



Shirley Miles, Virginia Attorney General Jason Miyares, and incoming Deputy Attorney General Monique Miles celebrate at the inaugural festivities Jan. 15 in Richmond.



Former Alexandria vice mayor Bill Cleveland, left, is joined by his wife Ruth and Jack Delnegro at the inauguration of Governor Glenn Youngkin Jan. 15 in Richmond.

PHOTOS CONTRIBUTED



Corinna da Fonseca-Wollheim, left, speaks with Rabbi Jack Moline following her presentation of "The Bus to Buchenwald" Nov. 7 at Agudas Achim Congregation. da Fonseca-Wollheim's grandfather perished in the Nazi concentration camp in 1944.

JANET BARNETT/GAZETTE PACKET

## Power Shift Locals celebrate Youngkin inauguration.

BY JEANNE THEISMANN  
GAZETTE PACKET

Several Alexandria residents took a road trip to Richmond Jan. 15 as Northern Virginia businessman Glenn Youngkin took the oath of office as the 74th Governor of the Commonwealth of Virginia.

"What an incredible experience it was to witness the inauguration," said former Alexandria Vice Mayor Bill Cleveland. "We knocked on a lot of doors last year to help make this happen."

Youngkin, a former private equity executive, became the first Republican governor in 12 years. History was made when Lt. Gov. Winsome Sears and Attorney General Jason Miyares were inaugurated, with Sears becoming the first woman of color to serve in a state-wide office, and Miyares as the first Latino to serve in his role.

"It was fantastic being there to see Winsome Sears, Jason Miyares and Glenn Youngkin make history," Cleveland said. "Voters chose the perfect combination – a diverse team of people who know what they are doing. They are the people's choice."

The inauguration took place on the steps of the State Capitol in front of crowds estimated to be 6,000 deep. Among the many in attendance was Alexandria civil rights attorney Monique Miles, who was named by Miyares as Deputy Attorney General for Government Operations and Transactions.

Youngkin's inauguration, themed



Northern Virginia businessman Glenn Youngkin waves to the crowd after being sworn in as the 74th Governor of the Commonwealth of Virginia Jan. 15 in Richmond.

"Strengthen the Spirit of Virginia Together," was attended by notable national Republican leaders including RNC Chairwoman Ronna McDaniel, former Speaker of the House Paul Ryan, former head of the Heritage Foundation Kay Coles James, former EPA administrator Andrew Wheeler and former Secretary of Transportation and wife to Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell, Elaine Chao.

During the campaign, the 55-year-old Youngkin ran on a "Day One" game plan, which included eliminating Virginia's grocery tax, firing the parole board and creating new charter schools among other pledges.

"It's Day One. Let's get to work," Youngkin said in his inaugural remarks. "And no matter who you voted for, I pledge to be your advocate, your voice, your governor."

Youngkin's victory in November over former Governor Terry McAuliffe marked a seismic shift for Virginia Republicans, just a year after President Joe Biden won the state by 10 points. The party now controls the governor's mansion, the lieutenant governor's office, the attorney general's office and the House of Delegates.

"It was just a wonderful experience," said Cleveland. "It was so great to be there and experience the camaraderie and the celebrations. It was stupendous."

**"We knocked on a lot of doors last year to help make this happen."**

— Former Alexandria vice mayor  
Bill Cleveland

## 'The Bus to Buchenwald' da Fonseca-Wollheim is featured speaker at Agudas Achim.

BY JEANNE THEISMANN  
GAZETTE PACKET

Corinna da Fonseca-Wollheim, most notably known as music critic for the New York Times, was the featured speaker at the annual Rabbi Jack Moline Lecture Series Nov. 7 at Agudas Achim Congregation.

da Fonseca-Wollheim is the granddaughter of Hermann da Fonseca-Wollheim, a doctor in Hamburg, Germany. In 1944 Hermann was sent to the Buchenwald Concentration Camp for being too friendly to Ukrainian forced laborers. He perished there that same year.

da Fonseca-Wollheim's presentation was titled "The Bus to Buchenwald" and detailed the daring journey her grandmother took to Buchenwald to try to recover her husband's ashes and learn more about the details of his death.

The annual lecture series honors Jack Moline, the congregational Rabbi who served Agudas Achim for 27 years. He retired in 2014, becoming Rabbi Emeritus. The series presents speakers who are making important contributions to American Jewish society.

[www.agudasachim-va.org](http://www.agudasachim-va.org)



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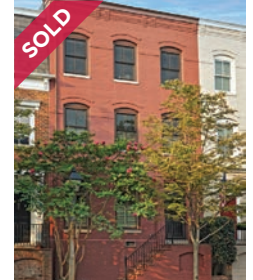
521 Duke St



18 Wolfe St



316 South Fayette St



104 Queen St



466 South Union St



639 South Saint Asaph St



611 Queen St



320 South Lee St\*



208 South Saint Asaph St



517 North Saint Asaph St



309 North Pitt St



610 South Lee St\*



10 Bakers Walk #401



404 Oronoco St



621 North Saint Asaph #405\*



312 South Columbus St



64 Wolfe St



308 South Columbus St\*



209 South Lee St



11 Wilkes St



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Republicans are hoping to spend \$150 million to create 20 new charter schools, but they'll be facing opposition in the Senate Education Committee, which has nine Democrats and only six Republicans.



PHOTOS BY MICHAEL LEE POPE/GAZETTE PACKET

One issue where Democrats and Republicans might find common ground is banning political contributions from public utilities.

## Era of Divided Government

Mask mandates, anti-racist curriculum and campaign finance on the agenda.

BY MICHAEL LEE POPE  
GAZETTE PACKET

Virginia is under new management, and it's a sharp turn from how things have worked in the commonwealth for the last two years. Republicans are now in control of the Executive Mansion and the House of Delegates. But Democrats still control the state Senate, ushering in a new era of divided government. The 2022 General Assembly session has just started, and already Democrats and Republicans are fighting over everything from mask mandates and anti-racist curriculum to marijuana legalization and voting rights.

"It's quite dysfunctional from a policymaking standpoint," said Jennifer Victor, associate professor of political science at George Mason University's Schar School of Policy and Government. "It's a very antagonistic form of politicking that is unfortunately quite common across state legislatures, and it's one of the unfortunate consequences in the partisan and polarized era that we're living through."

On the campaign trail, Republican candidate Glenn Youngkin often talked about what he called his "day-one agenda," things like banning critical race theory from schools and getting rid of mask mandates. Shortly after his inauguration as governor, he signed executive orders to deliver on both of those campaign promises although the details of how that might actually work remain unclear. Critical

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Gov. Glenn Youngkin began his day one agenda by issuing executive orders to ban critical race theory from public schools and allow parents to decide whether their children wear masks in schools.

race theory isn't actually taught in Virginia schools, and many local school board members reject the idea that a governor can dictate covid protocol to school divisions.

"Alexandria City Public Schools (ACPS) will continue to abide by the health and safety guidelines of the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and the Alexandria Health Department (AHD) and continue to require all individuals to wear masks that cover the nose and mouth in ACPS schools, facilities and buses," wrote Superintendent Gregory Hutchings in an email to parents last weekend.

**EDUCATION IS AT** the top of the agenda for the new administration, although the new governor will likely hit a roadblock when

his initiatives face the cold hard reality of the Senate committee system. During a speech to a joint assembly earlier this week, Youngkin announced he wanted to spend \$150 million to create 20 new charter schools. But the Senate Education Committee has nine Democrats and only six Republicans. So getting a bill expanding charter schools to the Senate floor would require two Democrats on the committee to cross over and vote with the Republicans, which seems unlikely.

"If you look at some of the charter schools, you're going to find that some of them are mostly students who are African American," said Sen. Louise Lucas (D-18), chairwoman of the Senate Education Committee. "I don't like sepa-

rating students. I think there ought to be a blend, and I think students ought to be able to have interaction among students other than students who look just like them."

Although critical race theory is not taught in Virginia schools, Republicans have been critical of the anti-racist teacher training that emerged after the murder of George Floyd in May 2020. During his speech to the joint assembly this week, Youngkin said his executive order was intended to prohibit what he called "inherently divisive concepts in schools, including critical race theory." Members of the Legislative Black Caucus say they're skeptical that the new governor is interested in making sure students understand some of the more unsavory chapters of race relations in Virginia history.

"If you don't want the truth taught, just say that's what you don't want," said Sen. Mamie Locke (D-2). "If you are going to stand there and say you want to teach the good, the bad and the ugly of Virginia history and then sign an executive order saying we are going to ban critical race theory, you're being a hypocrite."

**CAMPAIGN FINANCE REFORM** may be one issue where members of opposing parties can come to some kind of agreement. For example, Democrats and Republicans joined forces to reject a bill that would have put limits on campaign contributions. Currently, Virginia has no limits on the amount of money that donors can contrib-

ute. Some senators were interested in setting some kind of limit, and two separate bills would have set a ceiling of \$20,000 or \$25,000. A bipartisan coalition emerged to kill that idea.

"Contributions are speech," said Sen. Jill Vogel (R-27). "When you set up artificial barriers to speech people find ways around it."

Virginia and 10 other states had no limits on contributions from individuals in state races in 2019, according to the National Conference of State Legislatures.

On the campaign trail, Youngkin said he would disrupt entrenched interests in Richmond. He might have an opportunity to do that if lawmakers are able to put together a bipartisan coalition to prohibit campaign contributions from public utilities. Sen. Chap Petersen (D-34) is working with Del. Lee Ware (R-65) to ban campaign cash from public utilities, including Dominion Energy, which has long been a major force in Virginia politics and a generous donor. Petersen and Ware say it's a bad idea to have a utility that is regulated by the state to have so much influence over lawmakers.

"I can get a portion of my caucus. I can't get them all. I certainly can't get the ones who are more senior in leadership," said Petersen. "But I need -- we need, the commonwealth needs -- the new governor to take a firm stand on this issue and my hope is that will change the dynamic."

A spokeswoman for the governor said Youngkin will review all legislation that comes to his desk.



# Thank You Del Pepper honored for 36 years on Council.

BY JEANNE THEISMANN  
GAZETTE PACKET

**R**ecently retired councilwoman Del Pepper was honored at a Dec. 17 tribute at the George Washington Masonic Memorial for her 36 years of elected service to the City of Alexandria.

Mayor Justin Wilson led the honors and presented Pepper with a plaque. He was joined by former mayors Jim Moran, Kerry Donley and Bill Euille.

Pepper was first elected to City Council in 1985 and three times served as vice mayor. Her tenure makes her the longest serving public official in Alexandria.

Originally from Nebraska, Pepper got her start in local politics while still in elementary school. She went door-to-door campaigning for her father, who was a longtime member of the Omaha City Council. She later managed a regional Democratic headquarters during Lyndon B. Johnson's presidential campaign.

Pepper and her husband, F.J. Pepper moved to Alexandria in 1968. They settled in the West End, where they still reside today.



Former councilwoman Del Pepper, front, stands with Mayor Justin Wilson, left, and past mayors Jim Moran, Kerry Donley and Bill Euille on Dec. 17 at the George Washington Masonic National Memorial.



Mayor Justin Wilson, right, presents Del Pepper with a plaque honoring her 36 years on City Council at a tribute Dec. 17 at the George Washington Masonic National Memorial.

## Miles Joins Youngkin Administration

### Local civil rights attorney named Deputy Attorney General.

BY JEANNE THEISMANN  
GAZETTE PACKET

**C**ivil rights attorney Monique Miles, a 2015 candidate for Alexandria City Council, has been selected by Virginia Attorney General Jason Miyares to serve as Deputy Attorney General for Government Operations and Transactions as part of the administration of Governor Glenn Youngkin.

"I am excited and honored and look forward to serving the people of the Commonwealth of Virginia," Miles said in a statement.

Former vice mayor Bill Cleveland believes the state will be well served with Miles' appointment.

"I am so grateful to our governor for picking a person with such integrity," Cleveland said. "Monique has worked extensively overseas and at home with people in need and has an incredible work ethic."

In addition to her candidacy for City Council, Miles was recognized by the Alexandria Chamber of Commerce as a "40 Under 40" honoree in 2019. She has served on the board of local nonprofit Community Lodgings, the D.C. Metro Chapter of the Christian Legal Society, the Metropolitan Washington Employment Lawyers Association, Legal Services of Virginia Corporation, and the Virginia State Bar Young Lawyers Conference.

Additionally, in December 2021, Virginia Business Magazine recognized Miles in its 22nd edition of the Virginia Business Legal Elite Report as one of Virgin-



Alexandria civil rights attorney Monique Miles has been appointed as Deputy Attorney General for Government Operations and Transactions as part of the administration of Governor Glenn Youngkin.

ia's Best Lawyers in the Labor and Employment Law category. For 2018 - 2020, the National Black Lawyers honored Miles with their Top 40 Under 40 recognition.

Miles has served as founder and managing partner of Old Towne Associates, P.C. since 2013. Her legal experience includes

civil and appellate litigation, administrative law, election law, employment and labor law, business law, nonprofit law and constitutional law.

"Monique is not afraid to fight for what is right for all citizens," Cleveland added. "She will be a fantastic Deputy Attorney General."

PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

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Submit civic/community announcements at [ConnectionNewspapers.com/Calendar](https://www.connectionnewspapers.com/Calendar). Photos and artwork welcome. Deadline is Thursday at noon, at least two weeks before the event.

#### WEDNESDAY/JAN. 26

Community Listening Session. 6-8 p.m. Virtual. Join AlexRenew for the next RiverRenew Community Listening Session. Get a behind-the-scenes look at ongoing construction activity, direct insight from our team, and all the most up-to-date information on the RiverRenew Tunnel Project. Visit the website: <https://www.riverrenew.com/community/community-listening-sessions>

#### DUKE STREET TRAFFIC MITIGATION PILOT PROJECT

On January 3, the City of Alexandria launched its Duke Street Traffic Mitigation Pilot. This three-month pilot is intended to measure the impacts of signal timing changes on Quaker Lane and Duke Street, with the goal of reducing cut-through traffic on local streets. The project will provide longer green lights for drivers on Quaker Lane and Duke Street, with shorter green lights on neighborhood streets. Initially, drivers should expect to experience additional delays and longer backups on neighborhood streets, such as West Taylor Run Parkway and Cambridge Road.

#### PLASTIC BAG TAX TAKES EFFECT

Beginning January 1, 2022, a five-cent tax on single-use disposable plastic bags will go

into effect for grocery stores, convenience stores and drug stores in the City of Alexandria, Arlington County and Fairfax County. The Alexandria City Council, Arlington County Board and Fairfax County Board of Supervisors adopted a plastic bag tax in September 2021 as a step to reduce the negative environmental impacts of single-use plastic bags.

To support the transition, the jurisdictions have been working closely with the Northern Virginia Regional Waste Management Board to align outreach, education, timelines and common language for the localities to ensure consistency and clarity. A regional informational website contains answers to frequently asked questions and multilingual outreach materials for retailers. Over the past few months, reusable bags have also been distributed, along with information about the plastic bag tax, to recipients of Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and Women, Infants and Children (WIC) benefits.

The tax would not apply to: plastic bags intended for reuse; plastic bags solely used to wrap, contain or package certain items (ice cream, meat, fish, poultry, produce, unwrapped bulk food items or perishable food items); plastic bags for dry cleaning or prescription drugs; or multiple plastic bags sold in packages for garbage, pet waste or leaf removal.

Collected taxes may be used for environmental cleanup; providing educational programs designed to reduce environmental waste,

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## NEWS

# Seeking Leaders of Tomorrow

## Applications open for Boys and Girls State.

BY JEANNE THEISMANN  
GAZETTE PACKET

**H**igh school juniors in the Alexandria area are invited to apply for scholarships to attend the annual Boys State and Girls State programs to be held later this summer.

The American Legion Post 24 and Auxiliary Unit 24, sponsor of the scholarships for rising senior students, are currently accepting applications from local area students for the program.

Selected delegates are provided with full scholarships for attendance and application is open to all Alexandria area public school, homeschool and private school students.

Virginia Boys and Girls State of the American Legion are week-long programs focused on governmental affairs held at a selected Virginia University. Participants must have completed their junior year of high school and have at least one semester of high school remaining to participate.

Candidates for Virginia Boys/Girls State are selected through an interview process conducted by Post 24 (Boys State) and Unit 24 Auxiliary (Girls State). Candidates are evaluated based on their leadership abilities, interest in government, service to others and academics.

Girls State will be held at Longwood Uni-



Jaidyn Forrest, Virginia Girls State Governor at the 2021 American Legion Department Fall Conference in Williamsburg.

versity June 19-25. Application deadline for Girls State is Jan. 26. Boys State will be held at Radford University and applications for both programs are available at [www.valegionPost24.com/youth-programs](http://www.valegionPost24.com/youth-programs).

Delegates who attend Girls and Boys State and meet eligibility criteria may also be considered for special university scholarships for undergraduate studies.

More information is available at [www.vaboyssstate.org](http://www.vaboyssstate.org) and [www.vagirlsstate.org](http://www.vagirlsstate.org).

PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

**The Substance Abuse Prevention Coalition of Alexandria thanks these retailers for helping to prevent underage drinking. These businesses successfully passed alcohol compliance checks conducted in December 2021 by the Alexandria Police Department.**

7-11	Thank you!	Harris Teeter
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3023 Duke St.	4580 Duke St.	<b>Jano Mart</b>
800 Franklin St.	<b>CVS</b>	4105 Duke St.
1025 W. Glebe Rd.	1680 Duke St.	<b>Mart-11</b>
2 S. Jordan St.	3130 Duke St.	301 N. Ripley St.
3412 Mt. Vernon Ave.	503 King St.	<b>Rite Aid</b>
30 S. Reynolds St.	433 S. Washington St.	4515 Duke St.
331 S. Whiting St.	<b>EOS Convenience</b>	<b>Whole Foods</b>
<b>24 Hour Express</b>	<b>Store</b>	1700 Duke St.
4007 Mt. Vernon Ave.	140 S. Reynolds St.	



Business owners and employees can be penalized up to \$2,000 and/or have their ABC license revoked by selling alcohol to an underage customer, a violation of Virginia's minimum-age alcohol laws.

Learn more at [PreventItAlexandria.org](http://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.



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## A New Day in Richmond and Many Challenges

BY SEN. SCOTT SUROVELL

**A**s the Virginia General Assembly begins its 2022 session, my 13th, I look forward to working with Gov. Glenn Youngkin, the new House of Delegates leadership and other legislators to reach a consensus on the best direction for our state.

While I did not support them, I attended Governor Youngkin's inauguration and swearing in, along with the swearing in of Lieutenant Governor Winsome Sears and Attorney General Jason Miyares.

### Budgets Reflect Priorities

No matter what happens with other bills, one thing we are required to accomplish this session is to pass a budget. Thanks to federal pandemic funds, Virginia has significant excess revenues in our two-year budget cycle that ends on June 30, 2022. A little over half of those revenues will be appropriated to the "Rainy Day Fund" and to mandatory water quality improvement.

In the last session, we also reserved about \$1.5 billion of \$4.5 billion from the American Rescue

Plan Act in case we had a pandemic resurgence. We are limited to spending these funds on five categories of expenditures including water and sewer infrastructure and maintenance of outdoor assets. I am proposing to spend some of these

funds to (1) eliminate our state parks' \$225 million maintenance backlog, (2) install a public water line at Pohick Bay Regional Park to replace well service and water and sewer infrastructure, and (3) to construct permanent, outdoor restrooms at all Fairfax County public high schools.

The new two-year budget also projects significant new revenues. The Governor is proposing a series of ill-advised tax cuts. First, he proposes to cut our current two percent grocery tax that is dedicated solely to education and would cost Fairfax County Public Schools about \$80 million per year. The Governor also reiterated his call to suspend the \$0.08 per gallon gas tax increase enacted in 2021. His proposal would save the average Virginia driver about \$4 a month,



Surovell

but interrupt dozens of transportation projects currently planned.

### My Bills

I am carrying around 27 bills. One creates a joint study to review the state's response to the COVID-19 pandemic across all levels of government so we can learn from our mistakes and improve our system going forward. I am also carrying legislation to study multi-family housing regulation to ensure that Virginia's inspection systems and condo association policies are sufficiently strong to avoid the types of collapse we saw in Florida or partial collapse that occurred at River Towers near Belleview in Fairfax County in 2016.

The Biden Administration recently signed an agreement at the Edinburgh, Scotland, global summit to reduce methane emissions in the U.S. by 75 percent. Methane is 85 times more potent than carbon dioxide in trapping energy. I have a bill to incentivize Virginia's natural gas companies to capture loose methane from landfills or waste composting operations and

sell it to consumers to remove it from the atmosphere and curtail these greenhouse gasses that are warming the planet.

Cycling and pedestrian deaths have been increasing across the country, Virginia and our local community. At one point in 2020, three pedestrians were killed in Fairfax County one day. One major cause of these problems is that the infrastructure in our part of Northern Virginia was designed for vehicles and not pedestrians. While the legislature has provided significant new funding for transportation infrastructure, the focus has traditionally largely been for vehicle projects, with pedestrian or cycling improvements considered secondarily. I have introduced a bill to require a fixed percentage of funds to be devoted to pedestrian and cycling infrastructure going forward.

Virginia's Supreme Court significantly revised state legislative districts including the district I currently represent. I will discuss this in a future column.

If you have any feedback, please contact me at [scott@scottsuovell.org](mailto:scott@scottsuovell.org) and follow my work on Facebook and Twitter. It is an honor to serve as your state senator.

## Measuring Performance by Deeds Not Words

BY SEN. ADAM EBBIN

**T**he Virginia General Assembly gavelled into session on Wednesday, Jan. 12 with a new House majority, and Saturday saw a political change in all three statewide offices: Governor, Lieutenant Governor, and Attorney General. The Executive branch in Virginia holds vast authority over the structure and direction of our government — including the appointment of cabinet secretaries and deputy secretaries, all agency heads, and 3,300 board and commission members, strong veto powers, and the ability to choose how to enforce and enact many of our laws and regulations. The weight of gubernatorial power is hefty in Virginia, and vested with a Constitutionally mandated single four-year-term, must be mastered and wielded quickly if an Administration is to successfully accomplish the promises made on the campaign trail.



Ebbin

when he was inaugurated as our 74th Governor. The weather on Saturday was a frigid 30 degrees and was followed on Sunday with an icy winter storm. Whether that signals a slippery start for Governor Youngkin is yet to be seen, but, as for any

new governor, the learning curve is steep and the stakes high for their upcoming term. I will work hard to find areas where we find common interests, and think we will be able to agree on many things, particularly on much needed increases to school funding, systemic improvements at the Virginia Employment Commission, and support for our veteran community.

I was heartened by the unifying and optimistic themes Governor Youngkin outlined in his inaugural speech. However, I will be measuring Youngkin's performance by deeds, not words.

Just hours after his inclusive address, the Governor signed eleven divisive executive orders including attempts to ban the teaching of critical race theory in K-12 schools, banning local authority to mandate the wearing of facemasks for

students' health in schools, and withdrawing Virginia from the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative, which caps carbon outputs and provides much needed flooding resiliency funding to our community. These actions are in direct violation to our Commonwealth's laws and the principle of separation of powers, and a sharp about face from the lofty rhetoric of his swearing in.

In fact, Article VIII of the Virgin-

ia Constitution vests the power to set curricula with the Board of Education, so the banning of critical race theory, a topic that has never been taught in our K-12 schools, is both unconstitutional and unproductive to improving public education. Under Virginia law local school boards must adhere to CDC guidance, which recommends the wearing of masks in schools to protect those not yet vaccinated. The

SEE MEASURING, PAGE 7

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## News

# Measuring Performance

FROM PAGE 6

Executive does not rule by fiat in Virginia.

Where necessary, I plan to provide a wake up call for proposals dangerous to our common safety, prosperity, and welfare. On climate change, any proposals to divert public education dollars from public schools, and attacks on reproductive rights, however, the Democratic Senate majority will serve as a firewall against the forces of short sighted partisan policies.

Challenges are coming — for sure — especially with a new House majority and new Speaker at the dais. Todd Gilbert (R-Shenandoah) took the gavel on Wednesday with a slim (52-48) majority. With differing parties controlling each house of the legislature, the number of bills passed and signed may winnow from the close to 2,000 we passed in 2020 down to the hundreds. The reconciliation of the proposed two-year budget will be more contentious and prolonged than it has been in recent years, when one party held power over the “Money Committees” in each body. But among the strife and bustle of session, I look forward to continuing representing the 30th Senate District’s interests in committees and on the floor.

Already I have heard from hundreds of constituents who are vehemently opposed to the cabinet nomination of former President Trump’s EPA director Andrew Wheeler as the next Secretary of Natural Resources. A former coal lobbyist, Wheeler used his federal authority to undermine years of bipartisan environmental progress. In his first year as the EPA Administrator, Wheeler worked to restrict the use of scientific data in agency rule-making, rolled back federal efforts to clean up coal ash, reversed Clean Water Act protections, ignored EPA scientists’ calls to ban asbestos, weakened a rule to cut the potent greenhouse gas

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ALEXANDRIA GAZETTE PACKET ♦ JANUARY 20-26, 2022 ♦ 7



# Striking a Chord Christ Church installs new pipe organ.

By JEANNE THEISMANN  
GAZETTE PACKET



The newly completed Harrison & Harrison pipe organ at Christ Church in Old Town.



The inside of Christ Church is filled with construction supplies as assembly of the new pipe organ begins in December of 2021.



Dozens of crates filled with the components of a Harrison & Harrison pipe organ from England line the walkway of Christ Church in Old Town after clearing customs in November

PHOTOS BY  
JANET BARNETT  
GAZETTE PACKET



Music director Jason Abel talks about the installation process of the new pipe organ at Christ Church.



Pipe organ components are ready for installation in Christ Church.



The pipe organ installation process took place over several weeks in November and December at Christ Church.



Framing for the new pipe organ is in place at Christ Church.

we are in a flurry of preparations for its debut."

According to Abel, the dedicatory recital will be held on Sunday, Jan. 30, and will feature international performer Nathan Laube, professor of organ at the Staatliche Hochschule für Musik und Darstellende Kunst in Stuttgart, Germany.

"The organ will be known as The Bromley Organ, in appreciation for the generous donation made by long-time Christ Church parishioners Cap and Marilyn Bromley which made this project possible," Abel added.

The previous pipe organ at Christ Church was installed some 40 years ago.

"The new Bromley organ will not only bring beauty in our musical offerings but also bring beauty to our physical space," said congregant Dave Riggs. "I believe the Bromley organ is a new element to enrich our worship services."

A pipe organ produces sound by driving pressurized air through the organ pipes selected from a keyboard. Each pipe produces a single pitch and pipes are provided in sets called ranks, each of which has a common timbre and volume throughout the keyboard compass.

Said parishioner Riggs, "I believe that the new Bromley organ demonstrates two things.

First, that this congregation is keeping faith with the generations that came before us to preserve Christ Church, against tremendous odds through almost 250 years. And second, that we have faith that Christ Church will continue to be a vibrant and important part of Alexandria for generations to come."



## NEWS

# Peter Reistad Wins Post 24 Oratorical West Potomac junior advances to District 17 competition.

BY JEANNE THEISMANN  
GAZETTE PACKET

**P**eter Reistad, a junior at West Potomac High School, took first place Jan. 9 in the American Legion Post 24 Oratorical contest to advance to the District 17 competition slated for Jan. 23 in Fairfax.

Held at Post 24 in Old Town, Reistad's presentation topic described the importance of the Judicial Branch of the U.S. government as defined within the U.S. Constitution. His second speech, a 3-5 minute assigned topic speech, was on Amendment XXV, Section 4, which provides for the powers of the Presidency to transfer to the Vice-President in the event that the President cannot perform his duties.

First held in 1938, the American Legion Oratorical aims to develop knowledge and appreciation for the U.S. Constitution among high school students. The contest is open to girls and boys in grades 9-12 who each write their own 8-10-minute prepared oration. Contestants memorize and deliver their speech on any aspect of the Constitution in front of an audience of multiple judges, timekeepers and other attendees.



West Potomac High School junior Peter Reistad, center, is congratulated by American Legion Post 24 Commander Henry Dorton on taking first place in the Legion's Oratorical contest Jan. 9 in Old Town as contest coordinator Patrick Hawley applauds. Reistad advances to the District 17 competition Jan. 23 in Fairfax.

Nationally, more than \$203,500 in scholarships are awarded each year with the overall national contest winner receiving a \$25,000 scholarship. Each state winner receives a \$2,000 scholarship which can be used at any college or university in the United States.

Applications for next year's Post 24 contest, tentatively scheduled

for Jan. 8, 2023, will open in August and early entry is recommended.

Reistad now advances to the American Legion District 17 Contest at Post 177 in Fairfax.

For more information about the Oratorical Speech Contest or other youth programs, contact: VAPost24Oratorical@gmail.com.

JOHN BORDNER/GAZETTE PACKET

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JOHN BORDNER/GAZETTE PACKET

**SNOW DAZE** - A combination of snow and ice covers the Potomac River along the Alexandria waterfront at the Washington Sailing Marina Jan. 16. The third measurable snowstorm of the year resulted in three inches of powder on Alexandria streets before turning to sleet and freezing rain, bringing the 2022 snow total to 15 inches. The National Weather Service is predicting up to 4 inches for later this week.

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# ENTERTAINMENT

## Hot, Hot, Hot

Chili contest benefits Girls State.

BY JEANNE THEISMANN  
GAZETTE PACKET

**A**mber Berry took top honors with her white chicken chili in the American Legion Auxiliary Unit 24 chili cook-off Dec. 11 at Post 24 in Old Town.

The chili competition was the centerpiece of the Army-Navy game day festivities and served as a fundraiser for the Auxiliary's 2022 Girls State Program.

"A very special thanks to everyone who helped out to make this event a huge success," said Unit 24 representative Amy Soller. "Everyone who came out to enjoy the game and the chili, and those who donated graciously, helped us raise funds to send young women to this season's Girls State experience."

The event enabled Unit 24 to provide five local rising seniors scholarships for Girls State, which takes place in June.

"Unit 24 expresses our deepest thanks to our donors and community for graciously supporting this important educational opportunity," Soller added.

[www.valegionpost24.com/unit-24-auxiliary](http://www.valegionpost24.com/unit-24-auxiliary)

**"Everyone who came out .. and donated graciously helped us raise funds to send young women to this season's Girls State experience."**

**—American Legion Auxiliary representative Amy Soller**

**Amber Berry celebrates winning the American Legion Auxiliary Unit 24 chili cook-off Dec. 11 at Post 24 in Old Town. Berry took top honors with her white chicken chili recipe.**



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

### CALENDAR

#### JAN. 7-29

Little Monsters Exhibit. At Del Ray Artisans Gallery in the Colasanto Center, 2704 Mount Vernon Ave., Alexandria. At Del Ray Artisans gallery features artists' interpretation of their own little monsters — from scary to funny. Check out related workshops. Gallery hours are Thursday 12-6 p.m., Friday 12-9 p.m., Saturday 12-6 p.m., and Sunday 12-6 p.m. Details at: <https://DelRayArtisans.org/event/little-monsters>

#### NOW THRU JAN. 23

Post-Grad Residents Exhibition. At Target Gallery, Alexandria. Target Gallery, the contemporary exhibition space at Torpedo Factory Art Center, celebrates the work of the Post-Grad Resident artists—Eliza Clifford, Lindsey Kircher, Danny Varillas, and Nicole Wandera — in 2021 Post-Grad Residency. The exhibition will be on view through Sunday, Jan. 23, 2022. Target Gallery is in Studio 2 in the Art Center, located at 105 N. Union St., Alexandria.

#### JAN. 16-22

Prohibition Week. 10 a.m. to 9 p.m. At The Loft at Lena's, 401 E. Braddock Road, Alexandria. Speakeasy style dining experience Velvet & Rye, which is the latest seasonal concept from The Loft at Lena's, announces Prohibition Week Jan. 16-22. Velvet & Rye will celebrate the 101st anniversary of Prohibition — or more fittingly, the birth of speak-easies and bootlegging — with a week of activities include



**Alexandria Restaurant Week will be held Jan. 21-30, 2022 in Alexandria neighborhoods.**

Prohibition Cocktail Classes, trivia, a Roaring '20s Cocktail and Costume Party, and chances to win cocktail-related prizes. Visit the website: <https://www.theloftatlenas.com/>

#### JAN. 21-30

Alexandria Restaurant Week. At neighborhoods throughout Alexandria, including Old Town, Del Ray, Carlyle and Eisenhower, and the West End. For 10 days and two weekends, nearly 70 restaurants in Alexandria will offer a \$35 prix fixe dinner for one or two people. Special menus are available in-person at all participating restaurants, many with heated outdoor dining available. Fifty restaurants will also offer to-go options in addition to in-person meals. The online menu

book makes it easy to browse delicious selections from dozens of Alexandria eateries and enjoy special menus at some of Alexandria's winterized dining destinations or from the comfort of your own home. Visit [AlexandriaRestaurantWeek.com](http://AlexandriaRestaurantWeek.com).

#### JAN. 21-30

Annual Fooduary Event. At National Harbor, Md. Restaurants will offer pre fixe menus including Succotash, Bond 45, Fiorella Italian Kitchen & Pizzeria, Rosa Mexicano, Grace's Mandarin, and Mason's Famous Lobster Roll. MGM National Harbor's restaurants Voltaggio brothers, Diablo Cantina and TAP Sports Bar. Visitors are invited to enjoy options via dine-in, carryout or delivery. Visit [www.nationalharbor.com/fooduary/](http://www.nationalharbor.com/fooduary/).

[bor.com/fooduary/](http://bor.com/fooduary/).

[sans.org/event/snowy-trees/](https://sans.org/event/snowy-trees/)

#### SUNDAY/JAN. 23

GTMS Virtual Trivia. 7 p.m. Via Zoom. Warm Up with a Virtual Trivia Night to Benefit Gadsby's Tavern. Grab your favorite beverage and settle down for some trivia fun (with prizes!) that will test your knowledge of American history, the Presidents, and George Washington in honor of his birthday in February. Cost: \$20.00 per household. Purchase your ticket at [https://www.gadsbystavernmuseum.us/events\\_1/trivia-night](https://www.gadsbystavernmuseum.us/events_1/trivia-night)

#### SUNDAY/JAN. 23

"Virtual Winter Lecture: Native Shrubs for Birds." 1:30-2:30 p.m. At Green Spring Gardens, 4603 Green Spring Road, Alexandria. Anne Little, co-founder of the Virginia Bluebird Society and founder of Tree Fredericksburg, will introduce you to native trees and shrubs that help sustain our bird populations. Learn how creating the proper habitat in our yards and public spaces can help slow the decline in the bird population in North America. Register for Native Shrubs for Birds. call 703-642-5173, or visit Green Spring Gardens.

#### FRIDAY/JAN. 28

Snowy Trees in Watercolor Workshop. 6-8 p.m. Via Zoom. Learn to use many watercolor techniques such as wet in wet, salt texture, lifting, splattering and more, as you paint a very colorful snowy tree scene. For details and to register: <https://delrayartisans.org/event/snowy-trees>. Cost: \$50 Del Ray Artisans member / \$55 Non-members. Website: <https://delrayartisans.org/event/snowy-trees/>

#### 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](http://www.Birchmere.com).

#### January

Thu/Fri. Jan. 20 & 21: Keb' Mo' Band with special guest The Brother Brothers \$89.50  
Sat. Jan. 22: A Tribute to JOHNNY ARTIS featuring Johnny Artis Legacy Band & Friends with Ron Holloway, Regina Blackman, Stacy Brooks & Gary Thomas \$35.00  
Sun. Jan. 23: JOSH ABBOTT BAND \$35.00  
Mon. Jan. 24: J. BROWN \$35.00  
Wed. Jan. 26: SWEET HONEY IN THE ROCK \$45.00  
Thu. Jan. 27: The Gilmour Project \$35.00  
Fri. Jan. 28: Raheem DeVaughn \$69.50  
Sat. Jan. 29: Who's Bad – The Ultimate Michael Jackson Experience \$39.50

#### February

Wed. Feb. 2: MARC COHN \$55.00  
Fri/Sat. Feb. 4&5: Will Downing \$79.50  
Fri. Feb. 11: Drew & Ellie Holcomb: The You & Me Tour \$45.00  
Sat. Feb. 12: BURLIQUE-A-PADES In Loveland! Hosted by Murray Hill with Live Music from The Brian Newman Band starring Angie Pontani, The Maine Attraction, Mr Gorgeous, Gal Friday, \$29.50



## ENTERTAINMENT

# Warm Up and Try Something New During Winter Restaurant Week

BY HOPE NELSON  
GAZETTE PACKET

**L**ike a beacon in the dead of January, Alexandria's Winter Restaurant Week is drawing near once more. From Jan. 21-30, restaurants city-wide will concoct special menus priced at either \$35 per person or per couple to tempt diners to try something new (or venture back to old favorites). As with the past several years, many eateries' deals are also good for carry-out, so be sure to call before weighing your options.

### Ada's on the River, 3 Pioneer Mill Way

Potomac views and a good meal deal, too? It's the best of both worlds. For \$35 per person, Ada's on the River is offering up a choice of appetizers (yellow tuna tartare, Waldorf salad or charred mortadella) and entrée (spiced rockfish or flank steak) to warm you up



Ada's on the River

during a cold month.

City Kitchen, 330 S. Pickett St. Out on the West End, City Kitchen is offering a \$35-for-two meal featuring a choice of entrees (chicken pot pie, gnocchi or pork chops) and cheesecake or Devil's Latte Cream Cake – dark chocolate cake soaked in Irish cream and

filled with cream mousse – to finish things off.

### Haute Dogs and Fries, 610 Montgomery St.

Forget the fussy prix fixe menus – Haute Dogs gets straight to the good stuff with its \$35-for-two deal. The eatery's Restaurant Week menu offers two local German

brats complete with sauerkraut and brown mustard with a side of chips, paired with a Hofbrau helles lager. Order for takeout or delivery, or dine at the restaurant indoors or out.

### Junction Bakery and Bistro, 1508 Mount Vernon Ave.

Junction's two-person deal comes with a bountiful amount of food – one small plate, one large plate and one dessert per person. Choose between mojo mac and cheese, General Tso cauliflower and beet salad to start, then dive into the main event – pot roast, a falafel bowl or a burger. Finally, choose between coconut cake and blackberry cheesecake.

### Piece Out Del Ray, 2419 Mount Vernon Ave.

Del Ray's newest pizza joint offers much more than just the signature pies, and Piece Out aims to showcase the breadth of its menu through Restaurant Week. The eatery's dinner for two offers one starter – a Greek or tomato moz-

zarella salad – and two entrees, ranging from baked spinach manicotti to squid ink fettuccine fra diavolo and more. Finally, sweeten the deal with three cannoli. Want a little tippie to wash down the meal? Piece Out is offering a bottle of house red or white for an additional \$15.

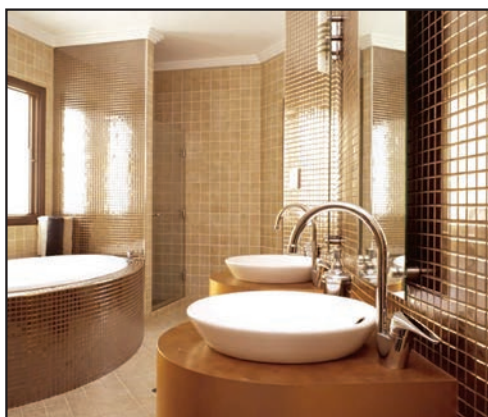
### Thai Signature, 722 King St.

Thai Signature is offering a three-course meal for \$35 per person. Start off with a choice of crab Rangoon or kratong thong (patty shells with shrimp and mixed chicken). Proceed on to a selection of lad na mee krob – shrimp and squid in a gravy sauce atop wonton noodles – or Siamese steak, and then finish things out with pumpkin sweet coconut milk for a sweet treat.

*Hope Nelson is the author of "Classic Restaurants of Alexandria" and owns the Kitchen Recessionista blog, located at [www.kitchenrecessionista.com](http://www.kitchenrecessionista.com). Email her any time at [hope@kitchenrecessionista.com](mailto:hope@kitchenrecessionista.com).*

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Thank you to the hundreds of supporters who helped to keep all your Connection Newspapers alive throughout Alexandria, Fairfax County Arlington County and Potomac, Md. along with affiliated websites and digital media. Now we need help again in 2022.

Each local newspaper's mission aspires to provide greater community service, and we do know that our communities are better off if we continue to publish. Last year's financial support from readers and supporters like you bridged the shortfall before Federal PPP funding arrived, and both made our survival possible. We now await a decision for a grant from Rebuild Virginia in early February that we hope will help us in 2022 and beyond. But we need help to survive the first quarter, always a brutal time for cash flow in weekly newspapers. Thank you.

Please, help save these historical papers.

All gifts will be used to fund our printed newspapers and websites and to meet obligations to our loyal and patient employees, writers, contractors and suppliers.

The ongoing pandemic continues to crush many newspapers across the country, and our newspapers continue to be at risk. The Northern Virginia area's best read and most trusted source for community news includes the Alexandria Gazette Packet, Mount Vernon Gazette and all Con-

nection Newspapers in the metropolitan region.

The pandemic has hit small businesses hard, which in turn has reduced advertising revenue that keeps these local newspapers alive to provide hyper local news to residents. It feels like no small miracle to be looking forward into 2022.

The pandemic has been a bear, financially and otherwise. Revenue plummeted at the beginning in 2020. Some beloved advertisers have stayed the course supporting us throughout, and many more have done what they can. In the fall of 2021 we saw the return of some advertising for events and Grand Openings, but now omicron clouds the horizon in so many ways. Revenue still remains short of expenses despite our greatly curtailed costs.

Connection Newspapers has been offering these local newspapers to residents for over 200 years. Countless residents have grown up with these papers covering significant moments in the lives of family and children, news, community events, school activities, and even pictures of your dogs and cats. Internet news and large national newspapers cannot provide the local connection or historical connection that local papers like Connection Newspapers and the Alexandria Gazette Packet provide. If your child, dog, mother, father, neighborhood, school has been featured, you understand the value of local community newspapers.

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# BULLETIN

SEE BULLETIN, PAGE 13



Association for the Advancement of Science's STEM Volunteer Program, [stemvolunteers.org](http://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](mailto:donaldrea@aol.com).

**Volunteer Adult Mentors Needed.** Help assist the Department of Family Services' BeFriendA-Child mentoring program. The mentors provide opportunities for companionship, guidance and support to children who have been abused and neglected, or who are at risk of abuse and neglect. Contact Ibrahim Khalil ([Ibrahim.khalil@fairfaxcounty.gov](mailto: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](http://www.alive-inc.org/volunteer.htm) or contact the Volunteer Coordinator at [volunteers@alive-inc.org](mailto: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](http://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](mailto:chubicki@volunteerfairfax.org) or call RSVP at 703-403-5360. To learn more about RSVP, visit [www.rsvpnova.org](http://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 healthy choices and succeeding in school and in life. Visit [www.spaceofherown.org](http://www.spaceofherown.org) and [www.spaceofhisown.org](http://www.spaceofhisown.org). For more information on how to become a SOHO mentor, contact Sarah Maroney at [sarah.maroney@alexandriava.gov](mailto: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](mailto: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/](http://www.volunteeralexandria.org/) for more.

## Obituary

## Obituary



**Deborah Elizabeth Palmer-Mills**, born August 13, 1947, at Alexandria Hospital and a long-time resident of Old Town Alexandria, VA Passed away peacefully at her home on November 29, 2021, after a long battle with cancer and multiple sclerosis. She was under the loving care of Goodwin House Hospice. Her family and many loyal friends were able to visit her often at the end of her life.

Debby attended George Washington High School in Alexandria and was active in the alumni association. She attended Virginia Intermont College in Bristol, Virginia. She was fun-loving and enjoyed traveling as well as volunteering at Alexandria Guest House. Those who knew and loved Debby will miss her lovely smile, her infectious laugh, her kind heart, and her warm and generous spirit.

Debby was preceded in death by her loving husband Charles Mills, her parents Mary Louise Palmer and Dr. Richard E. Palmer, and her niece Mary Cathleen Palmer. She is survived by her siblings Dr. Richard N. Palmer, Maurice R. Palmer (Jane), Dr. Mary Palmer-Brown, her step-daughter Amanda and husband Morgan Stokald (and their children), nephews Robert B. Palmer, Christopher, and Mathew Brown, and Richard Justin Palmer, nieces Megan Cullen Stanek and Amy Nash Martini and many other extended family members.

Debby was cremated at Everly-Wheatley Funeral Home in Alexandria and her ashes will be interred, commingled with her husband's remains and keepsakes as per their wishes, in the family plot at Chestnut Grove Cemetery in Herndon, Virginia. A simple graveside service will be held this early spring.

In lieu of flowers, donations can be made to Goodwin House Foundation directed to Hospice & Palliative Care at 4800 Fillmore Ave., Alexandria, VA 22311

## For Rent

## Announcements

Parking space for rent in Alexandria west end. Near Shirlington, Baileys & King St. 100/month. Indoor, CCTV, 24/7 access. [rarpropertiesva@gmail.com](mailto:rarpropertiesva@gmail.com)

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## Immuno-Confused



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

I wouldn't say, as a cancer patient, that I'm immuno-compromised, as a CNN news report today, Dec. 24th, described us similarly-diagnosed individuals, but my wife certainly would. Nevertheless, as a cancer patient undergoing treatment, I do realize that I need to be vigilant, especially since I have pre-existing breathing issues because the thyroid cancer I have had long ago moved into my lungs. Moreover, to complicate matters more, the main side effect of the medicine that I'm taking daily to treat my thyroid cancer has as its main side effect: shortness of breath. Having read what I've just written, it sounds likely that if anybody is immuno-compromised, it's someone who has cancerous tumors in their lungs and whose treatment for said tumors has as its primary side effect: shortness of breath. A trifecta of trouble when one considers that covid adversely impacts one's ability to breathe.

When covid first became a thing, my wife, Dina wouldn't let me out of the house. Even after we received our initial two vaccinations, Dina was still cautiously unoptimistic. I was allowed out of the house, but within very strict parameters. I wouldn't say I understand science/medicine, but even I could see the risks of exposure and the likely compounded problems it would present for a cancer patient like me whose lungs are already weakened by the presence of a dozen or more malignant papillary thyroid cancer tumors. And whose body has been negatively affected (I wouldn't say ravaged) by nearly 13 years of non-stop cancer treatment. Not exactly the most challenging host for a semi-incurable respiratory virus.

However, in the past three months or so since I've been boosted, I have returned to some of my pre-covid activities; in moderation, and always wearing a mask. I am out and about running errands as had been my area of responsibility previously. Now however, omicron has become the dominant variant/threat and presented a new level of concern even for fully vaccinated/boosted people like me. Though the side effects, hospitalizations and deaths seem statistically somewhat less than previous variants, still a cancer patient with pre-existing lung/breathing issues seems an attractive host. And not that the variant picks its targets, but its super transmissibility presents challenges/fears for those whose immune systems have already been weakened by years of toxic chemotherapy. As I describe myself, I think I might be the poster child for this disease. If anybody presents with the ideal/worst-case scenario, it's me. I can see the poster now: A picture of me with a black circle surrounding my chest with a black line diagonally across my torso.

Because, if there's anything I understand about my condition, it is that my weakest link is the area where the virus does its most initial damage: the lungs. And given that one's ability to breathe is kind of important, in whatever scheme of things/context one wants to consider, I should probably once again stay in the house and avoid all human contact (at least I would have five cats to keep me company). I mean, who's to say/know really, whether a lung cancer/thyroid patient like me could even survive the most modest of covid symptoms. Which, given my medical history, it's unlikely any symptoms I experienced could be described as moderate. I imagine if the virus found a home in my lungs, it might very well be, as they say in Boston: "Katie bar the door." There's probably no such thing as a moderate impact for a person with cancer/lung issues like me. In fact, if I want to be honest about my cancer/lung history, practically/prudently speaking, I should be disqualified from everything until further notice. I can't afford to take a chance/risk any exposure. I have very little margin for error. My life would be at stake, if I understand the warnings/susceptibility correctly concerning someone with my medical condition.

I suppose if I want to live my life moving forward, I'll have to utilize my sales background and pre-qualify any person with whom I'm possibly having contact/sharing space. I've survived/overcome an initial "terminal" diagnosis of stage IV non-small cell lung cancer with a "13 month to two-year" prognosis to be approaching my 13-year anniversary come the end of February 2022. Given all I've endured in the last 13 years since I felt pain in my left rib cage in late December 2008, it would be irresponsible and stupid for me to get careless and throw away all I've been gained. This is no time to throw caution to the wind. Quite the contrary.

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

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## A+ Education • Learning • Fun

# Earning College Credit with Work Experience and Training

Program expansions makes college degree accessible and affordable for many.

By MARILYN CAMPBELL  
THE CONNECTION

Now in the 17th year of his career in information technology (IT), Eric Hayes wants to work toward a college degree at Northern Virginia Community College. While he has taken a variety of on-the-job training courses, he believes that a formal education will lead to professional gains. Thanks to the expansion of a program in Virginia called Credits for Prior Learning

Portal, Credits-2Careers program, he and other adults can turn life work experiences into college credit. "The hours of course study will help me continue to grow in my career field," he said. "Course work, group collaboration, and lectures are a part of the responsibility of being an active IT professional," he said. "You can easily get left behind if you

do not keep your eyes and ears open. Constant change can be beneficial because it can quickly solve problems as well as streamline convoluted processes. With that being said, knowing about the change or even being a part of it is much more gratifying."

Adults who are interested in using work and life experience to earn credit at Northern Virginia Community College and other schools in the Virginia Community College System, can create an account on the Credits2Careers website ([www.credits2careers.org](http://www.credits2careers.org)) and list information such as work experience, prior training, certificates or standardized tests. This information is evaluated by the organization's career advisors who will then let the prospective student know how many college credits they are eligible to receive.

"This initiative is predicated on serving the needs of all students from various backgrounds who have a wealth of knowledge and experience," said Jenny Carter, Direc-

tor of Workforce Partnerships and Projects, Virginia Community College System. "Recognizing the expertise that is contained in a student's background is one way of honoring their past efforts and meeting them where they are in their educational journey, in the arc of their career, and most importantly, where they are in life."

A grant from the Lumina Foundation, as part of its All Learning Counts Initiative, provided the funding for the expansion. Professional development, workforce training,

professional certifications, exams and standardized test are examples of the types of experiences that students use to earn college credit while taking fewer classes, says Carter

"By awarding credit for prior learning, students are able to avoid any redundancy in training and save crucial time and money," she said. "Research has shown

**"The greatest thing about education, knowledge, skills, and capabilities is that they are not confined to a formal classroom. Having diverse life experiences enhances the classroom atmosphere and makes the fabric of our society and our workforce stronger."**

— Jenny Carter,  
Director of Workforce Partnerships and  
Projects, Virginia Community College System.

that by awarding credit for prior learning, students are ultimately assisted in a meaningful, tangible way to accelerate their pathway to earning a degree or licensure leading directly to a well-paying career. Life is full of rich experiences that deserve to be recognized wherever they align to formal training outcomes."

This path to education is designed to create a level playing field for those who want to access to higher education. "Credit for prior learning is one tool to ensure education is available to all, from students with traditional backgrounds to those who have followed another path," said Emily Jones-Green, Virginia Community College System. "The greatest thing about education, knowledge, skills, and capabilities is that they are not confined to a formal classroom."

Having diverse life experiences enhances the classroom atmosphere and makes the fabric of our society and our workforce stronger."





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