyle St., Alexandria. John Carlyle Square Park will dress up for the holidays and host more than 80 artisans and crafters, independent consultants and other local small businesses. Check off your shopping list with everything from unique handmade jewelry to organic bath and body products to home décor, holiday ornaments and much more. Visit the website: thecarlylecommunity.com

SATURDAY/DEC. 11

Civil War Christmas in Camp. 12 to 4 p.m. At Fort Ward Museum & Historic Site, 4301 W. Braddock



Sara Yoon, grade 11, Metropolitan School of the Arts student, performs in "The Nutcracker" Dec. 4-5 in Alexandria.

Rd., Alexandria. Get in the holiday spirit with a patriotic Union Santa Claus, reenactors in winter camps celebrating the season, period decorations, soldier-led fort tours and kids' crafting activities. Visit the website: alexandriava.gov/forward

SATURDAY/DEC. 11

6th Annual Del Ray Candy Cane Bar Crawl. 1 to 6 p.m. At various locations along Mount Vernon Ave., Alexandria. Take a break from the bustle of holiday preparations and enjoy specialty drinks and delights at Del Ray restaurants during a neighborhood bar crawl to benefit Neighborhood Health. Enjoy holiday costume contests for individuals and groups, raffle prizes and live music. Trolley transportation will be provided along the avenue. Visit the website: visitdelray.com

DEC. 11, 12, 18, 19

Tall Ship Providence Christmas Story Time. At 12 p.m., 1 p.m. and 2 p.m. At Tall ship Providence, 1 Cameron St., Alexandria. Come aboard the tall ship Providence for a special Christmas story time. This year's tale will be "The Christmas Ship," the true story of the schooner Rouse Simmons, the ship that for years supplied Christmas trees to the people of Chicago by making a dangerous winter crossing of Lake Michigan. This story is sure to delight young sailors ages 5 to 12. Check in at the Gazebo on the G-H Pier next to Founder's Park. Visit the website: tallshipprovidence.org

DEC. 17 AND 19

Holiday Concerts. Dec. 17 at 7:30 p.m. at Rachel M. Schlesinger Concert

Hall, and Sunday, Dec. 19 at 3 p.m. at George Washington Masonic Memorial. Under the direction of Music Director James Ross, the program will include excerpts from Handel's Messiah and familiar holiday carols and melodies. For Friday's performance, dancers from BalletNova take the stage with selections from Tchaikovsky's Nutcracker interspersed with music from Ellington's Nutcracker Suite. All children attending will be provided with sleigh bells for a surprise audience participation activity. Visit www.alexsym.org or call (703) 548-0885.

DEC. 17-18

Christmas Illuminations at Mount Vernon. 5:30 to 8:30 p.m. At George Washington's Mount Vernon, 3200 Mount Vernon Memorial Hwy., Mount Vernon. Kick off the holiday season with fireworks overlooking the Potomac River. Tour the Mansion to learn about holiday celebrations during Washington's time with live 18th-century music. See the lantern-lit historic area, the Mansion aglow in beautiful amber light, and the Upper Garden and Greenhouse dazzling in blue and lavender with moving wintry light patterns. Admission: \$60 adult/\$38 youth with mansion tour; \$58 adult/\$36 youth without mansion tour; for members, \$50 adult/\$28 youth with mansion tour; \$48 adult/\$26 youth without mansion tour. Visit mountvernon.org/illuminations

DEC. 17-18

Civil War Christmas at Carlyle House. 5 to 8 p.m. At Carlyle House, 121

SEE HOLIDAY CALENDAR, PAGE 17

LA Musician Got Her Start in Mount Vernon

FROM PAGE 11

is able to improvise and immediately render on the spot what the conductor/composer demands during a rehearsal or recording session," said Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra Executive Director Ben Cadwallader. "Julie and her colleagues at LACO are



Julie Gigante started her musical aspirations growing up in Mount Vernon.

among the most talented musicians in the country, and we are incredibly fortunate to have an ensemble comprised of such brilliant performers," he said.

The orchestra has provided soundtracks for more than 2,000 movies since Julie has been with them, and the last three Star Wars films were part of that, with composer John Williams leading the way musically. On a few occasions, director Stephen Spielberg showed up at the recordings, tweaking it for the movie. "He's very specific," Gigante said.

"While the film & TV re-

cording industry and classical music are tremendously challenging and competitive fields, Julie's music career has thrived," Cadwallader said.

The Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra was impacted by the pandemic and adapted to the situation by launching Summer-

fest in 2020, and then Summerfest 2021 to stream music to thousands. On Nov. 13, they started playing live again and their season will run until May 15, 2022. They did play one live show last summer at the Walt Disney Concert Hall.

Julie loves the live audiences, and the first show back in front of a live audience stood out to her. "It was lovely to play, I'm thankful we can," she said.

She does have fond memories of her life in Mount Vernon though. "I really miss Virginia, love Northern Virginia, love California as well," she said.



Julie Gigante is front and center on a famous mural showcasing Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra visible to millions of daily commuters on the 110 freeway near downtown Los Angeles.

HOLIDAY CALENDAR

FROM PAGE 16

N. Fairfax St., Alexandria. Discover how Christmas was celebrated when the Green family lived at Carlyle House and the Mansion House Hotel was being used as a Civil War hospital. Stay tuned for updates about live music. Tours offered of the first floor with timed entry on the hour and half hour. Space is limited and reservations are required. Visit the website: novaparks.com

FRIDAY/DEC. 17

Alexandria Symphony Orchestra Presents: Home for the Holidays. 7:30 to 9:30 p.m. At The Rachel M. Schlesinger Center for Performing Arts NOVA Alexandria Campus, 4915 East Campus Drive, Alexandria. This December, the ASO brings back the joy of live holiday music that audiences yearned for in 2020. ASO will accompany dancers from BalletNOVA with selections from Tchaikovsky's Nutcracker. Alexandria Choral Society joins the ASO for choruses from Handel's Messiah and will lead the audience in popular holiday carols. Visit the website: alexsym.org

SUNDAY/DEC. 19

Alexandria Symphony Orchestra Presents: Home for the Holidays. 3-5 p.m. At George Washington Masonic Memorial, 101 Callahan Dr., Alexandria. This December, the ASO brings back the joy of live holiday music that audiences yearned for in 2020. ASO will accompany dancers from BalletNOVA with selections from Tchaikovsky's Nutcracker. Alexandria Choral Society joins the ASO for choruses from Handel's Messiah and will lead the audience in popular holiday carols. Visit the website: alexsym.org

FRIDAY/DEC. 24

Waterskiing Santa. 1 p.m. At Waterfront Park (1 King St. and 1A Prince St.), Alexandria City Marina (0 Cameron St.), Founders Park (351



Ruth Judson / Nov 2019

A Home for the Holidays -- Holiday Mixer will be held Dec. 17 in Alexandria.

N. Union St.) and Point Lumley Park (1 Duke St.) Gather along historic Alexandria's Potomac River waterfront for a spectacular show by Waterskiing Santa and his merry crew. Come early to see the pre-show (on jet skis). Visit waterskiingsanta.com

FRIDAY/DEC. 31

Olde Year's Day at Torpedo Factory Art Center. 1 to 5 p.m. At the Torpedo Factory Art Center,



Christmas Illuminations at Mount Vernon will be held Dec. 17-18 in Mount Vernon.

105 N. Union St., Alexandria. The whole family can celebrate the close of 2021 at Torpedo Factory Art Center. Find hands-on activities, meet artists working in their studios, and get inspired for 2022. Visit the website: torpedo-factory.org

FRIDAY/DEC. 31

First Night Alexandria. 12 p.m. to midnight. At various locations throughout Old Town

Alexandria. Experience the region's signature New Year's Eve festival of music and more. Enjoy live performances throughout the day and into the evening for kids, teens, adults and seniors. New events include a kick-off at Market Square and a "Battle of the Buskers," leading up to the midnight countdown and fireworks finale over the Potomac River. Visit the event website for a full schedule of events. Visit the website: firstnightalexandria.org.

THE CONNECTION Alexandria Gazette Packet Mount Vernon Gazette Potomac ALMANAC

Children's & Teens' Connection 2021



During the last weeks of each year, this newspaper devotes its pages to the creativity of local students and children. The results are always remarkable. It is a keepsake edition for many families. Even readers without children of that age spend time admiring and chuckling over the issue. The annual Children's Connection (including Children's Gazette and Children's Almanac) is a long-time tradition.

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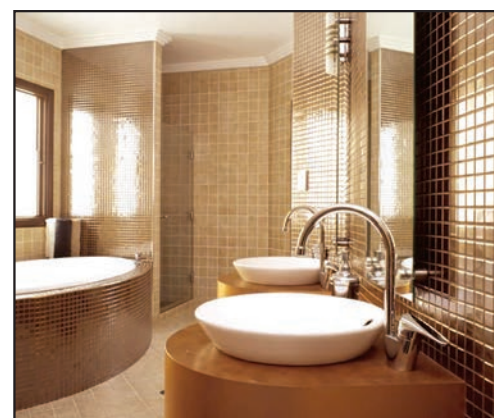
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Teen Film Makes It to the Alexandria Film Festival

A story about friendship, schoolwork and assumptions was shot in Old Town.



The girls take a break in between scenes. "The Homework Club," landed a spot in the 2021 Alexandria Film Festival.

BY MIKE SALMON
THE CONNECTION

There were four teenage girls embarking on a school project that turned out to be a small part of what they really learned about each other and relationships in general. This was the plot of a film called "The Homework Club," created by 15-year-old Hallie Crawford that landed a spot in the 2021 Alexandria Film Festival.

"We don't really know that we have things in common until we get to know each other," Hallie said.

Set on the streets and waterfront area of Old Town, Alexandria, the short film involved the girls doing the project as a punishment of sorts for doing something in school, similar to the brat-pack classic "The Breakfast Club," from the 1980s. "I love that movie," said Hallie. The girls went from the

waterfront to the Torpedo Factory, where they remembered an experience years ago when they were younger. An argument ensued, and the fledgling actresses gave stress on camera their best shot.

The cast included Sophia Webster, who is a sophomore at West Potomac High School, Jasmine Williams, who is home schooled, and Charlotte Benson who is a classmate of Hallie's at Bishop Ireton. The co-producer was Ella Schmutz, the screenwriter was Olivia Dedham, and Hallie's father, Brett Crawford, did some of the camera work and editing.

At school, the Cappies Theater Award program was announced, and it included an award for films too, so that gave Hallie the inspiration to make a movie and possibly submit it for a Cappie. "That got me really interested," she said.

Before shooting last winter, they planned it out, and held a casting call to find the rest of the cast,



A boom mike and jackets were needed items on the set. "The Homework Club," was created by 15-year-old Hallie Crawford.

and pulled it all together. It was a lesson in perseverance, her father Brett Crawford said. "A fun experience but a challenging one," he said.

For one thing, they started filming in February, but as they got into spring, flowers bloomed and trees got leaves, so the background was changing. This presented a challenge since the plot is all set in one day. "This required some creative editing," he said. "It was something that everyone enjoyed," he added.

There was a dance scene to some non-descript music so there weren't copyright issues, and arguments and thoughts that were ex-

pressed covertly, but all worked out in the end. One thing they didn't have was a stage director that ran around with a storyboard, mapping out the scenes. The cell phone worked for that. "We watched the dance scene on our phones," Hallie said.

Hallie noticed a film festival was happening in the city, so she looked into it. "I got excited about it," she said.

Cell Phone Cinema

Technology makes filmmaking more accessible to everyone these days, since just about everything can be captured with the cell phone. "Filmmaking is no longer



Dad helps shoot a scene out on the river. "The Homework Club," created by 15-year-old Hallie Crawford landed a spot in the 2021 Alexandria Film Festival.

a Hollywood-studio-only enterprise," noted Patti North, executive director at the Alexandria Film Festival.

"That's one of the reasons the film festival exists—to give independent filmmakers an audience for independent films. Hence our motto 'celebrating independents,' North said.

Although Hallie has achieved a lot by being in the Alexandria Film Festival at the age of 15, another teen named Julia Hocker was in the festival a few years ago. Hocker's first film was a winner in the Burke & Herbert Bank "Lights, Camera, Save" competition, and she went on to produce others.

Aladdin, Now 14, Is Back

In 1787, George Washington paid 18 shillings to bring a camel to Mount Vernon to entertain his guests. Now you can come to Mount Vernon and meet Aladdin, the Christmas Camel through Jan. 7.

When Aladdin hears the familiar hum of the engine and tires rolling across the gravel path, the 7-foot-tall camel stands up and hurries to the fence. Having stayed at Mount Vernon every holiday season since he was eleven months old, the camel knows the approaching vehicle is bringing him food. Lisa Pregent is a

member of the Mount Vernon livestock team and the resident camel connoisseur. She has worked at the estate for 21 years and has taken care of Aladdin since his first visit.

Pregent and the livestock team begin their day long before visitors arrive. They feed the 1400 pound camel at 7:30 a.m. and again later in the day.

Aladdin has lived in Virginia his entire life and is well acclimated to the cold weather. "I brought Aladdin home at 3 months old and took on the 'mothering' duties of bottle feeding and play teaching," said Jennifer Cossette, Aladdin's owner. As part of

the Pony to Go family, Aladdin lives in Berryville, Va. with an emu and miniature horse. "He seems to enjoy the company and always comes to the fence to greet visitors," said Cossette. "He definitely has the personality of a dog, coming when you call him and eager to give kisses."

The rest of the year, Aladdin entertains at birthday parties and weddings. Although he is not the camel in Geico's "Hump Day" commercial, he has made special appearances at Geico events.

Visit Aladdin at Mount Vernon during the holiday season, until Jan. 7.



BULLETIN BOARD

FROM PAGE 6

Join Friends' Board. Those who care about mental health, the Alexandria community, and collaborating with fellow residents to make sure the City's most vulnerable residents have a chance to thrive, then consider joining the Board of Friends of the Alexandria Mental Health Center. The Friends Board is an all-volunteer group of residents that oversees the administration of one of Alexandria's top mental health charities. Friends has no paid staff, so Board members, working on average 10 hours per month, share the day-to-day work needed to accomplish its goals. Interested candidates should email FriendsOfAMHC@gmail.com.

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.

CALENDAR

FROM PAGE 13

Sat. 11: Southside Johnny & The Asbury Jukes \$49.50
Sun. 12: "Seasons Greetings from the Ozone" Bill Kirchen & Too Much Fun with Lost Planet Airmen #1 Dr. John Tichy - A Honky Tonk Holiday & Tribute to Commander Cody \$39.50
Tue. 14: Shaun Cassidy \$55.00

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.

ALIVE! offers numerous programs that aid low-income families in Alexandria that rely on volunteers: monthly food distributions, furniture, houseware and emergency food deliveries, and community food drives. Individuals, families and groups are encouraged to participate. Students can earn community service hours by participating. Visit www.alive-inc.org/volunteer.htm or contact the Volunteer Coordinator at volunteers@alive-inc.org.

Volunteer Drivers Needed. Drivers needed by the American Cancer Society to take cancer patients to treatment in Northern Virginia. To volunteer, call 1-800-227-2345 or go to cancer.org/drive.

RSVP, a volunteer network for seniors seeking service opportunities in and around Fairfax County, Arlington County and the City of Alexandria, offers a wide array of opportunities for volunteers 55 and older. RSVP volunteers enjoy flexible schedules, free accident and liability insurance while serving, optional mileage and meal reimbursement and are invited to volunteer group projects and social gatherings. To sign up for an upcoming orientation, email Carly Hubicki at chubicki@volunteerfairfax.org or call RSVP at 703-403-5360. To learn more about RSVP, visit www.rsvpnova.org.

Mentors Wanted. Two creative programs that help transform the lives of Alexandria's preteens are seeking volunteer mentors. SOHO, which stands for "Space of Her Own," and "Space of His Own," serves vulnerable fifth graders in Alexandria. The programs pair men and women with youth in need of positive adult role models, to help support and guide youth in making

SEE BULLETIN, PAGE 21



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Thu. 16: Carbon Leaf \$39.50
Fri. 17: Carbon Leaf \$39.50
Sat. 18: Tom Papa \$35.00 (Resched from 3/26/21. All 3/26/21 tickets honored) SOLD OUT!
Sun. 19: Luther Re-Lives Holiday Show featuring William "Smooth" Wardlaw \$45.00
Mon. 20: Puddles Pity Party \$49.50

Sun. 26: MAYSA Holiday Show \$69.50
Wed. 29: Hank Williams Tribute w/ Cathy Fink & Marcy Marxer, Robin & Linda Williams, Phil Wiggins, Patrick McAvinue, Mark Schatz \$29.50
Thu. 30: Bela Dona Band \$35.00
Fri. 31: New Years Eve with The Seldom Scene, Eastman String Band, & Wicked Sycamore -8pm- \$49.50

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Obituary

Obituary

Cyril Desmond Calley



Cyril Desmond Calley, known as “Dez” Calley to many, passed away on November 18, 2021, after sustaining major injuries from a car accident on November 10th. He was 90 years old, and is pre-deceased by this wife, Elizabeth Lula Calley. Born on November 9, 1931 in Jersey City, New Jersey, he was raised there until the age of eight, when he moved to Bayonne, New Jersey. He was an only child until age 14, when he was joined by his younger brother Bob Bozzo. Upon graduating from Bayonne Senior High School in 1949, he attended Casey Jones School of Aeronautics at La Guardia Airport, then enlisted in the Air Force, where he was initially stationed at Lackland Air Force Base in San Antonio, Texas, and then sent to Parks College in St. Louis to further study Aeronautics, learning the intricacies of designing, manufacturing and repairing aircraft.

Dez was then stationed at Chanute Air Force Base in Illinois and Sewart Air Force Base in Tennessee, where he also played on the air force football team. In January, 1953, he was sent to Frankfurt, Germany and then Pisa, Italy for an eighteen month tour. Upon return to the U.S., he continued to be stationed at Air Force bases in Oklahoma and Pope Air Force base in Fayetteville, North Carolina, until his discharge in February, 1955. Dez then continued his studies at Parks College, a part of St. Louis University, graduating with an Aeronautical Engineering degree in 1957.

At the same time Dez was completing his studies, he met Elizabeth “Betty Lou” Soule. They were married in 1956 and had the first of eight children in 1957. Upon graduation, Dez worked briefly for McDonald Aircraft Corporation, then relocated to Arlington, Virginia to work for the U.S. Navy. In his spare time, he applied for and was accepted to Georgetown University to attend Law School from 1958 through 1962. At that point, he shifted focus to practicing law and secured a job at the Securities and Exchange Commission in Washington, then as Assistant City Attorney in Alexandria, Virginia, from 1964 through 1976, followed by election three times as City Attorney from 1976 through 1986.

After many years in public service, Dez Calley, Bud Hart and Herb Karp formed a partnership practicing law in Alexandria, Virginia, focusing on land acquisition and development. One of the most notable cases handled by the firm was the acquisition and development case of the Alexandria Railway, Potomac Yards. Eventually, Dez and Betty Lou sold their house in Alexandria and moved to Myrtle Beach, South Carolina, where they remained until their recent deaths. Cyril Dez Calley, along with his wife Betty Lou, who were married for nearly 65 years, leaves a legacy of focusing on love of family, including eight children: Susan (Edmund) of Orlando, Florida; William (Suzanne) of Virginia Beach, Virginia; Robert (Joelyn) of Elkton, Maryland and Safety Harbor, Florida; Mary (Dexter) of Bullock, North Carolina; Michael (Susana) of Middleburg, Virginia; Elizabeth (Tony) of Haymarket, Virginia; John (Jennifer) of Richmond, Virginia; and Daniel (Nicola) of County Londonderry, Northern Ireland, as well as thirteen grandchildren: Michael, Ryan, Wesley, Emily, Taylor, Christopher, George, Shannon, Edward, Nicholas, Georgia, Erin and Jack. Dez’s brother Bob (Merci), of Wyoming, Delaware, and their children Daniel, Amy and Laura, also have been close to the immediate family.

A funeral Mass will be held at the Basilica of St. Mary Catholic Church, located at 310 South Royal Street, Alexandria, Virginia at 2 pm Friday, December 3, 2021, followed by a graveside service at St. Mary’s Cemetery at 1000 S Royal Street, Alexandria, Virginia 22314, and a reception afterward. The family welcomes all who would like to participate at either location.

Legals

Legals



NOTICE FOR BID

BIDS IN THE FORM OF A PROPOSED AGREEMENT ARE INVITED BY THE CITY OF ALEXANDRIA, VIRGINIA, FOR THE GRANT OF A NON EXCLUSIVE FRANCHISE PERMITTING FRANCHISEE(S) TO USE THE PUBLIC RIGHTS-OF-WAYS IN THE CITY FOR THE DESIGN, CONSTRUCTION, INSTALLATION, MAINTENANCE, REPAIR, UPGRADE, REMOVAL AND OPERATION OF A BROADBAND NETWORK FOR OFFERING INTERNET ACCESS AND RELATED INFRASTRUCTURE IN THE CITY.

THE TERMS AND CONDITIONS FOR THE FRANCHISE ARE ATTACHED TO THE ORDINANCE AND ARE ON THE CITY’S WEBSITE <https://www.alexandriava.gov/Broadband>

THE TERM OF THE FRANCHISE IS NEGOTIABLE BUT SHALL BE FOR AN INITIAL TERM OF 20 YEARS WITH UP TO 3 ADDITIONAL EXTENSIONS OF 5 YEARS EACH.

ALL BIDS ARE TO BE SUBMITTED IN WRITING IN THE FORMAT OF THE FRANCHISE AGREEMENT FOR THE USE OF THE PUBLIC RIGHTS-OF-WAYS TO PROVIDE BROADBAND INTERNET SERVICE ATTACHED HERETO AS EXHIBIT A AND ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTS REQUIRED BY TERMS AND SPECIFICATIONS. THE BID DOCUMENTS ARE TO BE SENT TO LAURA TRIGGS AT 301 King Street Room 4300, Alexandria VA 22314 or to laura.triggs@alexandriava.gov.

An expert is someone who knows some of the worst mistakes that can be made in his subject and how to avoid them.
—Werner Heisenberg

WELLBEING



If you welcome only people who are vaccinated to the event, be sure to say so up front in the evite or general email invitation, suggests Linda McKenna Guly, Ph.D.

Safe and Conflict-free Holiday Cheer

Celebrating the holidays with both vaccinated and unvaccinated friends and family.

BY MARILYN CAMPBELL
GAZETTE PACKET

Egg nog, yule logs and champagne cocktails are making a reappearance this year as in-person holiday parties resume and virtual gatherings go into hiatus. Joining these celebrations might be guests who have not been fully vaccinated. Asking for proof of vaccination at the door does little to create a festive mood, but celebrating safely is a priority this season.

“There are several ways to enjoy holiday traditions and protect your health, said Kurt Larrick, assistant director, Arlington County Department of Human Services. “The best way to minimize COVID-19 risk and keep your family and friends safer is to get vaccinated if you’re eligible.”

From keeping a space well ventilated to holding celebrations outdoors if the weather permits, Larrick says that it is possible to maintain a semblance of safety at celebrations where there are some in attendance that have not been fully vaccinated.

Taking layered precautions provides an extra level of safety, said Lucy H. Caldwell, Director of Communications for the Fairfax County Health Department. “Including wearing a mask indoors when you’re around those not in your household. ... Getting booster shots if appropriate and staying home if you’re sick,” added Caldwell.

Hosting smaller gatherings this year can also help minimize the risk of COVID-19.

“You might choose to wear a mask, regardless of the level of transmission, if a member of your household has a weakened immune system, is at increased risk for severe disease, or is unvaccinated,” he said. “If you are gathering with a group of people from multiple households and potentially from different parts of the

country, you could consider additional precautions like taking COVID-19 tests ... in advance of gathering to further reduce risk.”

Having conversations to discuss whether guests have been vaccinated can be fraught with apprehension and discomfort. “Establish contact with all guests in a general way, and say you are looking forward to them joining you for a holiday party, dinner, or open house,” said Linda McKenna Guly, Ph.D., Professor of Psychology at Marymount University. “In that general invitation, like an Evite or group email, state something like, ‘Sadly, we are not out of the woods yet. Everyone in our home is expected to be vaccinated.’”

Be clear about your decision and avoid defending or debating your stance on vaccinations. “Issue the invitation as soon as possible, giving people time to respond or at least consider your requirement,” said Guly. “In other words, no last-minute battles.”

“It’s important to make sure unvaccinated friends or family don’t feel like they have a scarlet letter on their chest,” added Allyson Bohlke, LCSW, a Bethesda therapist who specializes in conflict resolution. “Show compassion. You don’t want anyone to feel judged or shunned. Remember that they have the right to make their own choices and those choices should be respected.”

Treating all guests as equals will help quell any dissonance between those who’ve been vaccinated and those who have not. “At an office party, for example, you can take everyone’s temperature before they enter the venue,” said Bohlke. “If it’s

financially and logistically doable, you can give everyone a rapid test before they enter. Regardless of their vaccination status, asking those who are positive or have a temperature to leave is perfectly reasonable.”

Include both vaccinated and unvaccinated guests in a brainstorming session to determine the best way to address the safety concerns, suggests McLean family therapist Angela Lott. “This is especially true for office parties. Ask attendees to offer suggestions on addressing the issues of those who are vaccinated and are uncomfortable around those who aren’t, and vice-versa” she said. “It’s easy to get a buy-in from all guests if they feel like they have some input into the decision.”

BULLETIN BOARD

FROM PAGE 19

healthy choices and succeeding in school and in life. Visit www.spaceofherown.org and www.spaceofhisown.org. For more information on how to become a SOHO mentor, contact Sarah Maroney at sarah.maroney@alexandriava.gov or phone at 703-746-4687.

Farmer's Market Volunteers Needed.

To volunteer for the Farmer's Markets, email Brian Morreale, brianmorreale@gmail.com

Arts and Crafts Festival. Volunteers are needed on June 10 to help with the event including: greet and check-in vendors, children's area, clean up and tear down and beer tent. Shifts are available between 7 a.m. and 7 p.m. Visit www.volunteeralexandria.org/ for more.

SUPPORT GROUPS

Postpartum Support Virginia sponsors a free, bi-monthly support group for women suffering depression and/or anxiety during pregnancy or in the first year following childbirth. Meets on the 2nd and 4th Wednesdays of each month at Inova Alexandria Hospital, Health Education Center, rooms 1-2, 4320 Seminary Road. Contact co-moderator Susan Doyle at suzjdoyle@gmail.com or 571-403-0673.

The Parkinson's Disease Support Group of Alexandria meets the 1st Wednesday of each month at 2 p.m. at the Hollin Hall Senior Center, Room 109, 1500 Shenandoah Road. All Parkinson's patients and caregivers are welcome.

The Caregiver Support Group is facilitated by the Alexandria Department of Community and Human

Services Division of Aging and Adult Services. Meetings are held the first Wednesday of each month at the Adult Day Services Center, 1108 Jefferson St., 4-5:30 p.m. Participants are full- or part-time caregivers providing care locally or long distance to a family member or friend. Participants share their experiences, provide support for each other and receive resources to assist them with caregiving. The next Caregiver Support Group meeting is June 7. For more information or to register, contact Jennifer Sarisky at 703-746-9999 or email DAAS@alexandriava.gov.

FACE Center Support Groups provide parents with a space to share their daily parenting frustrations and triumphs while offering new strategies for helping parents to cope, build positive parent-child relationships and best support their children's learning.

- ❖ Support Group in English, every Monday, 6-7:30 p.m. at ARHA Main Building, 401 Wythe St.

- ❖ Support Group in Spanish, every Wednesday, 6-7:30 p.m. at Community Lodgings Brookside Center, 614 Four Mile Road.

Registration not necessary. A light dinner and childcare services provided free. Contact Krishna Leyva at 703-619-8055 or krishna.leyva@acps.k12.va.us for more.

Divorce Workshop for Women. Second Saturday of each month, 9 a.m.-1 p.m. at Hilton Alexandria Old Town, 1767 King St. The workshops are designed to provide education on the legal, financial, family and personal issues of divorce in a logical, yet compassion-

ate way. The workshop fee is \$25. Visit www.novasecondsaturday.com for more.

ONGOING

Backflow Preventer (BFP) Assistance Program. The City of Alexandria has reinstated its sewer Backflow Preventer (BFP) Assistance Program for homeowners in designated areas that historically experience basement back-ups or flooding. The program reimburses homeowners for up to 50 percent of the cost of installing a BFP device by a licensed plumbing contractor, up to a maximum of \$2,000. The current program period is through Dec. 31, 2019. Alexandria homeowners should call the Department of Transportation and Environmental Services at 703-746-4014 or visit www.alexandriava.gov/tes.

Robust Walking. Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays at 9 a.m. at Mount Vernon Recreation Center, 2701 Commonwealth Ave. Free 55+ robust walking 1-hour exercise class (with chair exercise option). No class on holidays. Contact jjkingconsulting@yahoo.com.

Seeking Donations. Computer CORE, which is dedicated to helping low-income adults become computer literate is seeking donations. Visit www.computercore.org/contribute.

Senior and Job Programs. 8:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m. Queen of Apostles Church, 4650 Taney Avenue, Alexandria. St. Martin de Porres Center offers senior and job placement programming Monday through Friday at the parish. Email Kathryn Toohey, ktoohy@ccda.net.

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Not Getting Ahead of Myself



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

For the moment, I'm going to roll with the punch and not slip on any slope, real or imagined. The slope, metaphorically referred to, is my calcium level. A measure in my monthly lab work which needs to be normal-ish for me to continue receiving a bone-strengthening injection (Denosumab), a parallel treatment to my daily thyroid cancer medication. The reason I even have to get this shot is, you guessed it, it's a side effect of my thyroid cancer drug. In early Nov., and the following week's re-test, the calcium level remained abnormally low. As of this result, my monthly treatment has been delayed until early Dec. That means, I will have skipped a month of treatment; in my mind never a good thing. Whether skipping one dose like this could actually cause irreparable damage, I certainly don't know. But I have to admit, it worries the hell out of me, and at this late stage of my stage-IV cancer life; with a re-diagnosis to consider, I don't need anything else to worry about.

I mean, for all I know, the shot is actually working, and not receiving my every-four-week injection might put me at some kind of risk. The most significant risk being that if the calcium level does not improve, I might have to stop the treatment, or possibly, reduce the dosage of the pill I take for the thyroid cancer, a dosage which has been reduced twice already. This has always been a concern of my oncologist: the side effects of the treatment for side effects derailing the treatment for the underlying cancer. And generally speaking, untreated cancer doesn't usually resolve itself in the patient's favor. A side effect, in and of itself, is a problem, but more so the problem, its potential impact on your primary cancer treatment/protocol. I can't help but wonder if I'm, after nearly 13 years, finally heading down that dusty trail. However, I'm not going to go there yet, right?

Where I hope I'm going, as I've gone before, is the sweet spot, so to speak. The spot being where the dosage is high enough to combat the cancer but low enough to sustain one's quality of life. This has been a guiding tenet of my oncologist's treatment plan for me. He's always been sensitive to the demands of this patient on chemotherapy, and even on occasion, was not uncomfortable suggesting that I take a break from treatment and try to enjoy life while I felt good enough. I never took him up on the offer as I remained hopeful (and tried not to think too deeply about what he was inferring; that my life was going to be getting worse/more demanding and that ultimately, I would have to stop my treatment and eventually succumb to the disease. Instead, I just chose to continue the treatment and not think about the unpleasant possibilities).

Though this 'sweet-spot issue has only occurred recently, my concern of it happening has existed since my original diagnosis. I remember asking the oncologist about this medication-having-to-be-stopped issue at our original Team Lourie meeting in late Feb., 2009, he acknowledged the possibility. (As did I; remembering the circumstances surrounding my late mother-in-law's death from cancer.) I wouldn't say I've anticipated it, exactly, but I have been fearful of its inevitability. Nonetheless, until recently, it was hardly a blip on my radar; more like it was tucked away in a filing cabinet. Well, it's here now. And so are you regular readers.

No worries, really. This is life in the cancer whirl. Up and down and all around. Between office appointments, referrals, lab work, various scans, X-Rays, medicine/side effects, the sleepless nights and agonizing waits for results, unless you find a way, emotionally, to balance all the news, good or bad, the actual cancer is the least of your problems. Coping becomes the most of it.

I can't say any of it has been fun, but occasionally there's been a wry smile. Cancer is a very serious business. Contributing to its seriousness seems counter-productive. I've never been one to make a bad situation worse. And I'm certainly not going to start now.

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

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NEWS

December Is Puppy Mill Awareness Month

By SUSAN LAUME

THE CONNECTION

The Commonwealth of Virginia recognizes December as "Puppy Mill Awareness" month. Legislation, enacted unanimously in 2020, sought to call attention to continuing problems in the pet trade that often bring dogs which are sick, underdeveloped, have genetic deformities or behavioral defects, including poor socialization, to the Commonwealth's consumers through puppy stores or on-line sales.

In designating Puppy Mill Awareness Month, legislators resolved that "Virginians be encouraged to observe the month by supporting efforts to raise awareness of puppy mills, support rescue organizations, and promote responsible dog breeding and responsible pet adoption."

Del. Kaye Kory, (D- 38), co-chair of the General Assembly animal caucus, indicates that Virginia's animal laws have mostly kept puppy mills from operating in the Commonwealth. Puppy mill dogs bred in other states often find their way for sale here in puppy stores and on-line.



PHOTOS BY SUSAN LAUME

Delegate Kaye Kory (D-38th) chairs the Virginia General Assembly Animal Welfare caucus and has sponsored several bills to protect animals.

What is a 'puppy mill'? Kory explains, "It's commonly understood that puppy mills are facilities that breed many dogs at the lowest expense and dogs aren't treated well; are even treated cruelly. Some conditions are such that it hurts your heart and turns your stomach. Banning puppy mills is the way this country should go."

Where do puppy stores get their dogs? Kory says, "In the past, this has been largely puppy mills ... That was the reason legislation we've worked on required certification of health; to protect dogs and owners, and detect puppy mills."

Kory advises that it's good to avoid puppy mills. She adds that as long as there is consumer demand, it will perpetuate puppy mills. She suggests "instead to adopt rescue dogs and cats, or seek out reputable small breeders ... but please visit rescues more than once before you purchase."



Dogs at a Virginia puppy store sourced from out of state puppy mills before seizure by animal control for medication violations (May 2019)



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Harborside | \$2,150,000

This 4-bedroom, 3.5-bath treasure with triple exposures has the flow of an elegant single-family home. Family room has floor-to-ceiling French doors that lead to a 2-level outdoor entertaining area with a peek of the Potomac. Two deeded parking spaces. 52 Wolfe St
Colleen Coopersmith 703.338.2930
www.ColleenCoopersmith.com



OPEN SAT 12/4 & SUN 12/5, 2-4PM

Old Town | \$695,000

Two-bedroom, two-bath unit in sought-after 900 North Washington Street Condominiums. Convenient location to Metro and airport plus all the restaurants and shops of Old Town. Two assigned garage parking spaces convey. 900 N Washington St #303E
Courtney DeVries 703.795.8311
www.courtneyd.com



OPEN SUN 12/5, 1-3PM

Warwick Village | \$675,000

Classic 3-bedroom, 2-bath townhouse located on a quiet cul-de-sac. Kitchen features stainless & granite. Spacious living/dining room. 3 upper level bedrooms & full bath. Lower level family room & full bath. Private deck. Walk to "The Avenue." 2943 Sycamore Street
Jen Walker 703.675.1566
www.JenWalker.com



Hollin Hall Village | \$655,000

One level living at its finest. Adorable 3-bedroom, 2-bath home with a breezy and fluid flow throughout. Living room with wood-burning fireplace. Stainless and granite kitchen. Large multi-purpose room overlooks expansive and flat backyard. 7819 Yorktown Drive
Tracy Dunn 571.212.3658
www.tracybdunn.com



OPEN SUN 12/5, 2-4PM

Whale's Tail | \$450,000

Good east-west exposure! Two-bedroom, one-bath end unit with wood-burning fireplace, hardwood floors, extra storage, bike storage just across the charming courtyard. Nestled among shops, restaurants, and many historic sites. 220 N Saint Asaph Street #12
Sarah King 703.864.5050
www.saraheking.com



Belle View | \$239,000

Beautiful 1-bedroom condo features gleaming parquet floors, new light fixtures, a new kitchen with stainless appliances, granite counters, updated cabinet doors & new flooring. Previously renovated bath with heated flooring. Freshly painted. 6603 E Wakefield Drive #A1
Julian Burke 703.867.4219
www.JulianBurke.com



Old Town \$1,590,000

This elegant 4-bedroom, 3-bath home is filled with light and historic character. Original circa 1840 details include hardwood floors, doors and hardware, 2 staircases, and 3 fireplaces. Stunning parlor, handsome dining room, fabulous chef's kitchen, and brick patio. 202 N Royal Street

Babs Beckwith 703.627.5421
www.BabsBeckwith.com



Old Town \$1,700,000

Investment Opportunity! Historic townhouse features 4 residential units (currently fully rented) and 2 off-street parking spaces. Three 1-bedroom units & one 2-bedroom unit with wood floors throughout, 2 screened porches, 2 gas fireplaces, large brick patio, & roof-top deck. 812 Prince Street

Charlene Schaper 703.217.3666
www.cschaper.com



Arlington \$930,000

Stunning 3-bedroom, 3.5-bath townhouse walking distance to Ballston Metro, Ballston Common, restaurants, and shopping. Fully fenced front yard, open floor plan with morning and evening light, rooftop terrace, and 2-car garage. 4338 N Henderson Road

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